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Toward a Filipino/a Critical (FilCrit) Pedagogy:

A Study of United States Educational Exposure Programs to the Philippines

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

Michael Joseph Viola

2012

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Toward a Filipino/a Critical (FilCrit) Pedagogy:

A Study of United States Educational Exposure Programs to the Philippines

by

Michael Joseph Viola

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Sandra Harding, Co-chair

Professor Peter McLaren, Co-chair

Through a qualitative study fusing participatory action methods with a focus group, testimonio, individual interviews, and cultural analysis this project examines U.S. educational exposure programs to the Philippines. Organized and united by a social movement that traverses a Philippine diaspora, exposure programs enable participants to visit the Philippines for a short-term immersion where they are hosted by sectors of interest. This study explores the pedagogy that exposure programs enable as participants learn about the everyday realities challenging a Philippine polity and how systems of knowledge are being reframed and transformed. Placing Filipino/a American transnational activism at the center of analysis contributes to the field as this particular community group is sparsely examined in critical educational discourses. Of interest is how their praxis in exposure programs to the Philippines offers insight to critical theories, research methodologies, and educative social practices that seek the transformation of oppressive

global relations of class, race, and gender.

The manuscript is divided into two sections: *Research Process* and *Research Findings*. *Research Process* consists of: an introduction; a description of the theoretical frameworks (critical pedagogy, feminist standpoint theory, critical theories of race, and Filipina critical theory) that the study builds upon in examination of Filipino/a American transnational praxis; an overview of the qualitative tools utilized to document experiences of research participants; and a historical genealogy exploring the social conditions that have cultivated historical forms of Filipino/a American counter-consciousness.

The *Research Findings* section is divided into four chapters. Beginning with Chapter Five, which utilizes the testimonio of an exposure participant as a point of departure to conceptualize how such programs cultivate what I term a “diasporic counter-consciousness.” Nascent in a new generation of Filipino/a Americans, a “diasporic counter-consciousness” links Filipino/a American identity as contingent upon: 1) the fate of a population dispersed throughout the globe and; 2) the eradication of neocolonial conditions in the Philippines. Chapter Six explores the transnational praxis of participants and its implications for the theorizing of race (drawing explicitly from the cultural media created in a hip hop exposure and in generative conversation with the writings of W.E.B. Du Bois). Chapter Seven demonstrates how the interaction of feminist standpoint theory with the experiences of Filipina American exposure participants can point to a “Filipina diasporic standpoint.” Such a standpoint provides a uniting positionality where the labor, land, and lives of Filipina women across the diaspora are not alienated from them but rather channeled in the service of their own needs and the potentials of a greater humanity. Chapter Eight is a coda to the research project, summarizing the central themes outlined for Filipino/a Critical Pedagogy.

The dissertation of Michael Joseph Viola is approved.

Epifanio San Juan

Ernest Morrell

Peter McLaren, Co-chair

Sandra Harding, Co-chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

DEDICATION PAGE

To my wife, Suzanne, and daughter, Malaya:

Your love, laughter, and support animate my life and resonate brightly in everything I will ever accomplish – including the pages that are written here.

To my parents, Jesus and Cecilia Viola
and extended family Susan, Norm, Sara, Erin, and Daniel Senzaki:

Ang mga isinulat ko ay batay sa ating kasaysayan at
sa hangad na pag-asa para sa kinabukasan.

To the exposure participants who shared their experiences:

All your stories could not be included in this manuscript, but certainly your deeds are imprinted
in a more just world in the process of being born.

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The unyielding mentorship and support from Epifanio (Sonny) San Juan Jr. has contributed greatly in who I am and hope to become as a scholar and educator. Uncle Sonny has helped me to take initial and inchoate questions and translate them into a project grounded in both history and critical theory. The feedback he provided throughout the research process were also supplemented with care packages that contained books, mixed media, and essays that strengthened my analytical position but just as importantly short personal notes that fortified my morale, urging me to never forget: "may the just be victorious." The deepest gratitude to Delia Aguilar for the love she has extended to me as a mentor, articulated in every email valediction but also through her intellectual encouragement, constructive criticism, and unwavering support. This project has only been made stronger with Tita Delia's careful and engaged guidance. It is

my hope that the best of my teaching and scholarship will reflect the important roles all the aforementioned mentors have contributed in my personal, professional and political development.

While this manuscript has my name ascribed to it, the ideas developed and articulated was only made possible through a collective process sharpened in numerous conversations, debates, and feedback I have received from countless individuals I have met along the way. I hope I am forgiven in listing their names without the comments that their kindness toward me dutifully warrants. At UCLA I am indebted to scholars and friends: Ernest Morrell, Kent Wong, Concepcion Valadez, Janna Shaddock-Hernandez, Victor Bascara, Jesse Moya, and Lorenzo Perillo. Many thanks to the individuals whose kindness, feedback, and radical politics are in many ways imprinted in this project especially: Sarah Raymundo, Freedom Siyam, Brad Porfilio, Robyn Rodriguez, Jeff Cabusao, Robert Proudfoot, Moon Ho-Jung, Helene Lustan, Wakx Uy, Robert Hayden, Chera Amlag, Jeff Rice, Katrina Pestano, Lulu Carpenter, Rhondalei Gabuat, Melissa Roxas, Claudia Paras, Ace Saturay, Rene Rivera, Pacharee Sudhinarset, Simón Trujillo, Serenity Joo, and Nandini Dhar.

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RESEARCH PROCESS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

“I don’t want to be imported or exported. It is impossible to export pedagogical practices without reinventing them. Please tell your fellow American educators not to import me. Ask them to re-create and rewrite my ideas” (Freire, P; Freire, A, & Macedo, D., 1998: pg. xi).

Paulo Freire

In the Fall of 2008, I traveled to metro-Manila to participate in an educational exposure or expo trip to the Philippines. I was there for 20 days visiting Filipino/a educators, activists, youth, and cultural workers involved in a social movement to end historical conditions of colonialism and foreign domination. I was immersed in a community dialogue sharing my life experiences as a Filipino American and learning about the conditions of a country disfigured by United States hegemony. I learned how neocolonial domination intersected with the struggles of teachers who shared with me their unique challenges. For instance, in one public high school I visited, teachers told me that in their estimates 75% of their students are malnourished reflecting the conditions of a Filipino population whose majority earn less than \$2 a day. They shared stories of their students forced to scavenge plastic bottles and bags before and after school to contribute to their family incomes. On a day I was scheduled to meet with a high school youth I was informed that the student could not meet with me because the student’s sister had died that morning because of a respiratory sickness.

The public schools I visited had overcrowded classrooms that were partitioned by chalkboards so that two classes could be accommodated in one room. In extreme cases, students were forced to learn daily lessons outside under trees and in hallway corridors. Student to

teacher ratios were not the only ratio of concern. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) has documented there is a pupil to toilet ratio where in some of the worst cases, schools have 1 toilet for every 2,000 students.

Along with meeting with public school teachers, I had the opportunity to engage with faculty members of the Congress of Teachers for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND) at the University of the Philippines - Diliman. I heard brave stories from academic and public intellectuals involved in collective work to understand the root problems of the educational system and its intimate connection to United States colonialism. They shared with me personal stories of psychological warfare enacted by the Philippine government as the military held workshops on campus to discourage students from engaging in youth activism. Worse, for students and educators alike seeking to understand as well as transform the systems that have imposed poverty upon their country, they risk being another tally of the more than a thousand individuals since 2001 kidnapped, disappeared, or killed for their progressive community activism and affiliations.

Concepts that I read in books, such as "dispossession" and "primitive accumulation" refused abstraction during my exposure trip to the Philippines. I learned how these concepts reflect the everyday contradictions of a global system for too many people in the Philippines. To be sure, one does not have to necessarily conduct an educational exposure perceive the conditions of appropriation and cultural domination. However, as Latin American poet Eduardo Galeano eloquently explained, "to the extent that the system finds itself threatened by the relentless growth of unemployment, poverty, and the resultant social and political tensions, room for pretense and good manners shrinks: in the outskirts of the world the system reveals its true face" (Galeano, 2000, pg. 170). Similar to the conditions of the Philippine Diaspora – where

3,000 Filipinos (the majority of which are women) leave the Philippines each day – my research of United States exposure trips to the Philippines requires the crossing of theoretical, disciplinary, and methodological borders. The traversing of such boundaries confronts the problems I draw attention to throughout this manuscript. While Filipino/as have been relegated to the margins of the United States and the periphery of an exploitative global system, for the purposes of my research I have placed Filipino/a American praxis at the center of analysis.

Statement of Problems

Filipinos are the second largest immigrant population in the United States. In fact, the United States has the largest population of Filipino/as working and living outside the Philippines (Chua, 2009). While contributing valuable strategies and theories for educational justice, social transformation, and participatory democracy, studies that foreground the contributions of Filipino/as in a global diaspora to the theories and practices of emancipatory education are sparse. This failure has severely limited the field's ability to engage political strategies, democratic practices, and educational interventions that speak to the history and needs of a Filipino/a polity. For instance, in the recent publication of the Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies, the editors highlight important research methods deployed in educational research drawing from such powerful sub-disciplines as critical pedagogy, critical race theory, and feminist theories. However, the editors are clear that this anthology of decolonizing methodologies is far from complete as they state their inability “to locate persons who could write on Philippine pedagogy” (Denzin, Lincoln, Smith; 2008: pg. xii). The paltry state of critical educational scholarship that engages the standpoint of Filipino/a Americans and

its linkages to a Philippine Diaspora¹ is especially troubling considering the system of education in the Philippines was transplanted by and modeled after the United States in the aftermath of the Philippine-American War (Constantino, 1999).

Recent events demonstrate how the borders of the disparate First and Third worlds intersect in our nation's urban schools. Marred with conditions of extreme poverty, violence, illiteracy, and repression, dispossessed public schools in the United States now turn to the Philippine Diaspora to fill the vacant teaching positions in our nation's most dilapidated and impoverished inner city schools. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, more than 300 hundred Filipino/a teachers were recruited to work in Louisiana public schools. Exploited by international recruiting firms, 200 teachers were reportedly held in virtual servitude with their visas confiscated, their living arrangements and social networks restricted, and some teachers required to pay inflated recruitment fees of up to \$16,000, more than four times what they earn annually as teachers in the Philippines (Toppo and Fernandez, 2009). Similar to their compatriots who leave the Philippines by the thousands each day to work as household or domestic helpers, caretakers, and cleaners in commercial industry, Filipino/a teachers in the United States are the latest victims of what has been described as a new form of "modern day slavery."²

As I emphasize in Chapter Four, Filipino/a immigration to the United States has a long history that spans more than 100 years. Despite such a longstanding presence in this country, the

¹ At present, educational policies in the Philippines have supported the dispersal of Filipinos to the United States and throughout the globe as immigrant workers now called Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). Due in large part to the educational system in the Philippines and a national curriculum that has created a national polity of largely semi-skilled, English speaking workers, the exportation of Filipino bodies is the country's leading economic development strategy (Tujan, 2004). Recent statistics demonstrate that joblessness and poverty in the Philippines have reached record highs with 10.7 million Filipinos currently under or unemployed). During the span of 2001 to 2008 more Filipinos have left the Philippines as OFWs than at any point in the country's history.

² See documentary titled "Modern Day Slaves" which depicts the stories and lives of Overseas Filipino Workers who leave their country in search of employment as domestic workers, caretakers, and nannies.

neglect of critical educational scholarship in foregrounding the valuable insights and strategies of Filipino/a American communities to emancipatory forms of learning, consciousness, labor, language, and culture is troubling. In reviewing the literature, consistently missing are scholarly works that theorize the conditions and connections of Filipino/a Americans and the Philippine Diaspora. Without a doubt, I encountered powerful texts and testimonies that have impacted the field of critical educational theory that have validated the standpoints and experiences of black feminists, indigenous activists, race radicals, “border crossers,” and undocumented youth. Furthermore, such research - that utilize various and groundbreaking research methods sensitive to the cultural dynamics and history of their communities - offered political strategies and educational interventions that account for the needs and desires of their respective constituents. However, as matters of Filipino/a American education, culture, and resistance are at best marginalized or worse neglected altogether within educational discourse one is led to believe that a Filipino/a American agency has not made significant contributions to democratic manifestations of knowledge creation and social justice education. If the important history and present day strategies of Filipino/a American praxis is not explored within educational discourses, the transnational praxis and democratic imaginaries to transform unjust social relations will continue to be delegated outside the capacity of Filipino/a American communities.

In recent years, predominately outside the field of education, there has been a promising yet small emergence of multidisciplinary Filipino/a American scholars building upon the important frameworks of critical race theory as well as feminist theories to document Filipino/a American experiences and to provide valuable outlets for such communities to describe how they understand their racialized and gendered lives. Such research projects are important as they continue the work of situating historically marginalized groups at the center of knowledge

production. However, scholarship that intends to solely document subjugated experiences and give voice to subaltern communities has limitations, as human experience is never self-explanatory. While the utility of providing culturally relevant and positive educational experiences to Filipino/a American youth cannot be understated, scholarship must also support the development of new systems of analysis that assist in the demystification of global systems of domination. Furthermore, such scholarship must elucidate the links between a dehumanizing system of schooling and global processes of exploitation.

Critical pedagogy is a powerful theoretical tool that can be mobilized to demystify such structures of global inequality (Freire, 1989; 2005; P. Freire & A. Freire, 2004). Recently, radical educators and Marxist theorists have forwarded a revolutionary critical pedagogy with central tenants that promote:

- 1) A collective process of analyzing history - that emphasizes the allied importance of reflection and practice to transform one's history in the present tense.
- 2) The location of various oppressions within the capitalist social relations of production.
- 3) The building of coalitions and international solidarities in sites where knowledge is produced - such as in schools, labor unions, church organizations, and community-based organizations.
- 4) The creativity of cultural production to incorporate oral histories, music, poetry, art, and other cultural testimonies as educational tools to foster anti-capitalist political consciousness.

The contributions of this subfield are surely groundbreaking with its aim to understand, reveal, and disrupt the mechanisms of oppression imposed by global ruling blocs (Allman, 2007; Cole,

2008; Grande, 2004; Hill, 2002, Kelsh & Hill, 2006; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2005; Rikowski, 1997; Scatamburlo-D'Annibale & McLaren, 2003). However, qualitative research has not yet been sufficiently produced to explore the contours of humanist educational projects grounded in the eradication of imperial domination and exploitative class relations. For this subfield to be more than revolutionary ruminations, qualitative studies utilizing the methods of focus groups, case studies, individual interviews, testimonio, counter-storytelling, and other modes of inquiry must provide in-depth understanding as to why and where a revolutionary educational agenda is embodied in collective human practice as well as the historical reasons that govern such behavior. A qualitative study of educational exposure programs to the Philippines is positioned to address some of these current gaps in critical educational theory.

Characteristics of Educational Exposure Programs to the Philippines

Organized by national democratic³ organizations and allies in the United States, educational exposure programs enable participants to visit the Philippines for a short-term stay where they are hosted by sectors of interest that include labor organizers, educators, youth, peasants, human rights advocates, indigenous activists, women's organizations or cultural workers. Through exposures, participants are immersed in the everyday conditions of the Philippine's producing classes where mutual dialogues, community workshops, as well as formal and informal discussions are facilitated. In their involvement with the local contexts and concerns of their community, participants are able to learn about the everyday realities challenging a Filipino national polity. Furthermore, they learn of the cultural forms of dissent

³ National democracy in the Philippine context is an anti-imperialist ideological position and political program. Through the education and mobilization of various forces that include women, labor organizers, youth, church people, and ethnic minorities, the national democratic movement in the Philippines recognizes that genuine democracy, ongoing peace, and cultural survival is only possible through the defeat of foreign hegemony and the attainment of national sovereignty.

and resistance that mirror its people's history and collective vision for the future.

The characteristics of exposure programs vary depending upon multiple factors including the individual objectives, the political involvement of the participant, as well as the capacity and conditions of the hosting organization or region. As such, introductory exposure programs are intended for participants who have never been to the Philippines or who are new to the issues taking place in the country. For participants who have traveled to the Philippines, are familiar with the history and conditions of the country, and/or are active organizers in their home country, advanced exposure programs include "training through direct participation in organizing or specific campaign work as well as specific educational discussions chosen in consultation with the sponsoring organization" (Bayan Exposure Guide, 2008). While the features of educational exposure trips are highly unique and specialized, across the various tiers of educational exposure programs there are five shared characteristics:

1) *Preparation*: There is an application process at least three months prior to the planned trip where exposure applicants explain the sector (labor, human rights, educators, youth, etc) they seek as their host while abroad as well as personal objectives for going on exposure to the Philippines. Before their departure, participants prepare for their trip through educational discussions (EDs) organized with the community organizations in the United States that focus on Philippine history, current events, and the political economic conditions of the country. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to study the Filipino language in preparation for their immersion.

2) *Immersion*: Once in the Philippines, exposure participants are assigned a facilitator who is

involved with the work and mission of their host organization. The facilitator acts as a bridge to link the visiting exposure participant with community members, organizers, and families in the Philippines.

3) *Kuwentuhan*: During the immersion, dialogue is strongly encouraged with peasants, women, youth, cultural workers and labor organizers. *Kuwentuhan* - or friendly discussions with community members - promotes a personal understanding of the local conditions and everyday realities. As such, exposure participants are encouraged to dialogue and share their own life experiences, immigrant struggles, and challenges specific to their conditions in the United States.

4) *Pamilya ng Masa*: During the exposure, participants are encouraged to reside with a *pamilya ng masa* or “family of the masses,” which is usually a peasant or urban poor host family. Under these circumstances, participants live with the same quality of life as the family (i.e. minimum running water, electricity, flushable toilets, or air conditioning). Through their home stays, participants are not only expected to dialogue with family members but also assist in everyday jobs and household tasks.

5) *Report Back*: After returning back from their exposure trip, participants are expected to report back and share their experiences with their respective communities and networks in the United States. Report backs take the form of informal discussions in participants’ living quarters to more formal events hosted by labor unions and universities. As one participant explains, when a participant returns from their exposure they “do [a] report back which in turn leads to some kind of action oriented thing that the individual want[s] to do. Like a letter writing campaign or an

educational campaign focusing on outreaching about the different issues or mobilizing for action like May 1st or International Human Rights Day” (Individual interview, 11 February 2011).

Participants are also encouraged to utilize creative cultural mediums and pedagogical practices – such as hip-hop albums, spoken word, and documentaries - to teach about their exposure, the conditions abroad, and the movement for social transformation taking place in the Philippines.

Research Questions

The vacuous terrain of critical educational research that explores sites of transformative practice and emancipatory consciousness from a Filipina/o American standpoint highlights the need for further research. Of interest in my examination of exposure program practices to the Philippines anchored by the theoretical subfield of critical revolutionary pedagogy, is how such praxis can buttress the critical theories and critical methodologies currently circulating in the field of education such as critical race theory, intersectionality, participatory action research, testimonio, and feminist standpoint theory. As such, the following questions that guide my study of United States educational exposure programs to the Philippines are as follows:

Question 1: How does the testimonio of human rights activist, Melissa Roxas, point to an alternative counter-consciousness for a new generation of Filipino/a Americans? What are the qualities of such counter-consciousness and how have educational exposure programs to the Philippines helped to incubate such a social imaginary?

Question 2: In what ways does the insights of W. E. B. Du Bois inform a diasporic counter-consciousness in confronting racialization within the United States and across a global Philippine diaspora? Specifically, how is Du Bois’s pedagogical concept of

a “guiding hundredth” made legible and extended through the practices of a hip hop exposure program to the Philippines?

Question 3: How does the interaction of feminist theories with the praxis of Filipina American exposure participants signify a new form of feminist standpoint?

Importance of Study and Research Overview

Through a qualitative study fusing participatory action methods with a focus group, a testimonio, individual interviews, as well as historical, cultural, and media analysis I examine United States educational exposure programs⁴ to the Philippines. I take the position that qualitative research that examine culturally relevant practices and radical social imaginaries of Filipino/a Americans offer important insights as to how systems of education are being reframed, democratized, and transformed. Furthermore, by placing a Filipino/a American standpoint at the center of analysis offers innovative insights to critical theories, research methods, and educational practices that seek the transformation of oppressive social relations in an era of neoliberal capitalist globalization.

The manuscript is divided into two sections: “Research Process” and “Research Findings.” The “Research Processes” section consists of the current chapter and concludes with the fourth. Chapter Two describes the theoretical frameworks I build upon and extend in my study of educational exposure programs to the Philippines. More specifically, the second chapter is an outline of the theoretical toolkit I have mobilized drawing from the epistemological approaches of critical pedagogy, feminist standpoint theory, critical theories of race, and Filipina critical theory. With the theoretical lens of my study in view, Chapter Three describes the qualitative tools I use to document experiences of participants and their educational exposure

⁴ Also called “exposures,” “expos,” or “immersions” throughout the dissertation proposal.

programs to the Philippines. Chapter Four reviews historical literature to trace the social conditions in the United States that cultivated a radical Filipino/a American counter-consciousness.

Embedded throughout the second section which delineates my “Research Findings” are reviews of relevant literature. As this project traverses various interdisciplinary fields and disciplines, I have found it necessary to incorporate reviews of existing literature in multiple chapters not only for readability but also to narrow the context of the study, to demarcate what is and what is not within the scope of investigation, and also to situate how the study of exposure programs fit in a broader scholarly and historical context. According to David Boote and Penny Beile, the literature review is the basis for theoretical and methodological sophistication that requires the author to not only summarize “but also to synthesis the existing literature in a way that permits new and innovative approaches (Boote and Beile, 2005: pg. 4). Thus, after historicizing United States imperialism in the Philippines as the fuel for the Philippine Diaspora and the conditions of racialization in the United States in Chapter Four, I offer my findings of contemporary social conditions that govern Filipino/a Americans participation in educational exposure trips to the Philippines through the testimonio of Filipina American human rights activist Melissa Roxas. Chapter Five outlines her “conscientization” through educational exposures to the Philippines. Furthermore, through Roxas’s testimonio this chapter points to a “diasporic counter-consciousness” that is nascent within a new generation of Filipino/a American cultural workers, youth, and activists. I demonstrate how such a consciousness links local struggles for social transformation in the United States to the fate of a neocolonial polity dispersed throughout the globe and the not yet realized pursuit for sovereignty in the Philippine homeland.

Chapter Six explores the anti-racist theoretical frames and social imaginaries that inform a diasporic counter-consciousness. Drawing from W.E.B. Du Bois and his theoretical upgrade to his thesis for a “talented tenth,” this chapter explores how Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” is made legible and extended through a hip hop exposure program to the Philippines documented in the film, *Sounds of a New Hope* (Tandoc, 2009). Chapter Seven offers analysis of a focus group of Filipina American exposure participants. Specifically, I demonstrate how the interaction of feminist critical theory with Filipino/a American cultural work, activism, and methodology embedded in exposure programs points to an alternative feminist standpoint that I call “Filipina diasporic standpoint.” Such a standpoint provides a uniting positionality where the labor, land, and lives of Filipina women across the diaspora are not alienated from them but rather channeled in the service of their own needs and the potentials of a greater humanity. Chapter Eight offers a coda to the research project, summarizing central themes outlined for Filipino/a Critical Pedagogy. While the research process in the completion of each chapter was motivated with the goals of reciprocity and dialogue it certainly was not without limitations.

Research Limitations

In regards to an analysis that highlights the transformative and educative practices of Filipino/as in a global diaspora, the research standpoint is admittedly one-sided. Specifically, the conditions and concerns I highlight speak solely from the Filipino/a American experience. Educational exposure programs to the Philippines are organized not only in the United States but also in Canada, Western Europe, East Asia, and other locations Filipino/as are present throughout the world. However, this study is grounded in the specific social conditions and historical analysis of Filipino/a Americans travelling to the Philippines.

This study is also limited in that it does not offer a grounded and thick description of the customs and cultural practices of educational exposure trips to the Philippines. This could be remedied with ethnographic research. An ethnographic study would require more time that I was not afforded. Furthermore, a critical ethnography would oblige the principal investigator to speak and communicate in the Filipino language(s). My inability to speak Filipino more fluently narrowed the parameters of my research and was certainly a constraint in conducting interviews with first generation and recent immigrants from the Philippines. Language with its vocabulary and human expressions is an important reflection of a society and its culture. Furthermore, language provides an important window into the social practices that can bind as well as divide a national polity – a cultural tool I was not completely able to access.

The issue of language reveals much about the historical relationship between the United States and the Philippines. In particular, during my time in the Philippines I witnessed how people would (and did) adjust to the English language in order to more effectively share their thoughts with me. Filipino/a American researchers will face a great challenge to effectively contest their community's social position as silent subalterns so long as there continues to be a deficiency of Filipino language courses offered in North American high schools and universities. I agree with E. San Juan that the struggle for Filipino languages in our schools is a battle for Filipino identity - an identity that can be rooted in the ideas of liberation, democracy, and justice for Filipinos throughout the world (E. San Juan, 2009; pg 50). I believe social research in the future must tackle the issue of Filipino languages for the possibility of such an identity to take shape and transcend the corporatized manifestations of "identity" currently fashioned in schools and throughout civil society.

Research Positionality and Assumptions

It is necessary to briefly address both my own positionality and assumptions as the principle researcher and author of the study. Analogous with the goals of both critical pedagogy and participatory action research that places primary value in the shared knowledge of research projects, community-based analysis of social problems, and an orientation toward community involvement in confronting the root causes of societal and communal ills I make no claims to research neutrality. Sandra Harding argues that research projects that advocate do not necessarily compromise reliability or objectivity (Harding, 2011). Pointing to well funded arenas of medical, health, and military research, Harding maintains that there are a plethora of examples where research not only advances particular social and human interests (usually from the standpoint of the ruling elite) but also produce reliable results. Informed by the contributions of indigenous, feminist, Third World, and “other” subaltern groups who have utilized engaged research to the social, economic, cultural, and political benefit of their community, I agree with the position that orthodox social science that declare unbiased positions knowingly or unknowingly serve the interests and ideologies of those currently in power (Freire, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Harding, 2004; Grande, 2004; Collins, 2000). In the words of Filipino historian, Renato Constantino:

The desire for non-involvement is nowhere more clearly seen than in the worship of ‘objectivity.’ Many of our social scientists claim that their task is to search for and to present data irrespective of political goals. But social science cannot be separated from criticism since to write even dispassionately about social conditions is already criticism (Constantino, 1978: pg. 283).

The study of society involves judgment predicated upon the researcher's own relation to the social categories of gender, sexuality, race, religion, ethnicity, age, politics, professional status, and class among so many others. All of these social categories were present – some more strongly than others – throughout the course of this study. Issues of my gender (male), ethnicity (first generation Filipino American), professional status (graduate student) as well as the language I predominately speak (English with some Tagalog) were variably significant especially dependent upon the community and activist groups I worked with and the topics we broached.

I do not have the space to ponder and describe how research participants viewed me. I find that an endless task as my relationship with research participants certainly evolved and changed over time and social context. Nevertheless, I will speak to two assumptions that were present in the research process related to the traditional roles of intellectuals and activists. With the very real attacks upon ethnic studies and the privatization of higher education, those who are able to undergo the process of attaining a graduate degree predominately come from privilege. This is true in my particular circumstance, as my parents were immigrants from the Philippines who were trained in the medical fields and were located in the middle to upper income groups. Community activists and cultural workers with a firm grasp of history can not be faulted for assuming that privileged graduate students are predisposed to favor the present system and often times utilize their research as mechanisms for career advancement and professional ambition. Furthermore, throughout the entire research process, community activists expressed their frustrations of intellectuals who too often retreat to abstract isolation with research projects that have no relevancy to concrete concerns or material conditions. Worshipping nuance and complexity as indicators of social significance, the intellectual worker is often deemed as cut off

from the everyday problems that challenge local communities and their work irrelevant to the forces of social change. I have done my best to work through these valid and troubling trends.

Conversely, intellectual workers hold their own assumptions of community activists especially those rooted in struggles pertaining to Filipino/as in a global diaspora. Committed in combating the barbaric conditions inflicting the people of the Philippines, activists grounded in the events taking place abroad are often deemed mechanical in the adoption of techniques and strategies applicable for their own local contexts. Furthermore, scholars often assume anti-theorization within activist communities. The assumption that activists are uniformed and otherwise uninterested in theorization leads many scholars to believe that community groups hold inaccurate perceptions of the protracted timeline necessary for instituting sustainable change. Furthermore, it is rightly assumed that anti-theoretical positions have led to stale and uncreative forms of public pedagogy and social protest that too often speak to the same insulated audience of activists while not taking into account the possibilities of new forms of social activity that have manifest over the past three decades.

As engaged public intellectuals such as Constantino, Du Bois, Freire and countless others have sharply observed, activism without a political program or a corresponding theoretical vision for society is inutile. Furthermore, critical theory without collective human embodiment is an academic exercise with questionable social value. In the study of U.S. educational exposure programs to the Philippines, these tensions were undeniably present. By confronting these historically grounded postulations, a dialectical relationship took shape where I was able to witness activists becoming scholars and a scholar becoming an activist. In assimilating the virtues of the other, the possibilities for a humanizing research process took form that mirrored the type of society we mutually envision and aspire to create. In the next chapter, I outline the

theoretical frameworks I utilize in my examination of educational exposures and a corresponding Filipino/a American praxis.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

“Plans for the future of our group must be built on a basis of our problems, our dreams, and frustrations; they cannot stem from empty air or successfully be based on the experiences of others alone” (qtd in Rabaka, 2008, pg. 58).

W.E.B. Du Bois

“The most accurate and developed theory...comes from practice, from the experience of activism” (Smith, 2000: pg. 49).

Barbara Smith

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is foundational for my research of educational exposure programs to the Philippines. Developed from a Third World context, scholars of critical pedagogy build upon the famous maxim, “the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various way; the point, however, is to change it” (Selsam & Martel, 1971, pg. 318). Widely recognized as the architect of this powerful educational framework is Latin American scholar and educator, Paulo Freire (Freire, 1989; Freire, P., Freire, A., 2004). In his famous book, The Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire maintained that education is the central avenue where oppressed groups learn to internalize the oppressor’s ideology, via “banking education.” For Freire, “banking education” is an educative process of domination where students are imposed knowledge about their world that they memorize, store, and accept. This world is taught as fixed and unchangeable. Freire explains:

The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them (Freire, 1989, pg. 73).

To assist in a project of humanization where people can develop their human social potentials, Freire formulated a transformative pedagogical approach.

Freire's Methodology

Freire maintains that it is in praxis (unity of reflection and action) that people will not only better learn about their world but more importantly work towards its humanization. In accord with his educational philosophy of dialogue, humility, hope, and praxis, Freire facilitated educational immersions with landless peasants in Angicos, Brazil and taught them to read and write in 45 days (Mies, 1973). Such trips were not only programs of critical literacy but important avenues where Freire learned of worker struggles and peasant experiences. Through informal talks and discussions, Freire was able to gather an inventory of the basic vocabulary of the community that could be referenced to understand the most evident economic, social, educational, cultural, and political problems of the area (such words include, slum, land, food, work, poor, and hunger). "Cultural circles" were then formed where community members shared their ideas, experiences, and views pertaining to these concepts presented as images. Through collective discussion participants coded and de-coded their experiences to assist in the development of "a critical form of thinking about their world" (Freire, 1989: pg. 95). For Freire the development of a critical consciousness was only an initial step for those struggling against everyday situations of exploitation and oppression. He states,

If it was possible to change reality simply by our witness...we would have to think that reality is changed inside of our consciousness. Then it would be very easy to be a liberatory educator! All we would have to do is an intellectual exercise and society would change! No, this is not the question. To change the concrete conditions of reality mean a tremendous political practice, which demands mobilization, organization of the people (Freire and Shor, 1987: pg. 134).

The educational exposure programs that I explore are 21st century examples of a Freirean critical pedagogy implemented Filipino/a style. These exposure programs to the Philippines enable participants to examine their experiences, reflect upon the causes of their diasporic conditions, and collectively act to reshape their world. It is a method of praxis applicable in the classroom and beyond.

Since its introduction in the 1970s, critical pedagogy has cross-fertilized with a multitude of critical traditions that include postmodernism, postcolonialism, and historical materialism. There exist various irreconcilable differences between and even within the various theoretical frameworks however, what loosely links critical pedagogy across all disciplines and theoretical frameworks is the desire to foster a deeper consciousness of asymmetrical relations of power and privilege. This is true for a critical pedagogy grounded in historical materialist thought.

Critical Revolutionary Pedagogy

Classical Marxist approaches to critical pedagogy that refuses to ignore social class as a historical reality and an antagonistic relationship of exploitation that impacts matters of consciousness, knowledge production, and schooling has gained new relevancy in North and South America. Of particular interest are the writings of Peter McLaren and his development of

a Critical Revolutionary Pedagogy” (CRP) coined from the work of scholar Paula Allman (Allman, 2001). While one of the leading contemporary scholars of critical pedagogy, McLaren has in some ways distanced his work from the field. He argues that critical pedagogy has been translated in many educational programs as synonymous with “social justice” that uncritically legitimizes capitalism and sidesteps the nature of capitalist production (McLaren, 2006). McLaren positions CRP as a transformative educational approach that confronts the systematic exploitation of workers and students of every color and gender by a ruling capitalist class. McLaren is at the forefront in U.S. education developing a CRP that dialectically links the sexism, racism, and heteronormativity embedded in various modes of learning with the exploitation inherent within a global capitalist society (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2005). At present, CRP can be faulted for the lack of examples that point to its concrete practice especially outside the context of Latin American. A study of Philippine educational exposure trips addresses this deficiency within the subfield of CRP as well as speaks to fundamental criticisms made against the larger project of critical pedagogy.

Criticisms as Space for Contributions

Scholars have criticized Freire and contemporary scholars of CRP for foregrounding social class as well as for not emphasizing difference, identity, and the politics of the body ensnared by racist and patriarchal representations (hooks, 1994; Lather, 1991). Freire was receptive to these critiques, as he would begin to foreground the myriad of differences that cut across the experiences of culture, identity, race, and gender in his later works. Nevertheless, Freire was adamant in his belief that social class was an important site of education and solidarity for global social justice movements. He illustrated this point as he began to connect the ideologies of racism with the structures of class. Freire is clear, “one cannot reduce the analysis of racism to

social class, one cannot understand racism fully without a class analysis, for to do one at the expense of the other is to fall prey into a sectarianist position, which is as despicable as the racism that we need to reject.” Freire, 1989: pg. 15).

Certainly, scholars of critical pedagogy have a rich tradition of articulating the importance of cultural production as a valuable tool in the development of a transformative class-consciousness (Duncan-Andrade & Morell, 2008; McLaren, 1997; Giroux, 2005; and Grande, 2005). However, it is quite clear that within CRP, generatively traversing the domains of culture and identity is a contentious scholarly pursuit. In her incisive book, *The Task of Cultural Critique*, Teresa Ebert declares:

The task of a transformative cultural critique ineluctably involves class analysis. This is another way of saying it cannot remain an immanent critique. A critique that limits itself to an immanent analysis of culture in its own terms ends up interpreting its limits or blind spots, its aporiae, as the result of self-division within culture, as if culture is autonomous and not an effect of a larger social and historical force. I argue that the fissures that canonic critiques finds in culture are effects of social contradictions that cannot be resolved within the existing material practices (Ebert, 2009: pg. xiv).

The observations of Ebert are important especially during a time when progressive educators and scholars have distanced themselves from the labor / capital problematic (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale and McLaren, 2003). However, CRP has much to gain in exploring how a transformative consciousness is crafted and rooted in particular experiences of differentiated identities. Furthermore, CRP would bode well to recognize how diverse identities, in particular Filipino/a diasporic identities, are utilizing cultural production as an educative tool to confront both the logic as well as the structures of capitalism, whose totalizing effects reach every corner

of the globe.

Another critique wielded against CRP builds upon the issues of identity and research standpoint. With few exceptions the most recognized scholars extending historical materialist thought in the subfield of critical pedagogy have predominately been white male scholars (McLaren, 2006; Hill, 2002; Cole, 2008; and Rikowski, 1997). Accordingly, there has been suspicion about the standpoint of such scholars and in particular their ability to speak from the everyday lived experiences of racialized and gendered communities as well as other historically marginalized perspectives especially as it pertains to matters of subjugated cultures and exploited identities. In my dissertation, drawing from a variety of spheres (such as hip-hop, community-based organizing, radical feminism, and cultural production), I explore how Philippine exposure trips are important spaces of critical pedagogy enacted by a historically subjugated ethnic group (Filipino/a Americans) whose praxis extends the parameters of knowledge production.

While Freire's work certainly does not speak outright to the issues of race and gender that does not mean his work is not generative to critique such violent ideologies (hooks, 2003). Freire's research is not a finished project but rather a continuous undertaking that critical educators and researchers must augment to effectively challenge the myriad injustices tormenting people of color throughout the world. Freire states, "the progressive educator must always be moving out on his or her own, continually reinventing me and reinventing what it means to be democratic in his or her own specific cultural and historical contexts" (qtd in Rabaka, 2010, pg. 287). I now turn my attention to the materialist strands of Feminist Standpoint Theory. It is my belief that in the current epoch of globalized capital, an educational theory and method that does not bring awareness to the conditions and experiences of women would be a distortion at best a half-truth.

Feminist Standpoint Theory

Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) provides an important lens in my study of educational exposure trips. In particular, FST maintains that - as scholars, researchers, and activists - women are implicated in the struggles for human social relations as such FST scholars have made important calls for research to be linked with wider political struggles. FST's delineation between an interested subjective position and a committed standpoint is of particular importance to my own project. Kathi Weeks states:

This project of transforming subject positions into standpoints involves an active intervention, a conscious and concerted effort to reinterpret and restructure our lives. A standpoint is a project, not an inheritance; it is achieved not given (qtd. in Harding, 2004; pg. 245).

Educational exposures to the Philippines are important sites that can show how feminist standpoints are not simply bestowed on the merits of identity (whether a woman or a Filipina) but attained through the praxis of political struggle.

During the 1980s and 1990s, feminists such as Martha Gimenez, Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Rosemary Hennessy, and Dorothy Smith among many others identified the gaps between rhetoric and reality, as public policy as well as academic research were not producing the "neutrality" that their scientific methodologies had espoused. Feminist theorists argued that the conceptual frameworks of various disciplines (and of particular interest in my own work the field of education) are socially situated and thus cannot be divorced from the interests of those who wield power. FST maintains that within systems of domination the perspectives of existing social relations are easily available from the viewpoint of dominant groups to preserve their material interest. Sandra Harding explains:

Men in the ruling classes and races reserve for themselves the right to perform only certain kinds of human activity, assigning the balance to women and men in other subjugated groups. What they assign to others they rationalize as merely natural activity...their 'ruling' activities (in our society, management, and administration) could not occur unless others were assigned to perform the social labors they disdain (qtd in Kemp and Squires, 1997: pg. 169).

Thus, FST is not preoccupied with the attainment of "truth" as a discoverable thing outside of human activity but instead motivated by unveiling the conditions of domination that have rendered women and other oppressed groups as objects rather than the subjects of knowledge.

Building upon Marxian thought most notably the work of Georg Lukacs, FST highlights the role of gender not as a peripheral footnote to the Marxist category of social class but as fundamental relation in research projects serious in an attempt to influence the dialectics of social change. Speaking to the debates and fractures within FST due to its generative dialogue with Marxist theory, Sandra Harding comments:

[S]ome criticize standpoint theory for this legacy and even try to sanitize it by reframing it in empiricist or radical poststructuralist terms. Others, whether from ignorance of or hostility to Marxian insights, ignore this framework, often thereby attributing features to standpoint theory that its framers neither intended nor desired (Harding, 2004: pg. 3).

Of particular interest to my examination of educational exposure trips are the contributions of Marxist feminist, Nancy Hartsock as well as the black feminist standpoint offered by Patricia Hill Collins.

Marxist Feminist Standpoint

Nancy Hartsock argues that feminist and Marxist goals and methods are not antithetical but can complement one another because:

[A]spects of the Marxist tradition represent important resources for insisting on the impossibility of neutrality and necessity of engagement, for recognizing that social relations structure (though do not determine) the ways we understand the world; and providing tools that can allow us to trace the ways our concepts and categories structure and express the ways we interact with the world (Hartsock, 1998: pg.75).

Hartsock maintains that feminist research must not be preoccupied with the attainment of “truth” as a discoverable thing outside of human activity but instead motivated by unveiling conditions and causes of domination. Such a method departs from an analysis of reality that tries to understand human activity as the sum aggregation of autonomous individuals but instead deliberately engages history and matters of production. As such, Hartsock is reluctant to divorce the myriad experiences of gendered oppression with a critique of capitalist totality. She states, "macroprocesses of power, which can be played out in individual lives, can and must be understood at the level of society as a whole. To claim that we can understand the totality of social relations from a single perspective is as futile an effort as the claim that we can see everything from nowhere” (Hartsock 1998, pg. 78). Hartsock argues that rejecting all notions of totality prevents feminist scholars from critiquing the social relations that organize and influence the concrete experiences of gendered oppression. Hartsock would agree with the observations made by Terry Eagleton that “not looking for totality is just a code for not looking at capitalism” (Eagleton, 1996, pg. 11). In my own dissertation, I build upon Hartsock’s historical materialist feminism to examine how educational exposure trips to the Philippines enable a research project

to confront the totality of global capitalism that frame the experiences of gendered oppression (though does not determine them) for Filipinas within a global diaspora.

Extending Black Feminist Standpoint

The scholarship of Patricia Hill Collins is important to my research as an example of how FST must be stretched. For Collins she adapts FST to address the everyday struggles, experiences, and aspirations of black women. In her powerful book, Black Feminist Thought, Collins argues that black feminist thought is important in a rearticulating and restructuring of unjust social relations of domination (Collins, 2000). While her work is unapologetically centered upon African-American women, their consciousness as well as their empowerment, Collins is clear that U.S. black feminism must participate in a larger context of struggle that transcends the borders of the United States. She states, “U.S. Black feminism should see commonalities that join women of African descent as well as differences that emerge from our diverse national histories” (Collins, 2000, pg. xi). I take a similar position in my research of educational exposures, specifically that the experiences and praxis of Filipina women can augment feminist thought by broadening the valuable yet parochial binary of White/Black feminism. For instance, the events of Melissa Roxas’s exposure trip to the Philippines and her experiences of violence and repression I analyze in Chapter 5 provides an example to the broader injustices feminist theory must challenge such as state terror, forced migration, and human rights violations. Furthermore, Roxas’ position as a Filipina American locates linkages of diasporic experiences not only by their common injustices but also by their valiant strategies of international solidarity in teaching against the imperial structures that undergird the Philippine diaspora. For the vibrant women’s movement of the Philippines, the roots of what Collins has coined “global gendered apartheid” are the edifices of (neo)colonial domination that has been

imposed upon the Philippines since the United States set foot on its shores in 1898. I take the position that educational exposures trips to the Philippines are an important convergence of FST and critical pedagogy that fosters an “oppositional consciousness” as well as nurtures a diasporic politics of radical empowerment (Sandoval, 2000).

While my dissertation builds from Collins’ groundbreaking work it also sets its own course. Collins’ has applied an intersectional lens to examine the various oppressions of race, class, and gender or what she has more succinctly called a “matrix of domination.” She states, “the matrix of domination refers to how these intersecting oppressions are actually organized. Regardless of the particular intersections involved, structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal domains of power reappear across quite different forms of oppression” (Collins, 2000; pg. 18). Collins makes the important observation that gender and racial oppression have their own tempo of development that are not reducible to class struggle. Nevertheless, I take a position in Chapter Seven that her “matrix of domination” is not operational in providing a transformative understanding of how these intersecting oppressions are organized within and shaped by the very structures of global capitalism.

Specific engagement with educational exposure experiences to the Philippines enable me to map how gendered experiences of Filipina Americans and diasporic Filipinas are dialectically linked with the sharpening division of social class where surplus value is extracted from human labor-power. In contrast to the intersectional frameworks forwarded by Collins, I do not view the social relation of class through a stratification perspective or as a form of subjective identity where individuals are differentiated on the socioeconomic status indicators of income, occupation, and educational attainment. The social relation of class has an unquestionably negative role for a Filipino/a polity rooted in the historical reality of colonization, dispossession,

and exploitation. Such factors have resulted in the reproduction of poverty for many Filipino/as in the United States and the constrained development in the Philippines. It is important to stress that within my dissertation, social class is a powerful reminder of the unequal international division of labor imposed by United States imperialism with the bodies and labor of Filipina women now serving as the bedrock of this extractive global system.

Critical Theories of Race

Critical Race Theory (CRT) developed in the 1970s as a response to the shortcomings of critical legal studies in addressing the social construction of race and the widespread institutionalization of white supremacy (Taylor, Gillborn, Ladson-Billings, 2009; Crenshaw, 1995). CRT scholars view the experiences of minority groups as important sites of knowledge to challenge the racist ideologies and dominant viewpoints upheld in legal, educational, political, and various other institutions of social life. Although CRT has been largely used in the area of legal research it has been taken up in other disciplines including the field of education (Tate, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Leonardo, 2005; Solorzano, 1997). Speaking to its extension in the field of education, Daniel Solorzano states CRT is a theoretically grounded approach that “seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom” (qtd. in Leonardo, 2005; pg. 69). Over the past three decades, CRT scholarship has prospered introducing creative new methods for interdisciplinary research in such fields as education, cultural studies, and the social sciences.

CRT methodology is anchored in situating race within the context of diverse peoples’ everyday experiences. Through the presentation of metaphorical tales, critical reflections, and personal vignettes or what CRT scholars term “counter-stories” or “counter-narratives,” CRT has

presented a promising challenge to traditional methodological frameworks that have ignored the very real experiences of racial oppression suffered by people of color (Solorzano and Yoss, 2005). The use of counter-storytelling is a powerful methodological tool forwarded by CRT that can provide important insights and descriptions of racism in capitalist society. While often recognized as a methodological tool introduced by CRT, many scholars within the tradition are clear that CRT's intellectual origins and methods go back much further deriving inspiration from the activism of such figures as Martin Luther King, members of the Black Panther Party, and W.E.B. Du Bois (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The scholarship of Du Bois is of particular interest in my own research and of particular focus in Chapter Six due to his critical analysis of the links between racial oppression and capitalist exploitation in the global historical context of the African diaspora.

Ethnic studies scholar, Reiland Rabaka maintains, "many, if not all, of the key concerns of critical race theory are prefigured in Du Bois's discourse on race and racism in ways that makes one wonder whether critical race theory is simply a continuation, or a contemporary version of Du Boisian race theory by another name" (Rabaka, 2006). While I cannot go so far as to agree tout court with Rabaka's shrewd observations, I do believe that at the very least Du Bois's important scholarship foreshadows contemporary critical race theory and its framework of including racialized experiences as valuable sources of knowledge production. I believe a resuscitation of a Du Boisian analysis - especially his understanding that racialization as an international process linked to global structures of production - enables contemporary scholarship to advance a transformative critique of the racism that seethes 21st century global political economy.

W.E.B. Du Bois

Throughout his life's writing compiled in such books as The Souls of Black Folk (1989) and Darkwater (2007), W.E.B. Du Bois makes use of his personal experiences to draw critical attention to systems of oppression as well as historical events (i.e. World Wars, Imperialism, black lynching, etc). His autobiography, The Dusk of Dawn while not as often cited as his earlier works, is no exception as Du Bois states the book was written, "not so much [as] my autobiography as the autobiography of a concept of race, elucidated, magnified and doubtless distorted in the thoughts and deeds which were mine" (Du Bois, 1984, pg. viii). In his writings, Du Bois demonstrates that everyday lived experience can serve as critical points of analysis especially when such experiences are widened beyond the personal to examine and problematize conditions that he and entire groups of people (black folk) are situated. In The Dusk of Dawn, Du Bois makes use of his life experience to scrutinize the social contradictions of racism and its connection with underlying social forces of class struggle that impacted an entire African diaspora. Du Bois's approach not only imparts a better understanding of his life but also sharpens the readers' lens for historical and social critique.

For much of Du Bois's later works, he is clear that it is not possible to suture the deep wounds of a global color line without also challenging the division between those who produce wealth (racialized workers) and those who direct its production (white capitalist class). For Du Bois it is this material antagonism that sets in motion various forms of oppression with their own unique intensities. While Du Bois understood that the racial oppression he experienced was a modality of the political economic order into which he was born, he never discredited the importance of race as an unjust social relation. Du Bois states, "had it not been for the race problem early thrust upon me and enveloping me, I should have probably been an unquestioning

worshiper at the shrine of the social order and economic development into which I was born” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 27). As a result of his very painful experiences with white supremacy and his involvement in wider African diasporic social movements, Du Bois’s research dialectically interrogated the ideology of racism to its linkages with a global mode of production. Furthermore, as an internationalist, Du Bois’s work did not entirely ignore the struggles of other global communities. However, his primary concern was clearly the African American experience. In my dissertation, I extend Du Bois’ historic analysis to examine how exposure trips elucidate the social process of racism within the Philippine diaspora in this particular epoch of “globalization.” Du Bois provides important historical ballast to the global processes of racialization experienced throughout the African diaspora in the 20th century. Furthermore, through his theoretical upgrade to the “talented tenth” thesis which Du Bois aptly called the “guiding hundredth” I explore Du Bois’s rich theoretical contributions in dialogue with contemporary experiences of Filipino/a Americans in their educational exposure programs.

In the 21st century, race scholars of various disciplines have referenced the work of Du Bois and many have aligned under the larger umbrella of CRT. In the United States, various subfields have developed from the CRT framework to incorporate other racial identities including Latinos (LatCrit) and to a lesser extent Asian American experiences (AsianCrit). However, according to educational scholar Mike Cole, outside of the United States and Great Britain the CRT framework is still relatively unknown (Cole, 2007). Recognizing the vast potential for CRT in the international terrain, legal scholar Gil Gott proposes a Critical Race Globalism.

Critical Race Globalism and Global Apartheid

Drawing greatly from the work of Du Bois, Gil Gott forwards a critical race globalism as a

synthesis of critical race and international justice perspectives. Gott maintains that it must not be overlooked how “Du Bois tenaciously linked the struggle for racial justice in the United States, both analytically and politically, to anticolonial national liberation struggles in Africa and throughout the Third World (Gott, 2000; pg. 1512). The critical race globalism that Gott proposes is both internationalist and materialist in scope in order to effectively challenge the contemporary problems of “democratic free market neoliberalism” and what he describes as “the stops-at-the-water’s edge approach to racial critique” (Gott, 2000; pg.1518). Manning Marable makes a similar call to confront the racialized division of labor that stratifies the resources, wealth, and power between the people of the First and Third Worlds. Building from Du Bois’s famous maxim, Marable describes the great problem of the twenty-first century as global apartheid where:

[T]he racist logic of herrenvolk, the master race, still exists, embedded in the patterns of unequal economic exchange that penalizes African, south Asian, Caribbean, and poor nations by predatory policies of structural adjustment and loan payments to national banks (Marable, 2004).

Critical race globalism recognizes that racial oppression and the logic of white supremacy are not experiences neither limited to United States nation-state boundaries nor divorced from the policies of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other global economic institutions. Surely, ‘race’ relations in the history of the United States carry a unique position and deserve special emphasis. However, Gott makes the prudent observation that in an era of neoliberal globalization a wider CRT scope beyond the North American context must be made so that “links are made between the struggles for racial and economic justice, not just within one country but within and among many at once” (Gott, 2000; pg.1518). Critical race globalism is

an important embarkation as CRT has been quiet on the issues of United States empire and more specifically the violent racism inherent in the United States (neo)colonial project in the Philippines. Critical race globalism has not yet been able to locate case studies of such a rich and important project. I believe my research of educational exposure trips to the Philippines offers a tangible site where resistance is waged against the racist relationship of subordination between the Philippines and the United States as well as the continuing domination of a Filipino/a polity through the edifices of a neoliberal global market.

LatCrit and Filipino American Experiences

Similar to how CRT has generatively appropriated critical viewpoints from critical globalization studies and world systems theory, CRT has incorporated work from ethnic studies as well as Chicano and Latin American studies to give birth to a Latino/a Critical Theory (LatCrit). Under the umbrella of LatCrit, scholars have made important connections between Latinas/os with the experiences of racialized Filipino Americans. For example, in the Summer of 2000, the U.C. Davis Law Review hosted the fourth annual convening of LatCrit scholars and from that conference two papers were published that focused on Filipino experiences in the United States. Drawing on legal records and their own counterstories, legal scholars Victor Romero and Leti Volpp explore the messiness of constructed meanings and complicate the terrains of racial identification and identity. Furthermore, both scholars locate historical divergences between the two groups but more importantly highlight points of commonality between Latino and Filipino communities that permit the formation of alliances. From these articles an important question was raised as to whether LatCrit scholars “should place Filipinos/as within the rubric of Latina/o, primarily because of a shared legacy of Spanish colonization” (Volpp, 2000, pg. 833). Undoubtedly, there are shared experiences of oppression

that link the historical and present day realities of oppression and exploitation for Filipina/os, Latina/os, and other racialized communities throughout the globe. I believe the historical methods and theoretical analysis developed by one group can never be mechanically appropriated and transplanted as the solution for all others seeking similar goals of democracy, equality, and justice. Circumstances and historical conditions are always changing. The methods and analytical tools utilized by Latina/os while undoubtedly important sites for learning are not adequate in its own to effectively challenge the distinct and unique social problems that plague Filipinos in a global diaspora. The tangible sites of Philippine educational exposure trips are a special contribution to both educational practice and critical theory that other dominated groups can test, enrich, and utilize for a better future struggling to be born. In the next section, I outline the interdisciplinary scholarship of Filipina Critical (FilCrit) Theory I draw from and build upon in my respective analysis of educational exposure programs to the Philippines.

Filipina Critical Theory

At present, critical educational theory's engagement with the Philippine diaspora is a sparse endeavor. This is not anomalous to the field of education but rather symptomatic of academic and cultural institutions and their coverage of matters pertaining to Filipinos. In surveying the field, one scholar describes Filipinos as a group with "no history. No published literature. No nothing" (Espiritu, 1995: pg. 1). Espiritu's observations have certainly been addressed by valuable scholars from outside of the field of education whose critical scholarship of Filipino/as not only in the United States but throughout the diaspora provide valuable insights to issues of learning, consciousness, language, and popular culture (San Juan, 2009; Aguilar & Lacsamana, 2004; Tadiar, 2009; Rodriguez, 2010; Chua, 2009). However, within the field of education, critical scholarship with and about Filipino/as in United States and across a global

diaspora remains scant. In regards to my research of educational exposure programs, I believe linking such valuable interdisciplinary scholarship of the Philippine diaspora to the burgeoning educational fields I have outlined provides alternative visions of how education can be reframed, democratized, and transformed in the present epoch of globalization. The writings of Filipino/a scholars Renato Constantino, Epifanio San Juan, Jr., and Delia Aguilar are of particular importance as I generate greatly from their work in critically analyzing exposure programs to the Philippines.

Renato Constantino

Concerned with the development of a counter-consciousness and militant Filipino identity rooted in a liberated Philippine homeland is nationalist historian Renato Constantino. Throughout his important works such as his essay, “The Mis-education of the Filipino” and his book Neocolonial Identity and Counter-Consciousness, Constantino integrates politics and history in his analysis of systems of consciousness production (Constantino, 1978). Of interest to my own work is his dialectical understanding of the unity between intellectual and activist work in the formation of a counter-consciousness needed in the restructuring of Philippine society. Constantino observes that the two groups have a tenuous relationship. He maintains that establishment intellectuals repel activists, as they are too reliant on established institutions for their analysis to be trusted or consulted to support a democratic people’s movement. On the other hand, progressive intellectuals often view activists too entrenched in their organizing activities that such protest actions have become routine, devoid of critical reflection, ingenuity, and creativity. Constantino states:

Activists have to be scholars and scholars have to be activists. Scholars can no longer be isolated and activists can no longer be untheoretical. Each must assimilate the virtue of

the other in order to become more fruitful, more creative. Only thus can they evolve a theory appropriate to our reality, and action appropriate to theory (Constantino, 1978: pg. 290).

Constantino is clear that social transformation is contingent upon the collective democratic struggles of a larger majority of historically marginalized people beyond classroom walls who understand that the sharpening contradictions of their times can only be resolved with the advances of a social movement united in its (re)imagination and struggle for more human ways to learn, labor, live, and love. In his writings of the Philippines, Constantino argues that intellectuals and cultural workers who find the courage to immerse themselves in the process of decolonization and offer their work not only to their academic institution but to their respective communities will find in their lives vitality and meaning. However, Constantino does not demonstrate how such courage is developed and channeled. In exploring participant experiences in their educational exposure trip to the Philippines, I critically explore how commitment to historically marginalized communities is cultivated through educational exposure trips and how cultural workers, students, and intellectuals take part in various forms of activism to improve the social realities of a Philippine diaspora.

Epifanio San Juan, Jr.

The scholar who has contributed the most in advancing a Filipino critical theory for a 21st century is Epifanio San Juan Jr. His critical and prolific scholarship traverses the disciplines of cultural, ethnic, and women studies, as well as the fields of history and comparative literature. In his various books such as On the Presence of Filipinos in the United States (2007), Balikbayang Sinta (2008), and Towards Filipino Self-Determination (2009), San Juan chronicles the asymmetrical relationship between the United States and the Philippines with an unapologetic

critique of capitalism as a global reality that permeates and exploits human social relations. My examination of educational exposure programs gleans much from the scholarship of E. San Juan as his writings provide an important optic for education and the politics of learning, language, and labor for Filipino/as dispersed throughout the world. For example, in his book, Balibayang Sinta, he maintains:

What is needed in any society...that is seeking to transform itself are intellectuals or cultural workers, who would commit themselves to a labor of critique and pedagogical service to the masses, who would stake out partisan goals rooted in the solidarity of all the working people, the united front of all sectors, who seek common goals (San Juan, 2008; pg. 24).

My research of exposure programs is in direct engagement with San Juan's observation as I locate educators, cultural workers, and organic intellectuals who are active in creating and implementing new ways to nurture what I introduce in Chapter Five as a "diasporic counter-consciousness."

In his book, On the Presence of Filipinos in the United States, San Juan confirms, "ultimately Filipino agency in the era of global capitalism depends not only on the vicissitudes of social transformation in the U.S. but more crucially, on the fate of the struggle for autonomy and popular-democratic sovereignty in the homeland" (E. San Juan, 2007; pg. 24). However, E. San Juan does not locate the processes that can contribute to such a Filipino/a agency. What are the sites where Filipinos are teaching against the root causes of a forced dispersal of Filipinos throughout every part of the globe and the historical mechanisms that have imposed poverty in their homeland? Is there an alternative or emergent consciousness that is incubated and nurtured in exposures to the Philippines? If so, how are human agents, cultural workers, and youth

making important links between their local constraints in the United States and the historic struggles for genuine democracy and self-determination in the Philippines? My qualitative research of educational exposures to the Philippines is positioned to explore such questions.

Throughout the dissertation, I argue that the forms of critical pedagogy embedded within these exposures addresses central concerns in E. San Juan's writing as he observes that there is a current impasse in recent trends of critical theory where scholars are unable to locate sites where capital both theoretically and practically are confronted and challenged (San Juan, 2009). I believe there are various examples in exposure programs where participants creatively learn and teach against the structures of class domination from the particular standpoint of the Filipino/a American experience. Furthermore, I demonstrate how exposure programs are sites where issues of race, gender, culture and difference are not rendered as mere epiphenomenon to the Marxist analysis of class, but as key social relations that are essential for Filipinos struggling to understand the dialectics of social change.

Delia Aguilar

Utilizing a similar framework employed by E. San Juan to examine the forces of flux, flow, and process as comes into contact against the various structures of the Philippine diaspora, Delia Aguilar focuses her research upon the question of gender. Aguilar maintains that contemporary Feminist theory has "devolved into a cultural current and is no longer the movement for social transformation it once was" because trendy research projects are content in "cultural and discursive tinkering" (Aguilar 2006). Aguilar continues:

Relations of production are left untouched – why deal with this realm at all when the existing system is to be merely reformed, not overthrown? I believe that the domestication or taming of feminism has rendered it unable to adequately come to grips

with pressing issues brought on by the global market, which is truly an unfortunate turn of events (Aguilar 2006).

Aguilar is not alone in her analysis as Giminez (2005), Hartsock (1998), Epstein (2001), and Ebert (2009) have all made the astute critique that the discursive turn in feminist theory has cut the circuits between theory and practice, thereby rendering social transformation a textual abstraction. However, Aguilar's commitment in her research projects to link feminist theory with the social realities of women in the Philippine diaspora is noteworthy.

In her analysis of various feminist research that examines the struggles, lives, and experiences of Filipina women she makes the incisive observation that the critique and transformation of economy and state have been largely set aside by feminists engaging the Philippines. She argues the discursive turn in feminist theory elide the issues of poverty and exploitation as unifying points for collective struggle in favor of a politics of difference, identity, and interstitiality (Aguilar, 2006). My analysis of educational exposure programs is a fruitful site where transformative feminist praxis pushes against Aguilar's astute critiques. Are educational exposures just another example where the circuits between feminist theory and practice are unattached? Or, are new experiences being created from a "Filipina diaspora standpoint" that demonstrate liberation as opposed to interruption are central tenants for feminist theories and women movements in the 21st century? Once again, through qualitative research of educational exposure experiences to the Philippines, my research explores such questions.

The Unity of Theory and Method

I have located useful theoretical frames and sub-disciplines that document lived experiences and provide a powerful means for marginalized groups to describe as well as analyze

how they understand their lives. Such theories are especially important as they situate historically marginalized groups as the creators of knowledge production. My dissertation builds upon these frameworks to provide voice to excluded and silenced Filipino/a Americans. However, a methodology that documents experiences and gives voice to subaltern communities does have limitations that can be addressed with the unity of methods and theory.

At the present moment, much of the underlying structures of oppression have become naturalized through ideologies and the contradictions of everyday life. Examples abound with women who are supposedly reliant on men, racialized workers who are dependent upon the supposed employment created by white capital; Third World nations needy to the technology and industries of the Global North. Yet, in reality all these so-called dependencies are considerable inversions. Nancy Hartsock says it best:

[I]f material life is structured in fundamentally opposing ways for two different groups...the vision of each will represent an inversion of the other, and in systems of domination the vision available to the rulers will be both partial and perverse” (Hartsock, 1998; pg. 232).

Therefore, our methods must not simply describe these unjust inversions but also act against these naturalized social relations so that they are challenged, reimagined, and ultimately made anew. I have outlined the frameworks that I draw upon and extend in my analysis of educational exposure trips to the Philippines. In the following chapter I outline the action-oriented methodology.

CHAPTER III: CRITICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

As outlined in Chapter Two, I have crafted an epistemological framework that recognizes the intricate relationships between class, power, and human agency in global capitalist society. In this chapter, I situate my research methodology within a paradigm that is explicit in its political and ideological struggles inherent in the production of knowledge. Furthermore, I align this research study with Filipino/a American community formations (as well as other historically marginalized communities) through guiding principles of participatory action research (PAR). I draw upon PAR as an alternative philosophy of social research that has been generated in conversation with the theoretical frameworks I mobilize and have already outlined in the previous chapter. After explaining the process I embarked upon to gain the trust of community partners, I describe how I entered into the focal site of research – a community-based organization in Seattle committed to solidarity work with like-minded formations and networks in the United States and in the Philippines. After describing the research site, I outline the diverse methods utilized for collecting data as well as the strategies of analysis. To begin, it is imperative that I speak to the guiding principles of PAR and how my own research's methodology yields greatly from this approach to produce committed and engaged research that is beneficial to the historically marginalized.

Tenants of Participatory Action Research

Research practitioners have utilized PAR in a multitude of ways, informed by diverse political ideologies, and applied in various geographical locations (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991). For instance, this approach to research has been mobilized throughout the world to address agrarian reform in Latin America, to improve educational opportunities for youth in North

American urban schools, and to address labor conditions for women in Africa.⁵ With its roots in the struggles of the Third World, in particular liberation theology and approaches to community activism, PAR has now even been appropriated and institutionalized by schools of business and management to enhance production and the efficiency of workers. The growing literature in the field demonstrates the wide-ranging goals, contexts, and regions where PAR is performed (McIntyre, 2008; McTaggart, 1997; Brydon-Miller, Maguire, & McIntyre, 2004). Such diverse applications and strategies demonstrate that there is no mechanical formula for designing, implementing, and practicing PAR within communities of learning. While PAR has been taken up by practitioners informed by a multitude of philosophies in communities throughout the world, literature in the field often locate three key aspects that distinguish PAR from mainstream research methodologies: 1) collaboration with the community throughout the research process; 2) community based analysis of social issue(s) or problem(s); and 3) the shaping of pathways toward intercession and/or community action.

The research processes of PAR have often been described as a spiral of stages that include engaged procedures of observation and action.⁶ I do not find such descriptions to be altogether deficient. However, my own process of addressing social problems with cultural workers, activists, and educators in the Filipino/a American community has afforded me a different analogy. Taken from the philosopher Bertell Ollman, I have found PAR to be more of a “dialectical dance” - where research participants and the individual researcher participate in at

⁵ I have already outlined the manner in which critical pedagogy and feminist standpoint theory influences my research. Both epistemological frames have also influenced PAR as a means to assist communities in understanding how they are embedded within historical systems of power and exploitation. For instance, the critical literacy methods of Paulo Freire and critical pedagogy in general have greatly influenced the practice of PAR with an open commitment to the unity of theory and practice in changing unjust relations for marginalized communities. Feminist standpoint theory has also been a key contributor to PAR especially in the foregrounding of women’s experiences and the encouragement of culturally specific approaches to counter-hegemonic research projects.

⁶ See Stephen Kemmis and Robim McTaggart’s “Participation Action Research: Communicative Action and the Public Sphere” (pg. 564) in The Handbook of Qualitative Research, Denzin & Lincoln (eds), 2008.

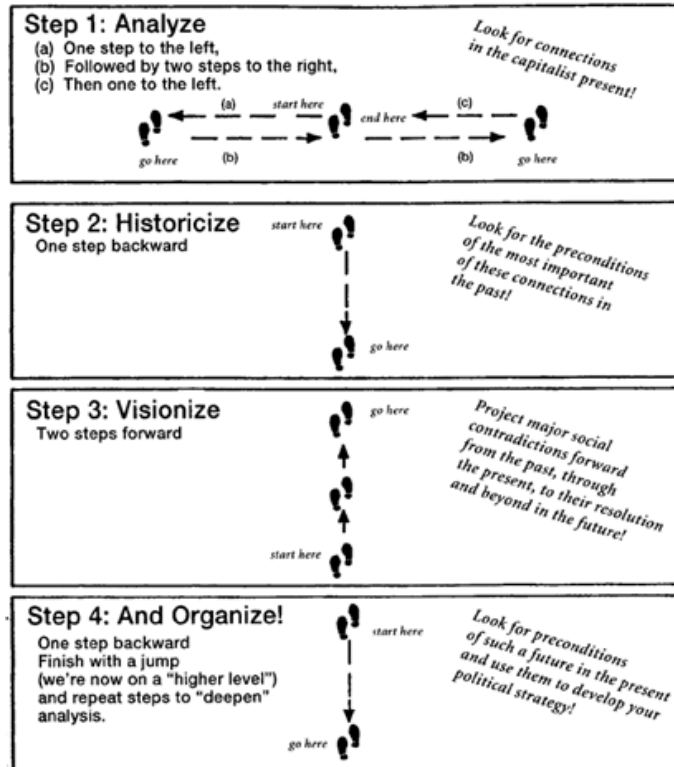
times rhythmical and in other times dissonant steps of movement to analyze, historicize, envision, and organize (Ollman, 2003). These four interacting positions of PAR are not linearly organized or easily compartmentalized, but like a dance flow and interact with one another in constant movement.

Analyzing – based on the concept of human experience as a social relation developed by the engagement of individuals with one another and the world, PAR encourages participants involved to continually analyze the unsatisfying social structures that mediate and limit their lives. Participants are encouraged to explore their human experiences and understand how they are shaped and constrained by wider social, cultural, and political structures of antagonistic class relations.

Historicizing – PAR assists in the critical understanding of a people's historical circumstances that have produced social conditions not of their own choosing. However, through the transformative processes of reflection and action participants are empowered to alter historical preconditions in through reflective social practice.

Envisioning – PAR nurtures a radical imaginary where participants are encouraged to release themselves from a consciousness that does not speak to their own wishes, dreams, and needs. In challenging the ideologies that assert the inevitability or naturalness of existing social relations, PAR encourages participants to imagine new possibilities for their communities grounded in their own cultural contexts and historical struggles.

Organizing – PAR is adamant that the acceptance of humanizing visions is an essential condition for transformation, yet it is not in theory alone that such activity will be realized. PAR supports the efforts of individuals and communities to convert their social analysis into culturally relevant action and ongoing political organization.



Dance of the Dialectic. (Text and choreography by Bertell Ollman; layout by Fran Moran.)

I find the analogy of PAR as a “dialectical dance” to be an accurate depiction of my own engaged research process as procedures were at times awkward, disorderly, and even out of step. Conversely, describing PAR as a dance also captures how research can in fact be a culturally relevant and transformative source of empowerment when conducted in sync with diverse community partners.

The Earning of Community Trust

A recurring conversation in PAR scholarship is whether the researcher needs to be requested as a resource by a community or group, or whether a researcher can approach a particular group inviting them to explore a particular issue or social problem (McIntyre, 2008: pg 8). In my case, I entered the research site with the inchoate idea of conducting research on educational exposure programs to the Philippines. Even though I had my own history of

community involvement with various Filipino/a American activist communities on the West Coast and had conducted an educational exposure trip of my own, I was nonetheless an outsider. My outsider position was primarily due to the fact that I was conducting research with community organizations and cultural workers in the city of Seattle, a vibrant region with its long history of Filipino/a American radicalism but also a locale that was altogether new to me.

Conducting academic research, even with the explicit intention to work collaboratively with a community of purpose and defy mainstream practices of academic research, was quite challenging as a new member of that respective community. In fact, negative connotations are most strongly held by historically marginalized, indigenous, and activist communities with their own experiences and relationships to detached academicians who observe social problems from the quarantined distance of the ivory towers. According to scholar Linda Smith, from the history and vantage point of colonized and indigenous peoples, academic research “is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (Smith, 2002: pg. 1). A dirty word indeed as the United States wages local as well as global wars against terror utilizing social scientists to document, contain, and provide extensive field notes of unruly subalterns.⁷

Aware of the political struggle inherent in conducting academic research, the building of trust with research participants was of the utmost importance to me. Since trust is earned and not blindly bestowed upon PAR practitioners, I dedicated more than a year in my research site (Fall 2009 to Fall 2010) working collaboratively to understand local issues and to organize various activities that did not have explicit connection to my research agenda of understanding the cultural practices of exposure trips to the Philippines. To be sure, the planning of various

⁷ See: “Army Enlists Anthropologists in War Zone” by David Rhode. New York Times, 5 October 2007. Accessed online at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/05/world/asia/05afghan.html>

community events, participating in educational workshops, and organizing national film premieres were of invaluable importance. Not only did such activity strengthen my own resolve and theoretical analysis of solidarity efforts that unite Filipino/as in a global diaspora, it would later ensure that my collaboration with research participants was rooted in already existing relationships of mutuality and trust. Consistent with the tenants of PAR, I viewed community partners as co-creators in the research process and in opposition to mainstream social scientific conceptualizations of research participants I never considered or will refer to co-producers of this research as mere “data providers” or “native informants.”

My participation in various community events and organizing activities through the Philippine United States Solidarity Organization (PUSO) enabled me to gain trust in the Filipino/a American activist community in Seattle. I found credibility to be especially important as immigrants, activists, feminists, and youth can be reluctant in providing personal information in formalized interview processes given their heightened vulnerability to the hostile inquiries of public agencies. Through time and with consistent community engagement, I found the collaborators in the research process to be rather comfortable sharing very difficult stories regarding their exposure programs to the Philippines as well as narratives of politicization and personal struggles with Filipino/a American identity. Because I took more than a year to develop a strong relationship within the community it is my belief that I was garnered more information than would typically be offered to an unknown academic researcher or interviewer. Through my participation with community members - united in a shared identity of Filipino/a resistance - my research positionality would ultimately shift from characteristics of an academic researcher toward possessing qualities of a “committed intellectual.”

According to Fischman and McLaren, committed intellectuals are largely sympathetic to reforming social inequalities at the level of public policy, curriculum design, and classroom pedagogy (Fischman & McLaren, 2005). Additionally, committed intellectuals also participate in forging a unified, anti-imperialist program outside these realms to challenge capitalist social relations, which McLaren consistently maintains in his scholarship is the locomotive for the multitude of social and educational disparities. Such a program is at least twofold where scholars utilize their skills to not only serve parochial academic requirements but also evolve and transform their talent to support an organized body creating alternatives to the existing hegemonic social, economic, and political formations. Consequently, throughout the research process I was not simply collecting and analyzing data from participants in a manner that was trusting and reciprocal but also contributing in a pedagogical and agitational role that incorporated my training as a scholar (such as writing press releases and organizational statements as well as facilitating educational workshops) within an anti-imperialist and democratic program of action that was distinctive to the experiences of Filipino/a immigrants. As such, while the more detailed contours of my research project was taking shape in the span of that year I was also contributing in the organizing activities of the research site. Through social practice I was able to learn of the organization's guiding principles in strengthening the ties of solidarity between community-based formations in the United States and the Philippines.

The Primary Research Site – A Community of Purpose

The Philippine – United States Solidarity Organization (PUSO) based in Seattle, Washington was the primary site of research for various reasons. As I highlight in Chapter Four, Seattle is a region that has nurtured a vibrant Filipino/a American counter-consciousness. Additionally, Filipino/a American activists have been dynamic in this area developing culturally

relevant sites of knowledge and cultural production. PUSO is an integral community organization that builds upon such a history through its various activities that include the facilitation of educational exposure trips to the Philippines as an ally organization with Bayan – USA. In conducting extensive research with a site that is a grassroots, community-based organization my research aligns with the observations made by Grace Lee Boggs that it is imperative for educational scholars to expand their understanding of where knowledge is produced, shared, and received beyond the traditional parameters of schools. Boggs states education must not only be researched but also “consciously organized to take place not only in schools but also a multiplicity of physical and social environments (qtd in Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: pg. 78). This is especially true for the educational subfield of critical pedagogy as the resistance to the injustices and imbalances of power are largely taking place outside the authorized walls of the classroom. Contraband sites of knowledge production can be found in labor halls, factories, public squares and of focus in this particular study within community-based organizations.

PUSO translates as heart in the Filipino language. It is a community based solidarity organization that consists of Filipino/a Americans, Filipino/a immigrants, as well as non-Filipino allies. The organization assists in the formation of international as well as local solidarities primarily through activities that raise community consciousness of the ongoing military aggression, human rights violations, and exploitative policies that impact a global Filipino/a polity. The mission of PUSO is to work towards:

- ending United States political, economic, and military interventions in the Philippines;

- supporting the human rights of Filipino/as, Filipino/a immigrants, as well as other marginalized peoples;
- assisting in the building of both international and local solidarity movements working for a world of peace, justice, and democracy; and
- providing support to the national democratic movement in the Philippines.

PUSO was formed in 2003, four years after thousands of community organizations gathered in protest of the global neoliberal policies at the convening of the world's most influential trade-governing bodies in Seattle. Inspired by the historic mobilization against corporate globalization that united diverse constituencies and garnered international media attention, a small cadre of Filipino immigrants and Filipino Americans discussed the need of bringing greater public awareness, both locally and internationally, to the negative consequences of neoliberal policies imposed upon the Philippines as well as the country's worsening violations of human rights. In 2004, a year after their official formation, PUSO helped to organize an International Solidarity Mission (ISM) to the Philippines to investigate the escalated reports of human rights violations occurring under then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Since its formation, the vast majority of PUSO members are alumni of educational exposure programs to the Philippines. In one interview conducted with an active PUSO member, exposure programs are integral to the organization's mission in strengthening international ties. The PUSO member explains:

If we didn't have international connections to the Philippines we wouldn't be a solidarity organization. We would just be an organization that cares from afar. Its not true solidarity when an organization does not have a connection with the area or the group it

claims to support. Without those true connections, solidarity is nothing more than a kind of colonial bullshit (Individual Interview, February 11, 2011).

PUSO is not the only community group in the Seattle area that organizes educational exposure programs to the Philippines. My involvement with PUSO introduced me to a wider network of Filipino/a American activists and Filipino/a immigrants who organized similar solidarity programs with various sectors (including youth, women, and cultural workers) of the Philippines. As a supporter (not a member) of Bayan – USA,⁸ PUSO is an ally to a regional, national, and international network of activists who conduct similar educational exposure programs to the Philippines.

Due to my geographical location and involvement within the Seattle community, I was initially intent in having research participants based entirely from the Pacific Northwest. However, because of very unique and historical circumstances that impacted the exposure participants outside the region I broadened the initial selection beyond the scope of Seattle. I speak specifically of two educational exposure programs to the Philippines that I explore in this research project. The first was the forced abduction and torture of Filipina American activist Melissa Roxas from Los Angeles who at the time was conducting a community health exposure in Northern Luzon. The second was the completion of an independent documentary based upon a hip-hop based exposure program organized by artists and cultural workers in California titled *Sounds of a New Hope*. Along with a diverse pool of research participants representing immigrant community organizers, militant women based in Seattle, youth planning their first exposure trip, and hip-hop artists from California I also incorporated multiple methods of data

⁸ BAYAN – USA serves as a clearinghouse of information pertaining to the national democratic movement in the Philippines. Its members consist of diverse sectors such as youth, artists, women, and labor. However regardless of sector the various organizations are united in an anti-imperialist perspective and hold a critical understanding of the historical links that bind Filipino/a Americans to the Philippines and a global Philippine Diaspora.

collection that I will now explain. These methods include: a testimonio, individual and group interviews, and multi-textual cultural analysis.

Testimonio

My findings section begins with Chapter Five, utilizing the method of testimonio to document the “emergency narrative” of Melissa Roxas who in May 2009 while conducting an educational exposure trip to the Philippines was forcibly abducted and allegedly tortured by forces many believe linked to the Philippine military. Roxas is the first known American citizen to survive torture and illegal detention within a contemporary climate of political repression and human rights violations in the Philippines. In fact, since 2001 there have been more than 1,200 known victims of extrajudicial killings, 206 documented cases of enforced disappearances, as well as 393 political prisoners in the country. Drawing from Roxas’ legal testimonies, media documentation, and press releases I recount her very personal experience of political repression. Furthermore, in two individual interview sessions I explore aspects of her youth growing up as a Filipina immigrant, the transformation of her political consciousness, and the role of educational exposure programs to the Philippines in the shaping of not only her identity but also what I identify as a “diasporic counter-consciousness.”

The use of testimonio is consistent within a PAR oriented framework as a means for empowerment and a practice of solidarity. A testimonio is often told to an interlocutor – in my case a graduate researcher – who audiotapes, transcribes, edits, and crafts a story from the narrator’s discourse. Through collaboration, testimonio can be an act of empowerment because a marginalized individual brings a life situation to an audience in which he or she would normally not have access (Beverley, 2004). In other words, that voice and articulation of struggle is wielded upon exclusionary institutions of power. Not only can testimonio affirm the authority of

personal experience it can be a transformative act of solidarity – in the capacity for “others” to identify their own life constraints, visions, and goals with the articulated narrative.⁹ This is certainly the case for one of the most powerful and important testimonios of the 20th century compiled from the life experiences of indigenous Guatemalan and human rights activist in the book, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*. Menchu’s testimonio illustrates how experience is conceptualized beyond the personal to affirm an identity integrated within larger subaltern, oppressed, or exploited groups. Similarly, Roxas’ testimonio is more than an individual narrative as she relates her experiences to a polyphony of struggles, experiences with oppression, and resistances to the violation of human dignity for Filipino/a Americans as well as for Filipino/as throughout a global diaspora.

In regards to the reporting and analysis of Melissa Roxas’ testimonio, I transcribed verbatim everything that was said in our two interviews. Along with our interaction I also collected public documents of her court testimonies as well as public statements that I then organized and compiled into organized vignettes. After transcribing Melissa’s testimonio, I sent her copies of the transcriptions in order to receive feedback, recommendations, and data verification.

Interviews

Individual Interviews

For the purposes of this study, I interviewed thirteen adult participants who had gone to the Philippines on an educational exposure program. I utilized the data-gathering technique of semi-structured or unstructured individual interviews. This method was useful as it allowed for freer interaction in my role as researcher with the interviewees. Furthermore, open-ended

⁹ Scholar John Beverly likens the reader of a testimonio as a jury member who is obligated “to respond in some way or other; we can act or not on that obligation but we cannot ignore it” (qtd in Denzin & Lincoln, (eds), 2008: pg. 550).

interview research created a space for in-depth exploration, description, and understanding of various participant views in regards to their educational exposure to the Philippines – thereby enabling grounded contributions to theory. Similar to the process of testimonio, I was drawn to the method of unstructured interviewing as it offered access to research participant’s ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own terms.

Each interview began with the question, “describe what was it like growing up as a Filipino/a (American) in your respective community?” and proceeded gradually at the participant’s own pace to such issues as Filipino/a identity, narratives of immigration, education and, and the processes of politicization. While I did prepare a list of interview questions, I found myself referring to these questions very little throughout individual interviews. I was open to the various perspectives shared, particularly since the research participants were articulating a world outlook, unique ways of learning and knowing, and transformations in identity that have not been adequately explored in educational scholarship. The unstructured interview process provided an important window into the research participants’ life experiences prior to their exposure program to the Philippines. Furthermore, this method offered participants to articulate their understanding of the social catalysts, historical impediments, as well as cultural perspectives that framed their exposure programs.

Due to the unstructured format and the vast particularities of participants’ life histories shared, the duration of participant interviews varied greatly in length. Some research participants shared approximately 10 to 20 minutes of their life context prior to their discussion of educational exposure programs. For others this phase of the interview took as long as two hours. Nevertheless, this initial stage of the interview process was vital because it provided pertinent and important data as well as served as an “ice-breaker” activity creating a space for

participants to relax, reflect about their life, and adjusts to their speech being audio-recorded. After learning more about participants' stories of Filipino/a identity, immigration, and their politicization, I urged research participants to describe the particularities of their exposure to the Philippines, what they learned, personal hardships while abroad, relationships forged, and conditions they witnessed. Afterwards, individuals would discuss what it was like returning to their respective communities, how they collectively processed their experiences, and in what ways that time transformed or challenged who they are. Each interview concluded with the participants having the space to highlight, elaborate, or clarify anything that was shared. As I already stated, due to the interviewee guided nature of the process, there was a large variation in the duration of each interview. The more abbreviated interviews were approximately an hour in length while one participant's process was more than three hours.

Every research participant was asked their preference of how data would be presented. Participants were given the option to either disclose their identity in the reporting of data or to keep their identities confidential by using a pseudonym. To my surprise, all participants interviewed agreed to have their identities openly disclosed in the research analysis. However, with the recent criminalization of activists involved in global solidarity campaigns and the openly political and anti-imperialist objectives of educational exposure programs to the Philippines,¹⁰ I have decided not to disclose individual names in my research. However, for exposure participants - such as human rights activist, Melissa Roxas as well as film documentarian, Eric Tandoc, and hip hop artist, Kiwi - whose identities were already disclosed

¹⁰ For instance, on September 24, 2010 the FBI raided the homes of anti-war and international solidarity activists in Minneapolis & Chicago and subpoenaed 14 people to appear before a Grand Jury investigating "material support of terrorism." During these raids the FBI took personal items such as computers, cell phones, documents and personal family items. Such tactics implemented by the state have been utilized throughout United States history to silence dissent and to repress various movements for social justice.

in publically available media sources (popular news, films or documentaries, as well as public interviews, and press statements) I do not conceal their identities.

Focus Group Interview

A group interview, also referred to as a focus group, was another important data-gathering technique utilized in my research. I conducted one unstructured focus group interviews with a group of four women involved with a community-based women's organization. I took a nondirective approach intent in listening to the wealth of knowledge offered in the tape-recorded discussion. The focus group not also provided a rich source of data but also was an important pedagogical space for participants to share their own experiences and offer advice for one individual who was planning her first educational exposure to the Philippines a few months after participants gathered for the focus group. In other words, the focus group was not only a research practice but also a pedagogical and political one as well. To be sure, there is a long history of deploying focus groups in consciousness-raising activities in the promotion of emancipatory imperatives as well as to generate theory from the lived struggles of women in order to contribute to the goals of equality, justice, and peace (Reinharz, 1992). The deployment of a group interview in this particular research project enabled participants a supportive environment to reflect upon their educational exposures to the Philippines within the context of their gendered life experiences and broader politicization. Furthermore, the group interview decentered my role as researcher allowing the participants to focus on one another, validate their everyday experiences, and share collective strategies of resistance.

The focus group interview was much longer in duration than the majority of individual interviews conducted, with the group interview extending over 2 hours in duration. The informal setting where the focus group was conducted undoubtedly contributed to the longer duration in

time. More specifically, the focus group took place in the living room of a research participant with other members sharing food or contributing to a larger potluck dinner. This informal space created an especially warm environment for dialogue as well as mitigated the intimidation that can arise when participants conduct sustained on-on-one interviews within the more formalized locations of a classroom or office.

While the setting for the group interviews was undoubtedly friendly, to be clear the objective for hearing various individuals share their experiences, fears, and motivations was not for therapeutic purposes. Rather, it was to collectively analyze the conditions of Filipina Americans in order to more accurately name their realities and generate a sharper understanding of a group largely ignored and under theorized in critical educational scholarship. Through this process, we were able to collectively explore new conditions, tools, and possibilities for transformative action and revolutionary theory - which in unison may contribute in attaining the necessities of life for a multitude of exploited Filipino/as and other groups in the United States, the Philippines, and throughout the world. Despite the great value of the methods I mention above, I recognize that the documentation of people's experiences as well as their reflections of their educational exposures to the Philippines does not necessarily provide the most detailed and comprehensive account of the cultural and social norms of exposure programs. For this reason, the personal accounts and shared testimonies collected through the methods of testimonio and interviews are triangulated with a cultural analysis that draws from various primary media and textual sources.

Multi-textual Cultural Analysis

Utilizing the video documentary of exposurists, in particular the independent film *Sounds of a New Hope* (2009), offered a grounded description of the social practice in question. In

analyzing the artifact produced by hip hop exposurists in particular I coded, generated themes, and conducted data analysis. Such a process enabled me to crosscheck with documentary evidence some of the assertions made in interviews and focus groups about the social practices of exposure programs to the Philippines. Comparison across interview and testimonio data with media created by exposure participants enabled me to understand as well as explain in better detail the phenomenon of exposure programs to the Philippines. My insights would have been undoubtedly limited if I relied only on interviews or the testimonio as the only data sources to describe the logistical components of exposure programs. The gathering and analysis of data from the cultural technology of research participants who conducted exposures to the Philippines is a method that lies between ethnography and cultural studies. As such, I must make an important detour to explain how the study of cultural products in this research project generated greatly from the methods of Raymond Williams and his groundbreaking analysis of culture.

Williams' methodology refused to examine culture as an epiphenomenon or in a simplified version where culture was subordinated to the superstructure and delegated as a mere reflection of the economic mode of production. Instead, Williams advanced an analysis that explored a social formation within a given historical moment as a "complex interlocking of political, social, and cultural forces" (Williams, 1977: pg. 108). Generating much from Gramsci's formulation of hegemony, Williams understood culture and its production as a crucial influence in rendering economic and political arrangements natural, inevitable, and unchangeable. On the other hand, since culture is a key factor in the internalization of political and economic arrangements, it also contains the seeds of their undoing. For Williams, seeds of transformation are always present within the dominant order as he explains in his important text, Marxism and Literature, "no mode of production and therefore no social order and therefore no

dominant culture ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention” (Williams, 1977: pg. 110). As such, he pioneered a dialectal method of exploring the production of culture where the dominant formation contains vestiges of the cultural past (residual) as well as generates new (emergent) cultural forces that seek to alter a prevailing social order. In my work I am positioned to demonstrate how Filipino/a Americans are instrumental agents in such a counterhegemonic project.

The examination of various cultural media such as the documentary, *Sounds of a New Hope* produced by hip-hop exposurists provided a valuable resource of visual and audio data. Furthermore, in its production such cultural work assists in the shaping of “emergent” social and cultural formations as well as research methods grounded in the Filipino/a American diasporic experience. Through an analysis of these particular cultural artifacts, which I will elaborate and focus upon in Chapter Six, educational exposurists are contributing greatly not only in the production of a revolutionary cultural form but also to anti-racist research methods and educational practices. As Williams incisively refuted the rationale for the hierarchical segmentation of culture into high and popular culture, I take the position that research methods must be wrested from the privileged space of the academy. Democratizing research methods embodied by Filipino/a American activists in their educational exposures demonstrate how methods of research are conducted by community-based intellectuals who are engaged in the practice of “active debate and amendment under the pressure of experience, contact, and discovery” (Williams, 1977). In other words, just as in culture, research methods are not the property or domain of a privileged minority. Through an interpretation of multitextual cultural technologies, I demonstrate how research methods are arising from the common experience and activities of the Filipino/a Americans in their exposures to the Philippines. Furthermore,

throughout my research project I take the position that the most developed methodologies come from practice, from the experience of community activism.

From Methods to History

The methods of both critical pedagogy and cultural studies must be dedicated not just in the study of particular forms of cultural technologies and pedagogies, but with the formation of alternative forms of human consciousness. This requires historical and structural analysis. Before I can transition to my research findings, I am obligated to historicize the presence of Filipino/a Americans in the United States. In the following chapter, I adhere to the argument that the conditions of exploitation and imperialism are a foundational basis for the creation of an oppositional counter-consciousness. However, the perception of class bonds and formation of political organizations are not automatic and do not inevitably supplant other affiliations and loyalties. As such, Filipino/a American identity and culture is a complex synthesis of place, collective memory, and meanings that has been fashioned from various sites of struggle. Upon historicizing Filipino/a American counter-consciousness incubated from a collective experience of forced migration and exploitation, I will be positioned to present my research findings. It is only through rigorous historical analysis where more contemporary communities of interest (Filipino/a Americans and other marginalized groups) can be understood through shared experiences of exploitation and social oppression but also in their efforts for self-definition.

CHAPTER IV: HISTORY OF FILIPINO/A AMERICAN COUNTER-CONSCIOUSNESS

“A study of history will show that the people have always been in struggle for a better life and have always resisted colonial domination whenever they recognized it. For history must do more than describe a dead past – it must help us to understand the roots of present phenomena so that we may be able to project with some degree of theoretical correctness the goals of the future” (Constantino, 1978a: pg. 250).

Renato Constantino

Filipino historian Renato Constantino approached the study of history and the conditions of Philippine society through a dialectical mapping of social interconnections. His method avoided a one-sided history told from the ruling elite in order to highlight the contributions and challenges of the Filipino subaltern classes. Throughout Constantino’s archive of writings he argued that careful historical analysis is imperative in understanding the dynamic interplay of the past upon the present (Constantino, 1975; 1978a; 1978b; 1982). Furthermore, writing on behalf of the agents of social change in the Philippines, Constantino maintained that historical analysis must do more than describe a dead past. History can show that people have always been in struggle for a better life and specifically Filipino/as have a rich legacy of resistance to injustice and colonial subordination. Constantino explains:

These struggles have taken various forms and demonstrated periods of escalation and periods of ebb of consciousness. History should not only chronicle these reactions but give us explanations for them, why were our people proudly militant at times, submissive

and confined at other times, which classes fought oppression, which compromised and why – so that we may better understand our people today (Constantino, 1978b: pg. 250).

Throughout Constantino's writing and historical analysis he rigorously documented how the principles of individualism and alienation imposed upon the existing social order of the Philippines was engineered so tightly into a people's consciousness and consolidated in everyday practice. Of particular interest to his work was the critical exploration of how the cultural apparatuses of schools, churches, and media were powerful vehicles in stunting an emancipatory Filipino/a consciousness and negating an emergent Filipina/o identity resistant to foreign occupation. Nevertheless, the struggle for humanity was always at the center of Constantino's analysis.

Through an archive of work that include A Past Revisted, The Continuing Past (a two-volume history of the Philippines,) Neocolonial Identity and Counter-Consciousness, and his important essay the "Miseducation of the Filipino," Constantino never loses hope in the possibilities of transformative Filipino/a consciousness – that is forged in a collective struggle and embodied within a human agency that understood their historical role in humanizing political, economic, and cultural social practices. Constantino's analysis of a Filipino "counter-consciousness" considered together with his critical analysis of the asymmetrical or neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines helps to clarify how the unity of people's thought and action (praxis) exist in two conflicting forms. Constantino's incisive historical analysis diagnosed how Filipino/as engaged the social relations into which they were born and for a majority carried the assumption that such practices were natural and inevitable, resulting in the reproduction of extant social conditions. Of particular interest to Constantino was the formation of a counter-consciousness, where a Filipino/a agency not only struggled to see past

the widespread ideologies that naturalized a neocolonial status quo but also in their practice nurtured the conditions for self-determination, justice, and equality.

Constantino's work has great use value to the discipline of education in general and the subfield of critical pedagogy in particular. In my own work on educational exposure programs to the Philippines, I build upon Constantino's analysis of Filipino/a consciousness and in particular his understanding that if marginalized communities are to assume a role in realizing goals of justice and liberation they must analyze, theorize, and understand the social forms, institutionalized beliefs, and cultural practices that have preceded them. In other words, history is a site of eminent importance as it indicates a repository of resistance for a people dominated by the structures of appropriation and dehumanization. Constantino maintains, without an understanding of one's own history and concrete realities, human agents run the risk of "being mere copy-cats neglecting the duty to be creative and innovative for their own time and society" (Constantino, 1978b: pg 286).

While Constantino's analysis focuses upon the contradictions and conditions for liberation in the Philippines, I believe his dialectical methods of historical analysis are useful in exploring a history of counter-consciousness for Filipino/a Americans. Tracking Filipino/a American consciousness throughout United States history is not only important as it reflects the degrees of control and resistance within society, but also for my own research project it enables a sharpened inquiry of educational exposure programs and the forms of counter-consciousness such programs nurtures for a new generation of Filipino/a Americans. In this chapter, I begin my historical analysis with the Filipino American War of 1898 and end after the fall of the U.S. supported Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship in 1986. In tracing emergent forms of counter-consciousness and cultural activity of Filipino Americans, I highlight a medley of vital pursuits –

which Constantino argues is altogether absent from the overall social design of imperial domination – such as the struggle for international solidarity and human dignity. Constantino’s dialectical analysis of Philippine history invokes the words of Antonio Gramsci who reminds us that the beginning point of any research project or critical elaboration is “the consciousness of what is as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without an inventory” (Gramsci, 1992: pg. 324). The reclamation of an inventory for my analysis of educational exposure trips to the Philippines begins with the inauguration of United States hegemony in the Philippines at the end of the 19th century.

Establishing United States Hegemony in the Philippines

For any ruling group to naturalize their power in a given society, they must direct and influence the majority of the population to consent to their own oppression through a complex coalition of political, economic, cultural, and religious alliances (Gramsci, 1992). Accordingly, the consolidation of consent in a heterogeneous national formation –whether in the Philippines or the United States - is never a complete or uncontested act of ideological reproduction. Given that “common sense” is produced within an assorted combination of ideas and practices the possibilities for counter-hegemonic projects to successfully resist and challenge the existing ruling bloc is always nascent. Furthermore, since hegemony is never quarantined from the processes of human resistance, the exercise of winning any group of peoples’ consent is not an entirely peaceful endeavor. The history of Filipino/as in the United States - beginning with the Philippine American War of 1898 - illustrates the practices of the U.S. ruling class to attain hegemony with a blend of military coercion and the consolidation of consent through educational, cultural, and other ideological means.

The United States took the place of Imperial Spain invading the Philippine islands in 1898 (Constantino, 1978a; San Juan, 2009a; Foster, 2004). Prior to their arrival, Filipinos had already fought a successful war to liberate the islands from their Spanish rulers (Constantino, 1975). The success of ousting their Spanish rulers had generated within the Filipino people a great confidence as well as an aspiration to guard their freedom from a new invader. Thus, the resistance of the Filipina/o people against their new American colonizers was not difficult to prophesize. American Henry Adams made the following comments before the military entered the Manila Bay to engage in a mock battle with the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay: "I turn green in bed at midnight if I think of the horror of a year's warfare in the Philippines where... we must slaughter a million or two of foolish Malays in order to give them the comforts of flannel petticoats and electric trailways" (qtd in San Juan, 1998; pg. 77). According to the few historical and academic textbooks that even mention this United States war of conquest, the Philippine-American War would be a four-year endeavor (1898 – 1902). However, resistance to U.S. colonialism lasted for decades during which time more than 126,000 United States soldiers were sent to the islands causing the death of millions of Filipino/as (Zinn, 2003).

Recognizing the rising unpopularity of the Philippine-American War with the American public - including more prominent figures such as Mark Twain, Samuel Gompers, Andrew Carnegie, former President Grover Cleveland, and Jane Addams - U.S. President McKinley and his advisors shifted their military strategy in the Philippines. The United States supplemented their military might of civilizing Filipinos with a krag (the standard army rifle of the day)¹¹ to educating them with chalkboards, books, and the English language (Constantino, 1982). Thus, I

¹¹ The army song of the United States military in the Philippines articulates their high regard for the Filipino people: "Damn, damn, damn the Filipino / Pock-marked Khakiac ladrone / Underneath the starry flag / Civilize him with a Krag / And return us to our beloved home" (qtd in Constantino, 1978b; pg. 106).

agree with the argument of Constantino that the cultural apparatus of public schooling in the Philippines was mobilized largely to erode the possibilities of an emancipatory consciousness in future generations of Filipino/a youth. On August 1901, a shipload of teachers on an army boat called the SS Thomas sailed from San Francisco to the Philippines (Hollnsteiner and Ick, 2001). These teachers - or "Thomasites" composed largely of ex-military soldiers and young college graduates - were assigned to install an American educational system in the islands.¹² The installation of an American educational system in the Philippines was never intended to be an act of altruism for the Filipino/a population. Senator Henry Lodge is straightforward in articulating American ruling class interests in the Philippines stating, "we make no hypocritical pretense of being interested in the Philippines solely on the accounts of others... We believe in trade expansion" (qtd in Constantino, 1978b, pg. 104). In other words, the motives of installing public education in the Philippines had more to do with securing and promoting American business interests than encouraging democracy and social progress.

Pensionados and Savages: The Introduction of Filipinos to the United States

Two years after the Thomasites arrived to install an American educational system in the Philippines, the Pensionado Act of 1903 was passed. This act enabled elite Filipino families to send their children to the United States in order to complete their university education. Young adults or "pensionados" as they were called would finish their college degrees abroad and return to the Philippines as central figures of a colonial bureaucracy that adhered to the "benevolence" of United States Empire. The pensionados were not the only Filipinos sent to the United States at the end of the Philippine - American War. Shortly after the U.S. military was creating a

¹² One of the more famous Thomasite was African American educator, Carter G. Woodson who would later author the book The Miseducation of the Negro (1977).

“howling wilderness” throughout the islands, profiteers shipped 1,200 Filipinos to the St. Louis World Fair to commemorate the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase (Rydell, 1984; Fermin, 2004). The Philippine Reservation, one of the most popular exhibits of the 1904 event, displayed the so-called savagery of indigenous Filipinos and the role of United States education in civilizing them. Public exhibits of Filipino/as eating dogs, performing ritual dances, as well as reciting songs of American patriotism were important tools to propagate an ideology of American Exceptionalism. Imperial expansion in the Philippines would not only set in motion a racist campaign of dehumanization both abroad and at home but also be the very source of the forced migration of Filipino/as from the colonial periphery to the United States.

After colonizing its “little brown brothers” in the Philippines, the United States imposed policies of economic trade that prevented national industrialization and preserved a semi-feudal economy. Constantino explains, “the Americans introduced a trade pattern for the islands which assured these [Filipino] people an unlimited supply of ready-made American goods and in return gave them magnanimously limited quotas for their raw material exports to the American markets” (Constantino, 1978b; pg. 111). In other words, valuable resources extracted from the Philippine islands were allowed entry into American markets so long as such goods did not threaten the business interests of U.S. elites. Another Philippine resource of great interest to the United States ruling bloc was a cheap source of available labor. In fact, at the beginning of the Philippine-American War, the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA) was already lobbying to the federal government to move subordinated Filipinos from the Philippines to toil in another island (Hawaii) of the American Empire.

Thus, shortly after the Philippine – American War, a rapid escalation of Filipinos arrived in the United States. The influx of this new population at the beginning of the 20th century was

linked to the policies of racial exclusion that targeted already existing immigrant groups in the country (Wing, 2005). Filipinos could not be excluded under existing legislation, as their legal status was neither “citizen” nor “aliens” due to the Philippines position as a United States colonial territory. The climate of ethnic exclusion for Chinese, Asian Indians, Japanese, and other immigrant groups along with the threatened exclusion of Mexicans resulted in the positioning of Filipinos, as a necessary source for the labor needs of American capital.¹³ Thus, the categorization Filipinos as U.S. nationals enabled their sizeable migration to the plantations of Hawaii and soon after the canneries of the Pacific Northwest and the agricultural fields of California’s Central Valley. The years from approximately 1906 to 1935 marked the first wave of Filipino/a migration to the United States.¹⁴ In 1906, fifteen Filipino “Sakadas” were shipped to Hawaii. By 1930, the United States Census counted more than forty-seventy thousand Filipino/as on the mainland and another sixty-five thousand in Hawaii.

The Great Depression and Filipino American Repression

Contrary to the colonial education many Filipino/a immigrants received in their homelands, the United States was neither the land of opportunity or a democratic beacon of freedom for its immigrants. The distance between rhetoric and reality was demonstrated in a public statement made by a member of an agricultural association in 1930: “It must be realized that the Filipino is just the same as the manure that we put on the land – just the same. He is not our ‘little brown brother.’ He is no brother at all! – he is not our social equal” (qtd from Takaki, 1998: pg. 324). Filipinos were commonly viewed as semi-civilized savages, morally depraved,

¹³ Utilizing the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Alien Land Laws of 1910 as templates, federal government would severely limit various ethnic groups from entering the United States and for those already in the country their land ownership and citizenship rights were severely restricted. The 1917 Immigration Act denied Asian Indians entry. Japanese nationals were excluded from the United States with the Immigration Act of 1924.

¹⁴ Filipinos laborers in Alaska were called “Alaskeros,” in Hawai’i, they were labeled “Sakadas” and the student pensionados were called “fountain penboys.”

and prone to criminality by powerful sectors of the United States' ruling bloc. Exclusionist forces would further characterize Filipino immigrants as animalistic with uncontrollable sexual urges. Former president of the University of California, David Barrows testified before Congress that the social problems of Filipinos were "almost entirely based upon sexual passion." Barrows further explains, that Filipinos "usually frequents the poorer quarters of our towns and spend the residues of his savings in brothels and dance halls, which in spite of our laws exist to minister to his lower nature" (qtd from Takaki, 1998: pg. 329).

The economic conditions of the Great Depression in the United States would only fuel the agitation and racial violence directed towards Filipino workers. Violent race riots would terrorize Filipinos throughout the West Coast and especially in California's Central Coast and San Joaquin Valley. For instance, on October 24, 1929, a mob of 300 white men in Exeter, California stormed a Filipino camp, stoned and clubbed 50 Filipino workers and burned the barn. Reflecting the white supremacist hostility over interracial romances and the limited employment opportunities, vigilantes would set ablaze Filipino dance halls, community centers, labor unions, and resident halls throughout the region. In January 1930, a Filipino clubhouse in Stockton, California was dynamited. In Watsonville, California Filipinos were terrorized on the streets culminating in a mob of approximately 200 to 500 men violently killing a Filipino male and the destruction of Filipino housing quarters. In August 1930, dynamite was thrown in the camp of sleeping Filipinos near Reedley, California in an effort to drive out the more than 500 Filipinos who had traveled the area to work the fields.

The racism and vigilante terrorism endured by Filipino immigrants during this time period is poignantly documented in the semi-autobiographical text *America is in the Heart* written by Carlos Bulosan. Bulosan's writings were based upon not only on his own experiences

as a Filipino immigrant but also a collective narrative of violence and brutality his Filipino compatriots would endure. Reflecting the conditions of the time, Bulosan would famously observe, “Yes, I feel like a criminal running away from a crime I did not commit. And the crime is that I am a Filipino in America” (Bulosan, 1995: pg. 9). Bulosan’s sentiments were rooted in the concrete conditions of racism and anti-Filipino public sentiment that eventually would manifest in U.S. public policy.

Pressured by a coalition of conservative politicians, the establishment labor movement, and xenophobic civic organizations, President Roosevelt passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934. This act reclassified Filipinos living in the United States from U.S. nationals to “aliens” and also required the Philippines to be an “independent” commonwealth. Thus, the Tydings-McDuffie Act - also known as the Philippine Island Independence Act - would grant the Philippine islands “independence” after a transition period of twelve years. Since the Philippines was no longer considered a United States territory, Filipinos were subject to analogous exclusion policies imposed upon other racialized immigrant groups. In all practicality, the legislation’s central purpose was to limit Filipino immigration to the United States with a quota of no more than fifty individuals per year. Yet for a prevailing segment of the United States population, Filipino exclusion was not enough. In 1935, the federal government passed the Filipino Repatriation Act. Masked with the rhetoric of providing Filipinos the opportunity to return to their homeland with free passage, the Repatriation Act was more accurately a deportation act.¹⁵ Renowned labor journalist Carey McWilliams stated that after serving their “brief but strenuous period of service to American capital” the Filipino Repatriation Act was “a trick, and not a clever trick to get them out of this country” (qtd in Takaki, 1998: pg. 333). Despite the racism that

¹⁵ For the reported 2,190 Filipino/as who were returned to the Philippines they were never again allowed legal re-entry into the United States.

manifest in both federal legislation and public sentiment, the majority of Filipinos chose to remain in the United States. Furthermore, a radical segment of the Filipino population would utilize the labor movement as a vehicle to organize against a racist system of exploitation and nurture a Filipino/a American counter-consciousness.

Filipino American Labor Consciousness

In the United States, reflective of the labor movement in general, Filipino workers were organizing around various ideological and economic goals. While some segments of the labor movement were parochial and economistic in scope a radicalized segment of Filipino immigrants perceived with great clarity the interconnection between their immigrant exploitation and the colonial systems of domination in the Philippines. Through the historical conditions of being racialized workers in the United States, a unique Filipino American counter-consciousness would emerge. Such a consciousness would grow increasingly perceptive of the vital connections that linked the changing manifestations of U.S. colonization in the Philippines with the exploitation of Filipino immigrants in the United States. Informed by the struggles that traversed two geographical locations, Filipino labor organizers in the United States would also cross racial and ethnic boundaries within the United States to form important sites of worker solidarity.

One of the first expressions of multiracial labor organizing occurred in the islands of Hawaii on October 1919. Filipino sakadas (or plantation workers) were instrumental in forming a workers' strike with militant Japanese workers. Labor solidarity would persist on the islands between these two communities for years as Japanese and Filipino immigrants united against the exploitative and repressive tactics of the sugar plantation owners. Due to the immense fear of the intensified and more militant actions taken among the immigrant Filipino and Japanese workers, plantation owners utilized the police, the National Guard, and other armed forces to

quell dissent. The state repression directed against the organizing efforts of this multiracial workers alliance would reach a violent nadir on September 9, 1924. (Alcantara, 1988). The workers of Kaua'i, Hawai'i who were engaged in a strike demanding wages of \$2 a day and an 8-hour workday were brutally met by state forces. Later coined the Hanapepe Massacre, a total of twenty individuals died – sixteen of them Filipino workers. Filipino labor organizer, Pablo Manlapit¹⁶ was a key labor leader responsible for the alliance of Filipino workers with the Japanese Federation of Labor. Manlapit was also a key figure in the creation of the Filipino Labor Union (FLU). Manlapit would go into exile to California after being targeted by Hawaiian authorities for his leadership role to organize workers against the Sugar Planters Association.

The white American ruling bloc would often utilize tactics of repression as well as “divide and rule tactics” in their attempts to defeat the organizing efforts of Filipino and immigrant labor organizers.¹⁷ Rumors were often circulated that the specter of communism had infiltrated the leadership of Filipino labor, consistent with the red scares deployed to interrupt the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Anti-communist rhetoric were politically calculated to invoke the Criminal Syndicalism Laws, which was passed after World War I blurring the lines of openly democratic expressions of free speech with sedition and violent acts against the United States government. Despite the state repression, red baiting, and vigilantism committed by white workers, Filipinos would continue to organize uniting beyond the boundaries of race, religion, and ethnic background. This was especially true for Filipinos

¹⁶ Malapit would author a 112-page booklet, Filipinos Fight for Justice. This publication detailed the history of Filipinos in Hawaii and promoted the ideas that unionization was an important vehicle for Filipinos to attain economic equality.

¹⁷ A common divide and rule tactic (used even today) was the recruitment of other ethnic groups such as Mexican, East Indian, and Asian laborers to replace and demoralize striking Filipino workers.

organizing in California within the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) - the agricultural arm of the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO). The formation of the UCAPAWA in 1937 was a result of the organizing efforts of not only noted Filipino leaders Chris Mensalvas and Carlos Bulson (who I will speak more to later) but also the leadership of other immigrant groups including Japanese, Chinese, as well as female Guatemalan labor organizers (Denning, 1997).¹⁸ Surely, the organizing and nurturing of a multiracial labor consciousness within the Filipino American community was not confined to California. Since Filipinos were forced to travel throughout the West Coast for a myriad of seasonal jobs, a radical counter-consciousness would also emerge in the fisheries and salmon canneries of the Pacific Northwest.

Filipino Labor Organizing in the Pacific Northwest

On June 19, 1933, the Cannery Workers' and Farm Laborers Union (CWFLU) – Local 18257 was organized under the American Federation of Labor by Filipinos in the salmon canneries in the summer months and the agricultural fields of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California in other seasons (Fujita-Rony, 2003). In its first year, union membership was a modest 200 individuals. However, three years later the membership rose to approximately 2,000 individuals (Ellison, 2005). It was also in 1936 that local President Virgil Duyungan and the union secretary Aurelio Simon became the first pair of Filipino labor organizers assassinated in Seattle, Washington. Both men were instrumental in the growth of the union and were staunchly opposed to a labor contract system that depended upon the exploitation of Filipino immigrants (Fresco, 1999).

¹⁸ According to labor historian and cultural theorist, Michael Denning, “in Southern California, UCAPAWA began organizing the workers in California’s canneries and food-processing plants, three quarters of whom were women, under the leadership of Guatemalan immigrant Luisa Moreno” (Denning, 1997: pg17).

From 1933 to 1951, Filipino unionism in the canneries of the Pacific Northwest would change labor affiliations from the American Federation of Labor to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1937 and again in 1949 becoming members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU).¹⁹ Such changes would reflect shifts in membership, external political pressures, and the changing ideological positions of Filipino labor leadership. One of the most important Filipino labor leaders of this period was Chris Mensalvas. Born in San Manuel, Philippines in 1909, Mensalvas came to the United States in 1927 to further his education. However, like many Filipino immigrants of his generation, political economic conditions forced him to work low-paying jobs in the agricultural fields of California as well as the canneries of the Northwest. While living with his brother in Los Angeles, Mensalvas would form a close friendship with Carlos Bulosan, rooted in their organizing work with the UCAPAWA - CIO. Mensalvas would eventually relocate to Seattle and between the years of 1949 to 1959, he would serve as president of the ILWU - Local 37 (Mensalvas -UW). Shortly after his election as Local 37's president, Mensalvas would invite Bulosan to live with him in Seattle and edit the local's *1952 Yearbook*.

The ILWU Local 37 Yearbook is an important labor anthology from the period that compiled rich personal reflections, cultural production including poetry and song, as well as statistical figures (that compared the discrepancy in life expectancy for African Americans and whites) in the United States. Furthermore, the *Yearbook* was a vehicle to raise the political consciousness of its Filipino membership by connecting the conditions of racism and state repression besieged upon immigrant workers to a movement in the Philippines active in its resistance to the global forces of domination and national oppression. In the *Yearbook's*

¹⁹ See "The Local 7 / Local 37 Story: Filipino American Cannery Unionism in Seattle 1940 – 1959" written by Micah Ellison (2005) of the Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project.

introduction, Bulosan articulates the vision of Local 37. He explains how the central objectives of the union are “channeled toward the collective interest and welfare of the whole people; a society, we must repeat, where war is eliminated, unemployment vanquished, profiteering a legend from the ledgers of predatory animals, and peace reality translated into every human endeavor with the accompanying crescendo of a triumphant democracy” (ILWU Yearbook, 1952: pg. 1). Internationalist in their scope, Local 37’s vision was not limited to the American working class, as the *Yearbook* highlighted world events taking place in China, Korea, Canada, and various countries of Western Europe. However, in regards to global affairs the collections’ central focus was the political situation in the Philippines. For instance, in a piece titled, “Terrorism Rides the Philippines” the author (widely regarded to be Bulosan) exposes the repressive violence used against organized labor and the Philippine government’s persecution of nationalist leaders. Also included is the article, “Wall St. Chains the Philippines” written by Amado V. Hernandez who was President of the Philippine Congress of Labor Organizations and at the time the Philippine authorities had him imprisoned for rebellion.

The *Yearbook* would associate the events taking place in the Philippines to an American brand of fascism fueled by white supremacist crusades of anti-communism and xenophobia. Thus, Local 37 would dedicate a great majority of its pages to denounce the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950 and the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. Such policies targeted militant labor organizers and cultural workers in the United States labeling them as communist front organizations and demanding their registration with the Attorney General. Under such legislation the federal government could deport immigrants and naturalized citizens believed to be involved in “subversive” activities. The McCarran Acts had already impacted the Filipino community as approximately thirty individuals were in federal detention. The leadership of

Local 37 was especially besieged by these draconian policies with leaders Chris Mensalvas, Ernesto Mangaoang, Ponce Torres, Joe Prudencio, and Casimiro Absolar under deportation orders.

The uncanny collection of writing in the *Local 37 Yearbook* articulates an internationalist Filipino consciousness where the demands for immigrant rights, racial equality, and workers' justice in the United States are linked to the democratic calls of ending foreign domination in the Philippines and throughout the globe. Consistent with the writings of its editor, the *Yearbook* nurtured a consciousness that viewed the existing global system as anything but natural. In fact, the collection forwarded a consciousness critical of a political economic system where its benefactors were free to plunder a foreign country's natural resources while also perpetuating violence against Filipino labor at home. In a letter written shortly after the publication of the *Yearbook*, Bulosan would poignantly explain the barbarism of his epoch.

Hate, greed, selfishness – these are not human nature. These are weapons of destruction, evolved by generations of experimenters in the service of ruling groups, be it a tribe, a clan, a prince, a kind, a democracy. These destructive elements have finally become so subtle, so intricate, so deeply rooted in men's minds in our time, the era of international finance, that many people sincerely, though ignorantly, believe them to be the guiding forces of nature (Bulosan, 1995: pg. 182).

Furthermore, Bulosan would eloquently articulate the type of Filipino American consciousness struggling to be realized grounded in the ideals of “Love, kindness, pity, tolerance, happiness, beauty, truth – these are the real human nature from which a galaxy of other relevant virtues spring, take root and flourish in manifold form – in what we call brotherhood or common humanity, as the ideal of honest men in the world” (ibid).

Despite their great geographical distance to the Philippines - where Mensalvas, Bulosan, and many of the other Local 37 organizers would never again return - the *Yearbook* expressed a consciousness grounded in a political project of liberation for all Filipino/as with no regard to time zone or geographic location. The consciousness and practices of Local 37 would impact a future generation of Filipino/a American activists, cultural workers, and labor organizers. For instance, Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes, two Filipino American labor leaders whom I will speak to more at length later, reached out to the Filipino cannery organizers and Mensalvas in particular for counsel and organizing strategies during the 1970s. Another individual inspired by the Filipino cannery workers and the militancy of Local 37 was Philip Vera Cruz.

Philip Vera Cruz and the Forwarding of an Internationalist Consciousness

Born in 1904 in Ilocos Sur, Philippines, Philip Vera Cruz was part of the first generation of Filipinos – or manongs as they were affectionately called – who migrated to the United States in the 1920s and early 1930s. Due to many reasons, among them his isolated geography, constant movement, and commitment to support family abroad, Vera Cruz’s life diverged from the radical labor organizers of Local 37 including the Filipino leadership of Chris Mensalvas, Ernesto Mangaong, and Carlos Bulosan (San Juan, 2009a). I have not yet found materials that suggest these individuals worked closely with Vera Cruz in their organizing capacities throughout West Coast. Nevertheless, Vera Cruz was aware of the work of his fellow compatriots. In the book Philip Vera Cruz: A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworkers Movement, he would explain:

The most important memory I have of that [1948 Stockton] strike was the leadership of Chris Mensalvas. He organized that strike along with his close friend, Ernesto Mangaoang. Both were exceptionally good Filipino labor leaders and people should

know more about them. Chris was probably the most outstanding Filipino union organizer in this country throughout the 1940s and 50s (Scharlin & Veillanueva: 2000; pg. 17).

It was not until Vera Cruz settled in Delano, California (upon financially securing the education of siblings in the Philippines) that he would become one of the most outstanding Filipino union organizers of the 1960s and 1970s.

Throughout his personal testimony, Vera Cruz explains how the development of his counter-consciousness matured in his participation with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) that he helped to form with Filipino labor leaders, Larry Itliong²⁰ and Andy Imutan. In the political organizing of immigrant workers, Vera Cruz states he had the opportunity to “bring my basically philosophical and questioning nature down to earth, and apply it to real everyday issues that actually affect people’s lives.” He continues the union “gave me the opportunity to participate in the political struggles of this country, not as a racketeer as many Filipino community leaders had been, but as a worker struggling along with my fellow workers for our constitutional rights” (Scharlin & Veillanueva: 2000; pg. 33). Filipino scholar E. San Juan eloquently explains that Vera Cruz’s “personal witnessing of farmworker organizing, as well as the testimony of actual participants in the struggle for humane treatment, helped shape Philip’s trust in the competence and sustainable strength of the organized masses to influence the course of their lives, even to the point of converting their passive resignation into active self-determination” (San Juan, 2009: pg. 32).

²⁰ Itliong was born on October 25, 1913, in the Philippines. He came to the United States in 1929. He was involved in union causes in both California and Alaska. Together with Vera Cruz, Itliong was crucial in convincing Cesar Chavez’s predominantly Mexican NFWA (National Farm Workers Association) to join the strike and boycott in the Delano grape fields in 1965.

On September 8, 1965, AWOC would actively defend their labor rights and vote in support of a strike for better pay and working conditions against the region's grape growers. This historic decision would lead to 5-year boycott and spark the nationwide farmworkers' movement. As a result of the Delano Grape Strike, in August 1966 AWOC would merge with the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) led by Cesar Chavez to form the famous United Farm Workers of America (UFW). Vera Cruz would serve as second vice-president of the UFW - the highest-ranking Filipino officer of the union. Reflecting on the Filipino farmworkers' decision Vera Cruz states, the Delano grape strike "became one of the most significant and famous decisions ever made in the entire history of the farmworkers labor struggles in California." He continues, "It was the strike that eventually made the UFW, the farmworkers movement, and Cesar Chavez famous worldwide and it lasted until 1970 when we finally won our workers contract with the growers" (Scharlin & Villanueva, 2000: pg. 36). Vera Cruz's powerful testimonies compiled by Scharlin, Villanueva, as well as Sid Valledor (2006) provide important insight to the rarely mentioned historical fact that it Filipino immigrants and labor organizers were important catalysts of one of the most important movements in American labor history.²¹

Vera Cruz's unwavering commitment to democracy and his internationalist position would eventually clash with the practices of the UFW. Vera Cruz was aware that the agribusiness and global corporations that generated misery and great suffering for immigrant workers within the United States were also culpable for the great poverty inflicted upon the vast majority of people in the Philippines and the Third World. He explains, "Third World countries have been exploited so much by the multinational corporations that their people, moved by

²¹ Also see Dorothy Fujita Rony's "Coalitions, Race, and Labor: Rereading Philip Vera Cruz" in *JAAS*, June 2000.

extreme poverty, leave their home countries to seek work in an industrialized country like the United States. The multinationals suck the wealth out of their homeland like a vampire sucks blood” (Scharlin & Villanueva, 2000: pg. 145-146). His astute understanding of an international division of labor that created an industrial army of mass unemployment in the Philippines, Latin America, and throughout the Third World led him to oppose the UFW’s insular agenda, especially in regards the union leadership’s position against undocumented farmworkers. Reflecting on Chavez’s attitude toward undocumented immigration, Vera Cruz states, “I always took an opposing view to Cesar’s position on the undocumented workers. I think it’s because I am more of an internationalist than Cesar. In fact, I am the only board member who raised objections to the union’s policy against the undocumented worker” (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000: pg. 146). Under Chavez’s leadership, the UFW viewed the presence of undocumented workers in the United States as undermining the campaigns of the union. In fact, Chavez and the UFW leadership would go so far as to work with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to report undocumented workers deemed as threats to the success of UFW strikes.

Vera Cruz would spend many years suppressing his differences with Chavez’s leadership, especially in regards to their undemocratic practices and their parochialism towards undocumented immigrants.²² Vera Cruz’s conviction in the ideals of international labor solidarity as well as the UFW’s ability to mobilize immigrant workers for better wages and improved working conditions were the grounds for Vera Cruz ongoing tenure with the union. However, Vera Cruz was no longer able to compromise with UFW leadership after Chavez accepted the invitation to visit the Philippines in support of the U.S. supported Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship. Vera Cruz resigned from the organization in 1977 due to this visit as well as

²² See Michael Yates books reviews of recent publications regarding the UFW of particular interest “The Rise and Fall of the United Farm Workers” (May 2010).

Chavez's reciprocal invitation to Marcos' Secretary of Labor, Blas Ople who would not only promote Marcos' labor policies but also his repressive dictatorship to UFW's general membership at its annual convention. Reflecting on Chavez's decisions to visit the Philippines and convene with a fascist U.S. backed dictator, Vera Cruz is clear:

What Cesar did there in the Philippines was the saddest day in the history of the farmworkers movement in this country. It was just a disgrace. Cesar was toasting with Marcos and all those phony farm and labor leaders appointed by Marcos at the presidential palace and at the same time, on the other side of Manila, the real union leaders and farmworkers were in jail (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000: pg. 135).

Vera Cruz's understanding of the importance of labor and social movements that transcended the boundaries of the United States coincided with an emergent Filipino/a American counter consciousness that linked the struggles for racial justice and civil rights at home with the atrocities of the Vietnam War and U.S. support of fascist dictators throughout the Third World. It was this powerful message that Vera Cruz would share with a younger generation of Filipino/a American activists who would visit him at Agbayani Village or at the various speaking events he was invited to attend at college campuses and community events. However, the maturation of such a radical counter-consciousness would face great challenges, as the circumstances of the "second wave" of Filipino/a immigration to the United States would alter the community's social and political profile.

The Struggle Over Filipino/a American Consciousness Post-1965

The 1965 Immigration Act facilitated the move of new Filipino/a immigrants to the United States consisting of more working professionals in the fields of health, engineering, and public administration. Furthermore, Filipinos who had served in the U.S. military during World

War II were granted avenues for American citizenship. Thus, a new Filipino/a immigrant population began to take shape in the United States that did not share the same degree of exclusion, violence, and labor exploitation as the manongs from the 1920s and 1930s. Nevertheless, racism was still a fact of life for Filipino/a immigrants especially within the medical professions. For instance, when medical malpractices or misconduct would occur, health administrators would often place blame on the medical training or general incompetence of Filipino immigrants working in the hospitals (Choy, 2003). To prevent their offspring from facing similar expressions of racial prejudice and ridicule, Filipino parents would often stop communicating with their children in their native tongues (whether Tagalog, Ilocano, and Visayan) so they could speak English without an accent or foreign intonations. Furthermore, alignment with the ideas of American conservatism would greatly shape the consciousness of this new wave of Filipino immigrants. Nevertheless, fissures in a neocolonial identity would emerge. The resurgence of a nationalist youth movement in the Philippines epitomized by the protest movement of the First Quarter Storm in 1970 and the militant organizing models of America's internal colonies (such as the Black Panthers) were all important aspects that fostered a Filipino/a American counter consciousness from the 1960s to early 1980s.

In 1971 newly arrived immigrants from the Philippines who were active in the Philippine nationalist youth organization, Kabataang Makabayan (KM) together with a cadre of Filipino American activists formed the Kalayaan Collective in California's Bay Area (Cruz, 1983; Reyes and Bello, 1986). This group would produce a community newspaper under the same title *Kalayaan* (or Freedom) *International*.²³ In the first issue the editors stated, "The Kalayaan

²³ See Kalayaan papers archived by the Civil Rights and Labor History – University of Washington under the section, "Filipino American Activism Across Three Generations" access November 2, 2010. <http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/repository/v/Filipino/Kalayaan/>

International is today's answer to the need of the overseas Filipino to be aware of the multi-faceted problems of his people, both here and back home." Speaking to their location within the United States, they explain, "this need becomes more acute as we realize the intricate workings of the American system and the Philippine experience" (qtd. in Habal, 2007: pg. 65). Analogous to the metropolitan areas of Chicago, New York, Seattle, and Los Angeles - which all had larger Filipino/a immigrant populations - the Kalayaan Collective in the Bay Area would analyze their conditions as racialized immigrants located at the center of the United States Empire. They formed reading groups to sharpen their understanding of the conditions of U.S. imperialism in their local contexts and explored the possibilities of genuine democracy in the Philippines.

The Kalayaan Collective's Educational Exposure in the Philippines

The Kalayaan Collective supported trips to the Philippines where their U.S. based members could learn from a vibrant social movement transforming the very structures of Philippine society. I believe these immersions are precursors to what are now recognized as educational exposure trips to the Philippines. In an article published in the September - October 1972 edition of Kalayaan titled, "A Relevant Education: learning from the Masses" an unidentified individual highlights their experiences. The author explains that because Filipino/a youth activists "have seen through the flimsy system of education as a tool for colonialism... educational relevance is not to be found in the four walls of the classroom but in the wide experiences and conditions that the students live" (Kalayaan, 1972). The author continues that in developing an anti-colonial educational framework requires "the transformation of educational theories and philosophies into practice and to learn from the teachers, the masses, the common 'tao' /people" (Kalayaan, 1972).

Such an educational method is distinguishable from the more recent calls for community dialogue and public engagement very popular in educational service learning programs throughout the United States today. Such contemporary programs with their catch phrases help mask the corporate reshaping of higher education and the sharp reduction of government spending to our nation's public schools. In stark contrast, the ideas expressed in the author's immersion to the Philippines echo Paulo Freire's radical ideas of education where the objectives for learning is the realization of freedom through human interaction with one another and the world. Freire states:

[T]he more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into a dialogue with them. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side (Freire, 2000: pg. 83)

To clarify, the *Kalayaan* article promotes a sense of "fighting" where an individual struggles against preconceived conceptions of a community and enters into genuine dialogue - not in the role of activist, expert, or researcher but as a learner nurturing a relationship of humility and trust. For instance, after attending a community meeting in the Philippines, the author states, "there seemed to be no distinction between the students and the people. All were functioning as a single community" (Kalayaan, 1972). Functioning within such a community does not mean there is an occlusion of identity and difference, rather a political recognition that "there were much more important things that united them than divided them" (Kalayaan, 1972).

This article points to an educational project that enabled Filipino/a Americans to interrogate experiences of oppression in the context of the Philippines and explore how consciousness traversed both theoretical and practical planes mediated as a response to human needs and conditions. Shortly after this community-based news article was published, Ferdinand Marcos would sign Proclamation No. 1081 placing the Philippines under martial law resulting in the suppression of democratic dissent and the curtailment of basic civil liberties.

State Sponsored Exposures in the Philippines - The Balikbayan Program

The Marcos government was especially sensitive to the critiques made from within the United States as it jeopardized the foreign aid and business investment upon which his regime depended. To fortify support abroad while also combating the reports of human rights violations, democratic suppression, and political corruption, the Marcos regime introduced the Balikbayan (Homecoming) Program. This program encouraged Filipino/a Americans to return to their home and witness for themselves the Philippine transformation as a result of Marcos' New Society policies. To encourage travel to the Philippines, Balikbayans - or returning Filipino/a Americans - received an array of favorable treatment ranging from expedited travel visas, reduced airfares, and faster service through immigration and customs. The program nurtured a tourist consciousness within the Filipino American community grounded in a culture of consumerism and political apathy.²⁴ Upon returning from their time in the Philippines, Balikbayans were encouraged to share their favorable experiences pertaining to the cleanliness, beauty, development projects, and shopping opportunities that prevailed under the policies of Marcos' New Society (Richter, 1980).

²⁴ Building upon the closeness of familial ties and the winter holidays, teachers were encouraged to develop curriculum where their students would write letters to their relatives abroad inviting them to come home for Christmas. The Department of Tourism developed an "Invitation to a Traditional Philippine Christmas" which was a special tourist package that offered discounts on airfare, accommodations and shopping.

The introduction of the Balikbayan program in 1973 buttressed a Filipino/a American consciousness that consented to Marcos' dictatorial rule but also was deferential to the plundering of the Philippines through the economic restructuring programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund and other global economic institutions. Marcos' reliance upon the economic and military aid received from the United States, would lead him to keep a close watch of community group formations and individual organizers abroad. The extent of intelligence work and suppression conducted by the Marcos regime upon the Filipino American community became public after the political killings Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo on June 1, 1981 in Seattle, Washington.²⁵ Both men were labor leaders with the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) – Local 37 as well as community activists with the Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino (KDP) or the Union of Democratic Filipinos.

Viernes, Domingo, and the (Com)Promise of International Solidarity

Viernes and Domingo were college educated, second generation Filipino Americans who would spend their summers working in the Alaskan canneries. Viernes was born in Yakima, Washington on August 16, 1951 and was the eldest of nine children. Viernes would spend many summers alongside his father in the Alaskan salmon canneries and would join Local 37 at a very young age.²⁶ Silme Domingo was born in Killeen, Texas on January 25, 1951. Domingo would eventually move to Seattle with his family in 1960 where he completed high school, graduated with honors from the University of Washington, and become active in the labor movement. Through lengthy discussions with an earlier generation of Local 37 manongs - as well as their

²⁵ See: Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes newsletters archived online by the Civil Rights and Labor History Project: <http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/repository/v/Filipino/KDP+documents+and+Flyers/c4j/>

²⁶ See: Carlos Bulosan Exhibit at <http://www.bulosan.org/html/organizers.html>

own research of the internationalist principles that guided the work of such figures as Bulosan, Mensalvas, Vera Cruz, and the many other Filipino organizers who preceded them - Viernes and Domingo would take the position that the possibilities for realizing economic justice for Filipino/as in the United States was ultimately linked to the larger struggles for peace, sovereignty, and democracy in the Philippines. Such a position was undoubtedly influenced by Viernes' trip to the Philippines where he learned about the impoverishing realities of an international division of labor as well as the local strategies utilized by the labor union, Kilusang Uno Mayo - or May 1st Movement (KMU) - to organize and transform their historic conditions.

According to Chong-suk Han in his article "Unknown Heroes," Viernes would dialogue with labor leaders from KMU, learn about the various national issues impacting Filipino/a workers, and even during a rally on May 1, 1981 share a message of solidarity to the thousands who gathered. It was at this rally that "Viernes extended an invitation to KMU's President Crispin Beltran to attend the ILWU convention to share with the general membership the repressive strategies against Filipino/a workers under the Marcos dictatorship" (Han, 2001).²⁷ Very little is documented about Viernes immersion with KMU in the Philippines. However, labor scholar's Kim Scipes case study of KMU offers insights as to how an internationalist standpoint may have been fortified and shaped through an annual program called the International Solidarity Affair (ISA). According to Scipes the ISA began in 1984, which was three years after Viernes was in the Philippines. Nevertheless, it is more than likely that central components of Viernes' own trip to the Philippines - where he dialogued with KMU leaders and was immersed in the conditions of the producing classes of the country – were present in what would later be known as an ISA.

²⁷ See Chong-suk Han's article, "Unknown Heroes" published in Colorlines accessed on October 3, 2010 at: http://www.colorlines.com/archives/2001/07/unknown_heroes.html

In his article “Social Movement Unionism and the Kilusang Mayo Uno” Scipes explains the ISA program has occurred “every year since 1984, [where] the KMU has invited workers and labor leaders to travel to the Philippines and experience first-hand the situation of Filipino/a workers through a ten-day program. This experience does not show visitors how wonderful conditions are in the Philippines, but it gives them an accurate understanding of the situation in which the KMU operates” (Scipes, 1992: pg. 145). During a ten-day immersion in the Philippines, international participants visit various work sites and picket lines to learn about particular struggles, join in informal dialogues with community members, and listen to formal presentations organized by labor leaders as well as rank and file members of the union.

According to Scipes:

[T]he [ISA] program removes labor solidarity from the hands of the labor bureaucrats and allows workers to learn first-hand about conditions facing workers in another country...The concept, however, of workers visiting other workers and learning about their specific situations, seems like one which could be carried out by labor organizations in any country. It also serves to let workers in the ‘host’ country know that they are not alone, that workers in other countries are interested in their struggles, and are willing to spend time and money to learn more about the situation facing the host-country workers (Scipes, 1992: pg.146-147).

Based upon Scipes experiential accounts, I can only assume that Viernes participated in a similar worker exposure program that preceded contemporary educational exposure programs that I critically analyze in my research.

Viernes immersion with KMU fortified his understanding that while the struggles were intensified in the Philippines and throughout the Third World, Filipino/as throughout the globe were important elements in the reclamation of their humanity from a system that plunders human labor power regardless of geographic location. Thus, shortly after Viernes returned from the Philippines he along with Silme Domingo were instrumental in passing two groundbreaking resolutions at the ILWU convention. The first resolution was in support of the organizing efforts of union workers – the majority being Filipino immigrants or Alaskeros - to improve their conditions and wages in the canneries of Alaska. The second was a resolution to send an ILWU team to the Philippines to investigate the repressive labor tactics under the Marcos dictatorship. While the ILWU resolution did not condemn the Marcos dictatorship outright, it was a groundbreaking resolution as no other national labor organization located in the United States had initiated the process to objectively inspect reports of repression and human rights violations against the Filipino labor movement under Marcos' tenure. Furthermore, other labor formations in the United States - such as the popular UFW under Cesar Chavez - had either remained silent or accepted the overtures of the Marcos regime. Less than one month after the passing of the ILWU resolutions and before a team of labor organizers could be sent to the Philippines, Viernes and Domingo were murdered in their ILWU offices in Seattle, Washington. Through a protracted civil court case led by the efforts of the KDP's Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes,²⁸ the Marcos regime was found culpable in their deaths (Churchill, 1995).

Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino (KDP)

Along with their leadership roles in Local 37, Viernes and Domingo were members of

²⁸ See Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes newsletters archived online by the Civil Rights and Labor History Project: <http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/repository/v/Filipino/KDP+documents+and+Flyers/c4j/>

Seattle's Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino (KDP). According to KDP documents archived online by the Civil Rights and Labor History Project at the University of Washington, KDP's national presence in Seattle, as well as the cities of Chicago, New York, and San Francisco was a result of organizing work of the Kalayaan Collective. Members from the Kalayaan Collective were instrumental catalysts in the organizing of a 1973 national conference in the Bay Area to launch an alternative to the existing National Coalition for the Restoration of Civil Liberties in the Philippines (NCRCLP). The NCRCLP consisted of a diverse umbrella of Filipino/as ranging from mainstream civic leaders to militant community activists loosely united around the call for renewing civil liberties in the Philippines. Many Filipino and Filipino American activists viewed the NCRCLP as politically reformist or too limited in its goals of realizing genuine social transformation for Filipino/as throughout the world (Cruz, 1983). Thus, the group would splinter and other formations would emerge most notably the KDP.

In theory, KDP recognized that the social movements in the United States and the Philippines "are integrally related as part of an international struggle against U.S. imperialism" (qtd. in Espiritu, 2009). However, in practice, they would organize around a "dual program" that rendered racism and worker exploitation in the United States dichotomous with the struggle for democracy and peace in the Philippines. According to one former KDP member, "having a dual program meant objectively participating in two separate revolutions, the Philippines and the U.S." (Ho, 2000: pg. 38). KDP's organizing activities in the span of its thirteen years are copious as they organized nationally for affordable public housing, intervened against the racist treatment of Filipino health workers in American hospitals, and consistently mobilized against the Marcos dictatorship.

The KDP would officially disband in 1986 (after the fall of the Marcos regime) leaving behind a legacy of community work and activism. There is no doubt that the KDP spearheaded a multitude of political projects that have peaked the interest of academics and have facilitated the reflection of its former members (Choy, 2005; Espiritu, 2010; Gaerlan, 1999; Habal, 2007; Ho and Antonio, 2000). However, just as plentiful and inadequately explored are the numerous tensions and contradictions that plagued this United States based organization working in solidarity with a Third World social movement in the Philippines. It is not within the scope of my dissertation to explore the still unanswered tensions, political debates, and rumors that plagued the work of the KDP ranging from its infiltration by U.S. and Philippines intelligence agencies²⁹ to its break with the national democratic movement in the Philippines (Ho and Antonio, 2000). Nevertheless, it is important to point out that upon officially cutting ties with an anti-imperialist social movement in the Philippines after the defeat of Marcos in 1986, a Filipino American counter-consciousness would organize around a myriad of disparate issues ranging from electoral politic reform within the Democratic Party, to solidarity work with Latin America and South Africa, to matters of difference and identity politics.³⁰ This is the historical context and legacy that frames my research of Filipino/a American participation in educational exposure programs to the Philippines. In the following chapters where I present analysis of qualitative research of exposure programs to the Philippines, I point to the formation of alternative forms of

²⁹ See Liezl Rebugio's "Surveillance without Suspicion: Limiting Freedom Without Making Us Safer" accessed on October 3, 2010 at: <http://www.iexaminer.org/editorial/surveillance-suspicion/> as well as Venny Villapando's "Target: KDP – Government Files Admit Extensive Spying" published in *Ang Katipunan*, Vol. IX, No. 3, accessed on October 3, 2010 at: http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/repository/v/Filipino/KDP+documents+and+Flyers/Katipunan/AK_Govt_Spying_ocr_001.pdf.html

³⁰ With no moral and political associations to the movement in the Philippines, were matters of global poverty and political economy less of a concern for activists, intellectuals, and labor organizers within the Filipino/a American community during the later part of the 20th century?

Filipino/a American counter-consciousness incubated within the material conditions and social contradictions of our current epoch.

Educational Exposure Programs and a New Form of Counter-Consciousness

As I have surveyed in this chapter, the struggle against domination is a unifying thread of a Filipino/a American counter-consciousness that was inaugurated at the very least in 1898. Such a consciousness was strengthened during the 1920s to the 1950s despite the racist assault against Filipino labor organizers who were conceptualizing and organizing against the global social forces that led to their forced migration from the Philippines and their collective subordination in the United States. Inspired by the national liberation movements sweeping the world during the 1960s and 1970s and more specifically the youth and national democratic movements in the Philippines, a Filipino/a American counter-consciousness would continue to take shape and recognize the changing global system responsible for the conditions of racism, patriarchy, and class exploitation in the United States and the neocolonial condition in the Philippines. Following an ebb of counter-consciousness in the later part of the 20th century, with the disbanding of community formations in the United States that were morally united with the social movements in the Philippines, there has been a recent resurgence within Filipino American community formations. As such community based organizations consolidated around youth, gender, labor, and cultural work are building upon a rich legacy of resistance from their own distinct historical, diasporic, and cultural reference points. As a result, unique pedagogical sites are being created - such as educational exposure programs - where Filipino/a Americans and other community allies are learning about and contributing to a vibrant movement for justice and freedom in the Philippines and throughout the Philippines Diaspora. With a historical analysis and my research processes now adequately articulated I now address my first research

question: How does the testimonio of human rights activist, Melissa Roxas on her exposure trip to the Philippines, point to an alternative counter-consciousness for a new generation of Filipino/a Americans? What are the qualities of such counter-consciousness and how have educational exposure programs to the Philippines helped to incubate such a social imaginary?

RESEARCH FINDINGS

CHAPTER V: THE TESTIMONIO OF MELISSA ROXAS & DIASPORIC COUNTER-CONSCIOUSNESS

Yen Le Espiritu's Filipino American Lives uses a life story methodology to examine the contours of consciousness for a second wave or post-1965 Filipino/a American immigrant population. In her text, Espiritu focuses upon the construction of Filipino American identities within the metropolitan area of San Diego. She observes that in the community's efforts to "resist racial categorization, Filipino immigrants in the United States also have refused to sever their ties to the Philippines." She explains "they have assumed instead the role of transmigrants, generating and sustaining multistranded relations between the Philippines and the United States" (Espiritu, 1995: pg. 27). Espiritu identifies a transmigrant consciousness that bind Filipino/as simultaneously in both countries and is marked by the social practices of occasional visits, telephone calls, and the sending of remittances. My research project diverges from Espiritu's observations as I am interested in exploring contemporary social practices and an emergent political consciousness that unite Filipino/as in a global diaspora beyond the consumptive cultural exchanges mediated by the sending of remittances or balikbayan boxes. Specifically, I inquire what has become of an oppositional consciousness articulated by previous generations of cultural workers and militant labor organizers in the Filipino American community? Has a culture of resistance expired with the demise of militant labor organizing in an epoch of neoliberal globalization and transnational migration? If there is indeed such an oppositional consciousness linking Filipino/as in a global diaspora, what are its qualities and under what conditions is it fashioned?

Espiritu's more recent book Home Bound builds upon a transnational framework she outlines in Filipino American Lives as she examines the ways Filipino/a American communities reconnect with the Philippines through primarily symbolic transnational activities. However, in the concluding chapter of Home Bound, Espiritu points to the activities of three Filipina Americans who participate in an exposure program to the Philippines and their insistence upon building a new identity that crosses national boundaries rooted in the ideas of justice and political struggle (Espiritu, 2003). These individuals provide important glimpses to a the formation of an emergent Filipino/a Americans identity that is connected to the Philippines not simply through benign transnational circuits of cultural consumption but in their social practice and collective attempts to fashion solidarities across myriad forms of difference grounded in the ideals of justice and lasting peace. Drawing upon central terms from the educational subfield of critical pedagogy and the method of testimonio, this chapter explores the role of educational exposure programs in the formation of an alternative Filipino/a American consciousness and radical identity. Utilizing the testimonio of Melisa Roxas and her own experiences with educational exposure programs to the Philippines, I outline such formations.

I first became aware of Melissa Roxas in the Fall of 2006 as I came across incisive public statements and commentary pertaining to the Philippines from a community-based arts collective she helped form in Los Angeles. As a graduate student in Los Angeles, I became involved in various circles and networks of Filipino/a American cultural workers, activists, scholars, and youth organizers from Habi Arts and BAYAN-USA. At the time, I had not yet met Roxas in person as she was conducting an extended educational exposure program in the Philippines to gather materials for her writing but also to conduct medical surveys throughout the country. On the afternoon of May 19, 2009, I received a phone call from a friend informing me that Roxas

was forcibly abducted along with two of her companions in a northern province of the Philippines. Roxas was the first American citizen to fall victim of the systematic violations of human rights during the tenure of then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Human rights groups such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, and the community-based organization Karapatan (based in the Philippines) have reported more than 1,000 workers, students, activists, educators, peasants, and religious leaders in the country had been made to disappear or have been killed by paramilitary forces during Arroyo's presidency from 2001 to 2009. On May 25, 2009, as a result of an international barrage of media statements, community vigils, and coordinated actions, Roxas resurfaced and was reunited with her uncle's family in Manila.

On July 19, 2009, Roxas returned to the Philippines to personally submit her testimony to legal bodies of the Philippines where she described being abducted at gunpoint by several heavily armed men, brought to what she believes is a military camp, interrogated and tortured repeatedly before being released. In the Fall of 2010, an independent film titled *Dukot* premiered throughout the United States along with the film's actors, producers, and Melissa Roxas. The film was based on reports made by survivors and family members of extralegal killings and forced disappearances in the Philippines. During the film's premiere in Seattle, Washington in October of 2010, I had the opportunity to build a relationship with Roxas and she agreed to collaborate with me in the creation of her testimonio. In two audio-recorded sessions and numerous email correspondences she shared aspects of her youth growing up as a Filipina American, her political awakening, and the role of educational exposure programs to the Philippines in the shaping of her identity. I transcribed verbatim everything that was said but intentionally did not ask her to elaborate on the circumstances of her abduction and forced

disappearance. I personally did not find it necessary for her to relive traumatizing accounts with me that have already been made assessable through detailed public affidavits and the writ of amparo filed with the Philippine Court of Appeals. Along with legal documents that have been made public, I utilized primary sources such as her open letters, cultural writings, and media statements in generating her testimonio. After transcribing the data, I sent her copies of my progress in order to receive feedback, recommendations, and data verification. Through the collaborative process of transcribing, editing, and evaluating the raw data of Roxas' life experiences, in this chapter I underscore central aspects of her testimonio.

This chapter is divided into three sections as I engage her life experiences with three theoretical / methodological subfields. To begin, I review the central tenants of testimonio while also pointing to central debates surrounding this research method and literary form. In the second section, utilizing key terms in the educational subfield of critical pedagogy I present the first part of Melissa Roxas's testimonio as she reflects upon her political awakening through the processes of critical reflection and social action. Of particular interest is the role of educational exposure programs in Roxas's "conscientization." In the third section, I critically explore how Roxas's immersion in the Philippines incubated a consciousness that would broaden the conceptualization of community beyond a U.S. national framework. While an internationalist vision of community was certainly nascent within the Asian American movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, I point to how in the face of human rights violations, international solidarities continue to be forged and strengthened for Filipino/a Americans of a global diaspora. I conclude by outlining what I call a "diasporic counter consciousness." I take the position that Roxas's experiences provide an important example of how one can recognize and actively resist the

fragmentation, repression, and commodification of her Filipina American identity by the structures of global capitalism.

Testimonio: Central Tenants and Debates

Testimonial literature is often referred to as a resource literature where historically marginalized groups can actively transform themselves from the object to the subject of study. The reclamation of erased or subjugated histories in the sharing of human experiences is of eminent importance for the method of testimonio as it proclaims a repository of resistance for people dominated by the structures of imperialism, patriarchy, racism, and a myriad of other dehumanizing social relations. The well-known testimonio I, Rigoberta Menchu, originally titled *Me Llamo Rigoberta Mengu, Y asi me nacio la consciencia*³¹ is an important case in point. One of the most important text of the 20th century, I, Rigoberta Menchu documented the life experiences of a young indigenous, activist who struggled to transform the injustices that plagued her country during the period of military dictatorship and counter-revolution in Guatemala (Menchu & Burgos-Debray, 2009). Through the interlocutor of a Latin American anthropologist (Elisabeth Burgos), Menchu narrated the oppressive social conditions that facilitated her radicalization and demonstrated that everyday lived experience can serve as critical points of analysis especially when experiences are intended to go beyond the personal to explore social and historical conditions that entire groups of people are situated. In the opening of her testimonio Menchu is clear:

This is my testimony. I didn't learn it from a book and I didn't learn it alone. I'd like to stress that it's not only my life, it's also the testimony of my people...The important thing is that what has happened to me has happened to many other people too: my story is the

³¹ Translation: My name is Rigoberta Menchu and this is how my consciousness was formed.

story of all poor Guataemalans. My personal experience is the reality of a whole people (Menchú & Burgos-Debray, 2009).

Told from the perspective of someone who witnessed firsthand a traumatic event of social and historical significance, proponents maintain that testimonio offers alternative visions of society that can challenge the imposed logic of the free market, corresponding state violence, as well as the principles of individualism and alienation engineered tightly within historically subjugated cultures.

Testimonio has existed for as long time as a literary expression of resistance as well as a methodology of solidarity where one's voice is cast upon institutions of power and exclusion. Georg Gugelberger defines testimonio as "an authentic narrative, told by a witness who is moved to narrate by the urgency of a situation (e.g. war, oppression, revolution, etc)" (Gugelberger, 1996). Scholars have maintained that testimonio has its roots in the slave narratives of African Americans during the early 19th century. Miguel Barnet's The Autobiography of a Runaway Slave published in 1966 has been identified as a founding text for testimonio documenting the life experiences of African slave Esteban Montejo during some of the most turbulent moments of Cuban history including Cuba's War for Independence (1895-1898) and the subsequent presence of United States troops as an army of occupation (1898-1902) (Barnet, 1994). Testimonio has garnered much from Latin American liberation struggles of the mid-20th century that influenced the consciousness of an entire region such as the Cuban Revolution, the Sandanista Revolution in Nicaragua, and the indigenous movements in Guatemala, Mexico, and Bolivia. During the "culture wars" of the late 1980s and early 1990s, testimonio received international and widespread academic attention with the publication of I, Rigoberta Menchu as it moved from the margins of South America to the institutions of North American knowledge production.

While Menchu's life experiences as well as the conditions in Guatemala were becoming points of discussion for college students in a multitude of academic departments in North America, anthropologist David Stoll seized the opportunity to criticize the Nobel Peace Laureate for the factual inaccuracies of her story especially the details of Menchu's accounts of human rights abuses and torture her family witnessed. Stoll mobilized his research project and his extensive qualitative interviews within the indigenous communities to discredit Menchú's narrative arguing that she fabricated central aspects of her testimonio as a propaganda strategy to garner international support for revolutionary forces in her country. Conservative critics of higher education such as Dinesh D'Souza and David Horowitz were quick to reference Stoll's research as a platform to rebuke the so-called political agendas of leftist scholars. Stoll argues Menchu's narrative is celebrated "because they tell many academics what they want to hear" within an academic climate where "careerists can project their fantasies of rebellion" (Stoll, 1999: pg. 247).

A multitude of academics most notably John Beverley from the now defunct Latin American Subaltern Studies group defended Menchu and the utilization of testimonio in general. Beverley argued that Menchu's truth claims must not be evaluated through dominant Western constructions since her testimonio is not merely a singular expression but a personal narrative that is shared with the community to which the narrator belongs (Beverley, 2004). Beverley maintained that testimonio must be evaluated as an act of identity-formation where the individual voice is emphasized within a larger collective mode marked by marginalization, dispossession, and struggle. In the words of Guleberger, testimonio portrays an individual experience as a representative of a collective memory and "truth is summoned in the cause of denouncing a present situation of exploitation and oppression or exorcising and setting right official history

(Gugelberger, 1996: pg. 17). Academic debates would emerge with the publication of I, Rigoberta Menchu pertaining to issues of truth, representation, subalternity, and human agency. Such debates within and across academic disciplines continue to remain unsettled. However, what is not widely contested is the transformative ability for testimonio to denote cultural resistance in challenging dominant ideologies that seek to detach the individual subject from social relations, communities, and history.³²

As I have briefly stated, testimonio has been influenced greatly by Latin American struggles. However, it is important to note that Filipino/a American narratives especially within the labor movement have greatly contributed to the genre. While I do not have the space in this chapter to elaborate in great length this point, it is worthwhile to suggest future research projects that could be undertaken to explore radical Filipino American testimonios crafted through the practice of organized labor. A rich archive exists such as Carlos Bulosan's America is in the Heart,³³ the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) - Local 37's

³² Feminist scholar, Nancy Hartsock has critiqued such dominant ideologies as supporting a "rational economic man" (Hartsock, 1998). The "rational economic man" is an ethnocentric vision of community where individual desire to maximize personal satisfaction universally motivates economic and social behavior. Such an ideology located economic inequalities and social vices upon the deficiencies of individual subjects divorced from institutions and larger social structures. Hartsock argues the codification and vision of the "rational economic man" is predicated upon a certain class and cultural location, which is at the heart of capitalist exchange theories of Western civilization.

³³ One of the most important testimonios from United States literature is the semi-autobiographical work by Carlos Bulosan titled America is in the Heart published in 1946 (Bulosan, 1995). The book is one of the first to document the conditions and contradictions of U.S. society during the Great Depression from the optic of working class Filipino American immigrants. Bulosan produced a multitude of other cultural artifacts such as short stories, poems, and letters that intentionally linked his personal life to the broader experiences of largely immigrant Filipino males who arrived in the United States prior to the 1965 Immigration Act – a period of noted xenophobia, union repression, and Cold War hysteria. However, America is in the Heart was explicit in linking his individual hardships within larger communal experiences of injustice. Such intent distinguishes the genre of testimonio from other methodological and literary forms such as autobiography, oral history, or counter storytelling. Thus, America is in the Heart is not only semi-autobiographical but also a testimonio as the text articulates his personal tales of survival and evokes a larger orientation to collective predicaments of Filipino subjugation and racial domination in the United States. In other words, Bulosan's narrative is not confined to an individual subject overcoming harsh life circumstances but rather suggests a collective polyphony of struggle, resistance, and human agency.

*1952 Yearbook*³⁴ (also edited by Bulosan), as well as Philip Vera Cruz's self-titled: *A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworkers Movement*. Furthermore, such a wider study could contribute greatly in shedding more light upon the radical praxis of labor organizers Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo. Other than a fictionalized narrative (Churchill, 1995), very little scholarly research has been initiated that examines their life experiences and legacy. In reviewing the testimonios of Filipino American labor leaders a study could explore how emergent forms of Filipino/a American consciousness were informed by various educational, ideological, social, and political goals and fueled by social conditions of racism, xenophobia, and labor exploitation in the United States. As I outlined briefly in the previous chapter, with the passing of the 1965 Immigration Act a new Filipino/a immigrant population (often referred to as the "second wave") would take shape in the United States that did not share the same degree of exclusion and violence experienced by the labor leaders and "manongs" of a preceding generation. Thus, for a new generation of Filipino/a Americans born in the late 1970s and 1980s, what are the social conditions that have fueled counter-consciousness and an oppositional praxis? What are the qualities and characteristics of such a consciousness? Of particular interest, how has a new Filipino/a American agency come to understand and even oppose the exploitative global forces that have fueled the conditions of mass migration from the Philippines and various contemporary forms of subordination that impact Filipino/as in the United States and

³⁴ The collection of writing in the *Yearbook* express central aspects of testimonio - which can include a multitude of forms whether autobiographical, oral history, memoir, confession, diary, eyewitness report, or life narrative – as the self is not defined in strictly individual terms but more so fused with a communal "we" that displaces the bourgeois conception of the individual toward the witness of a larger community. The *Yearbook* expressed a collective consciousness born from the racist and exploitative conditions in which Filipino immigrants lived and placed important value in the knowledge created in the everyday experiences of union organizers and leaders. Despite their great geographical distance to the Philippines - where Bulosan and the many other Local 37 organizers would never again return - the *Yearbook* also articulated a consciousness grounded in a political project of liberation for all Filipino/as with no regard to time zone or location. The social practices and goals expressed by Local 37 would impact a future generation of Filipino/a American activists and labor organizers including labor leader Philip Vera Cruz.

throughout the diaspora? What role do educational exposure programs to the Philippines play - if any - in nurturing such a counter consciousness? I turn to the educational subfield of critical pedagogy and Asian American studies as essential frameworks to engage the testimonio of Melissa Roxas while addressing these inquiries posed.

Critical Pedagogy and the Testimonio of Melissa Roxas

Critical pedagogy is an important educational subfield that seeks to counter historical amnesia while also demystifying the asymmetrical relations of power and privilege that have been forced upon marginalized communities. Through a multitude of important books that draws upon his experiences of immersion developing cultural circles for critical literacy in Brazil, Paulo Freire analyzed how dominant systems of education are mobilized as the central means for a population to internalize and consume the ideology of a small elite, via “banking education” (Freire, 1990, 2004; Freire & Freire, 1994, 1997). For Freire, “banking education” represents the processes of the ruling elite to naturalize the existing social order by erasing a contested history of struggle and resistance thereby impeding the possibilities for critical consciousness by disconnecting learning from social life and emptying words from the history they are meant to represent (Freire, 1973: pg. 37). In this systematic process of miseducation, Freire argues history is rendered predetermined with no meaningful interrelation to the present. Oppressive social conditions are presented as unchangeable, the future not for toiling human beings to shape. Roxas life experiences offer an important window as to how a particular individual can come to understand their history – not anchored to consumable markers of identity such as ethnic dances, entertainment, and food but instead – through the social practice of resistance.

Melissa Roxas was born on October 23, 1977 in Manila, Philippines. She immigrated to the United States when she was 8 years old to be reunited with her mother. She explains:

My mom was in the United States years before my siblings and I arrived. My mom was able to petition for my brothers and I, only after she was a little bit established. But even then, my family was separated for a while because when we got to the United States we were still separated from my sister and my dad. This was in the early 1980s after Ninoy Aquino was shot. The political situation as well as the economy in the Philippines had a lot to do with our move to the United States (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas alludes to the political economic situation during the 1980s and the U.S. support of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. It was during this time period that the Marcos Administration established a labor intensive and export oriented economy that resulted in the labor power of working Filipino/as becoming the country's most valuable commodity of export. A great flux of Filipino/as - including Roxas' family – looked for opportunities outside of their own country, in the world's more industrialized countries where they generated enormous surplus value (profits) for multinational corporations and the affluent families in Western Europe, East Asia, and North America.³⁵

Upon arriving in the United States, Roxas enrolled in the third grade. She is quite clear that “growing up I knew that I was different.” Through her experience in public schooling Roxas began to see the manufactured social partitions based upon the category of race. In junior high school she saw clearly how “Asians hung around Asians, blacks with blacks, whites with

³⁵ While not the scope of my research, it is important to note that such an economic development strategy cannot be adequately understood without a critical analysis of the corresponding impoverishment created in the Philippines with the imposition of asymmetrical economic agreements and structural adjustments that plundered the country's rich resources and perpetuated conditions of immense unemployment, national dependency, and political unrest.

whites, Latinos with Latinos.” She reflects how her own identification as a Filipino/a American was befuddled compared to other racialized community groups:

I remember growing up and being around a lot of other cultures that [were] very much more defined. For example with Latino communities, there was a sense of history and an acknowledgement with their indigenous roots and their pride as a Chicano. For other families whether...Vietnamese, Korean, or black there is a sense of identity that goes beyond what food they eat. Growing up Filipino that was not necessarily instilled in me. When I reflect upon a Filipino [identity], at least when I was growing up, its mostly rooted with food or an identity with a place that’s called the Philippines ...a country we came from, that we seldom visit and when we do, usually our family takes us to the nice beaches and the mega malls (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas alludes to a Filipino/a American identity disconnected from its own history. Because the historical atrocities and alternative imaginaries of her community have been suppressed and actively made forgotten through school curriculums and other cultural apparatuses, Filipino/a Americans have been rendered ill equipped to build upon a rich culture of political struggle. With a history that has at best been marginalized or worse neglected altogether in educational textbooks, the capacity for Filipino/a Americans to relate to themselves and the world has been impeded, neutralizing a potentially radicalized and empowered collective subjectivity. Roxas proclaims how “even before the Philippine military physically put blindfolds on me...I had been blindfolded during the early part of my life and kept from the truth about my history as a Filipino, the real reasons why my family had to immigrate to the U.S., and I was kept from the truth about what is happening in the Philippines” (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Growing up in the diverse communities of Southern California, Roxas at a young age would observe how her companions from other racialized, oppressed, and internally colonized communities associated their identities to their collective pasts. She reflects:

Everyone around me from other cultures was able to have a proud sense of who they are. I would have friends who could say, I am Mexican American and my family dates back to this date...they would know the history of Mexico and Azteca. Those were the type of people I would be meeting. Many African Americans have a strong sense of their history and why they are here in the United States. For Filipino/a Americans, we are proud to be Filipino, but what can that grounded in without our history? (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

While the struggles of blacks, Latinos, and other immigrant populations would later in her life be a source of great inspiration, for Roxas it was not her own community's history of struggle but the "politics of food" that first facilitated her political consciousness.

As Roxas entered high school, she would soon become active in various activities such as volleyball, track and field, as well as student government. She was also an avid reader learning materials that went beyond her assigned schoolwork. Of particular influence to Roxas was the book, Diet for a New America (Robbins, 1987). She explains,

My first introduction into what I understand now as imperialism was through this [book]. What struck me was that there would be grain that would be raised in the Third World, but primarily to feed not people but the cows in the First World, with the U.S. being one of, if not the largest consumer of meat. In a sense, I got to understand how inequality works through the politics of food - who had access to food, who had access to land, and how that was distributed. Becoming vegan was the only way that I knew at that young

age to make a change and that was start[ing] with myself (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010),

Roxas' individual decision to become a vegan was a concrete and practical solution for a youth interested in changing the world. She explains, "my decision to be vegan, then later vegetarian were influenced by my beliefs at that time, which was, to follow the old adage, to create change in the world, start with yourself." As immigrant groups including Filipino/a Americans often keep their cultural ties to their countries of origin through the consumption of ethnic foods, the fact that Roxas did not commonly eat Filipino/a food in her own home together with her personal decision to become vegetarian would only complicate her sense of identity. She explains:

My family was not traditional Filipino in the sense that I would hear about other moms cooking traditional Filipino foods such as Adobo or cooking Sinigang. My mom was not like that. My mom was a working mom and she worked long hours. So my siblings and I pretty much took care of ourselves and fixed our own food. When my mom would fix food it was mostly American food. So I grew up actually not really [eating] Filipino food at all (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas further notes how over time with continued reading and learning, her politics would change and "my diet choices evolved with that." She continues, "in order to solve the whole ... redistribution of food, [I realized] there is something else that needs to be resolved." Roxas' realization was that social transformation requires more than the freedom of individual choices. She would later recognize "that regardless of whether or not I choose to become a vegan, its not going to change these conditions in the world. So I have to become apart of a bigger change that will take individuals but many, many individuals acting collectively to create change" (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010). The reinvention of her political consciousness would

take a qualitative leap as a college student in Southern California during a time of enhanced and racism as immigrants particularly from Latin America entered into the United States in increased numbers with the passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

In 1996, Roxas enrolled at University of California, San Diego where she would be exposed to the xenophobic aggression that manifested in California legislative politics where funding for educational programs as well as social services that assisted immigrant populations were targeted, threatened, or cut altogether.³⁶ The political climate in California would greatly impact Roxas' experiences in college. She points to this period as a time when "I actually came more politicized in other issues." She began to realize growing up in Southern California how "we [immigrants] are second class citizens, whether someone likes it or not. They are ignoring facts, if they think they are first class citizens living in the United States. I think pretty much that everyone that I know who is a person of color has experienced a kind of discrimination" (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010). In response to such feelings of racist marginalization Roxas formed a study group with a group of friends who wanted to analyze things that were not being offered in her academic studies. "As a science major, I was not a part of any ethnic studies classes at that time... And so my friends and I started a study group to watch a lot of films, progressive films, books, and discuss it amongst each other. We studied things like the book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010). Her politicization as a

³⁶ For instance, California's Republican Party and Governor Pete Wilson proposed Proposition 187 - a ballot initiative designed to deny undocumented immigrants access to social services such as health care and public education. It passed with 59% of the vote in November 1994, though it was later overturned in California courts. Proposition 187 was met with fierce resistance by immigrant rights advocates, labor, and in particular the youth of Southern California with an estimated 150,000 people demonstrating in front of Los Angeles City Hall in defiance against the proposition. The Republican Party responded to the historic mobilizations with further ballot measures that aimed to criminalize immigrant workers further as well as create a climate of fear, repression, and intimidation directed towards working-class youth of color. During Roxas' first year of college Proposition 209 passed, which eliminated affirmative action policies in public employment hiring and state university admissions. Two years later, Proposition 227 was approved by 61 percent of the electorate and eliminated bilingual education in California public schools.

youth through the politics of food and later as a college student during a time of increased anti-immigrant sentiments would eventually lead her to question more deeply her own heritage as a Filipino/a American immigrant.

Despite being a college student in a highly regarded public institution with a large population of Filipino/a Americans, Roxas would realize that “I didn’t know a lot about my own culture. I was studying all these different cultures and I realized I knew very little about my own.” Roxas was able to unearth this purged history through her own initiative as she became involved in the planning of her annual Philippine Culture Night (PCN) at her university. She explains the process of struggle in learning about her community’s history.

In college it was hard because there was nothing being taught about Tagalog or Philippine studies, at least not that I was aware of at that time when I was at UCSD. And actually, I got into dance in college. I decided to join Philippine Culture Night. More than just for the traditional dances, I wanted to understand the meaning ...and the history behind them. So I became the screenwriter and the director of the PCN my second year. Because I wanted to find out more...I started to do my own research. I was so dissatisfied and just upset about the lack of information out there about Philippine history and the books that I was able to find in the library. There was mention of Philippine American War but just a mention of it. Most accounts were largely favorable of the U.S. occupation. Nothing about the atrocities committed by U.S. troops or nothing about occupation...None of the books at the university library that I found at that time talked about this. It was really surprising. The deeper that I wanted to know the more lack of information that I had. But anyways, I wrote the play and it...sparked a strong desire to

keep learning, finding out the truth about my history (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas would continue to dedicate time outside of her academic studies to research and speak with friends in her community to learn more about the current events and history of the Philippines. After five years, Roxas would complete a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Physiology and Neuroscience and a Bachelor of Arts in Third World Studies with a Minor in Health Care and Social Issues. She would also apply to medical school to pursue her childhood dream of “helping the poor and disadvantaged” as a physician.

While applying to various medical schools in the United States and abroad, Roxas had a friend who had been on an educational exposure program, staying with trade unionists, and learning about the workers’ struggles in the Philippines. With the assistance of her friend, Roxas organized her own educational exposure trip in the summer of 2002 focused on issues of community health and alternative medicine. For the first time Roxas would travel to the Philippines without her family. She reflects on the fundamental difference between an educational exposure program and the trips she would take with her family.

Before, when I went to the Philippines I would just go there and visit family and they would always take me to the nice parts of town - the malls and the nice parts of the country, the tourist destinations. But I didn’t want to ignore the beggars in the streets, the children and the slums that you have to pass through to get to the ‘nice’ part of town. I wanted to see the real Philippines, the reality that the majority of Filipinos face every day, so, as they say, I went back to my roots (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

She would immerse herself with a community-based health organization and through such work she would become more cognizant of the harsh reality for too many Filipino/as. Allow me to cite Roxas at length:

Through a clinic in Manila, I spent a lot of time with the urban poor....I would help with taking blood pressure and help with interviewing patients. So it was really hands on. It was community work, living with the community health workers, and living with some of the urban poor communities... I learned about how they did diagnosis. I talked with patients and their common ailments. I was very interested in how community groups in the Philippines were able to provide affordable healthcare to the poor. And one of the ways they were able to do that was through alternative medicine and acupuncture. But they combined it really well. They had doctors that were trained in both Western and in Eastern medicine. I was really impressed with that. There were community health clinics and there would be people who traveled two to three hours from outside of Manila just to get treatment in the urban areas (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010)

Roxas was forever changed not only by the alternative approaches to health services she was both learning and implementing but also how health workers were “actively organizing themselves to improve their conditions and to address the root causes of the problems, not just providing a band aid fix.”

Going to the Philippines provided Roxas with “the tools of analysis to understand the causes of various health problems and the practical tools to solve them.” Her educational exposure program to the Philippines provided her with an opportunity to participate in a political act of witnessing as she began to understand the deregulatory tactics of neoliberalism

implemented tour de force by the Philippine administration and the accelerated destitution such policies reaped upon an entire country. During her time abroad, Roxas would gain acceptance to medical school but she would decline admission choosing instead to dedicate her life to an environment of learning that confronted the historical structures that has produced a multitude of unnatural health problems for the people of Philippines. Through her immersion to the Philippines, Roxas gained deeper understanding of how health problems in the Philippines are connected to larger structural systems of U.S. neocolonialism. Such understanding was attained through a constellation of personal experience, theoretical and historical analysis, as well as collective action. Freire describes this process as conscientization.

Conscientization is important term coined by Freire to signify the formation of a critical consciousness by those who are able to understand the forces of domination or oppression and equipped to contribute in their community's emancipation. Freire reminds us "conscientization is not exactly the starting point of commitment." He elaborates, "conscientization is more of a product of commitment. I do not have to be already critically self-consciousness in order to struggle. It is through struggle with others that one can become conscious and aware" (qtd. in Fischman and McLaren, 2005, pg. 440). The components of Roxas' educational exposure program in the Philippines certainly aligns with Freire's position that critical engagement and genuine dialogue with marginalized groups enables a deeper perception of their gendered, racialized, and subaltern experiences masked by naturalized ideologies. Freire reminds us that, "the more fully he or she enters into reality so that knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to the world unveiled. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit to fight at their side" (Freire, 2000: pg 39).

Through Roxas's exposure program she was enabled a unique optic to understand her own personal identity and its connection to the larger struggles of a Filipino/as in a global diaspora. She is clear, "through the exposure I was also able to understand that my family leaving the Philippines for better jobs and opportunities abroad was also a result of the conditions in the Philippines. They are intertwined." In other words, the common denominator that binds her own life narrative with the social and political economic conditions in the Philippines is a shared history of repression and resistance to U.S. (neo)colonial domination. That shared yet unique history connects her to the Filipino "manongs" of an earlier generation and the continuing immigrant experiences of a populace dispersed throughout the globe. She elaborates:

I learned and interweaved the importance of history with the experiences of Filipino Americans. Because even to understand the waves of migration of Filipino Americans, it is definitely rooted in Philippine history because it is consistent with the economic and political relationships...with the U.S. during that time and the needs of the economy of the U.S. I mean even just thinking of cannery workers and the need for laborers to be in the US, Hawaii, it is all definitely tied. It is not ahistorical. So to say that our identity as Filipino Americans is not rooted in Philippine history is ignoring that history...The reason why we are here and our families were forced to migrate in the first place is because of the problems there. It didn't happen in a vacuum. The prevalent poverty and joblessness created the conditions for mass migration and separation of families that still continues today. The relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines is still very much influenced by its colonial past. Who we are as Filipino Americans, our identity and culture, is shaped by our history and our past. We can't erase this fact, erasing it would be like denying you are Filipino altogether (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Through her exposure in the Philippines, Roxas developed an oppositional consciousness that was not bestowed on the merits of identity alone –whether rooted in ethnicity, gender, or nationality - but attained through a Freirean ability to immerse oneself in a Third World praxis of engagement and community dialogue.

Thus far, I have offered a cognitive mapping of Roxas’ politicization and the unification of her ethnic identity to a durable history of Filipino/a resistance to (neo)colonialism through the social practices, immersion, and community dialogue facilitated in her educational exposure programs to the Philippines. Upon returning to the United States from her Philippine immersion, Roxas would explore various avenues to reduce the distance between her position as a Filipina American in the United States and the social struggles waged by Filipino/as in the Philippines and throughout the diaspora. She would dedicate her writings and cultural work to “confront, to listen to the world unveiled” on behalf of a diasporic Filipino/a polity. She states:

I always had varied interests. I was always interested in health work but I was also a cultural worker, so I was also an artist. How did I merge all that together? Making art for social justice, not just art for the sake of art but with a purpose. I was a writer and I met other artists and we decided to form a cultural organization. I felt that I had to be actively engaged in the community to be able to understand and produce the kind of work that would be relevant to the community (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas articulates a vision of community that draws upon and extends the internationalism of such Filipino labor organizers as Carlos Bulosan, Philip Vera Cruz, and the members of ILWU – Local 37. As such, Roxas’s educational exposure to the Philippines forwarded a conceptualization of community not solely confined within the borders of the United States. Such an international or diasporic vision of belonging builds upon the Filipino labor organizers

of the 1930s as well as the student and youth activists who pushed forward the Asian American movement of the 1960s.

Cartographies of Community in Asian America Studies

The boycott of classes at San Francisco State College in 1968, which led to the institutionalization of the field known as Asian American Studies, was led by a panethnic coalition of students and community activists. The Asian American movement was one of the last ethnic-consciousness movements of the 1960s emerging from the civil rights struggle, the politicization of Asian American college students, and the public protests against the war in Vietnam (Maeda, 2009). Asian American student and community activists at San Francisco State College believed it integral to identify with the causes of Third World liberation struggles in the Asian continent and thus took on the name the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF). A statement of goals by the Philippine American Collegiate Endeavour (PACE), one of the key organizations in the TWLF, acknowledges their understanding of community and its inclusion of Third World peoples. They proclaimed “to fuse ourselves with the masses of Third World people, which are the majority of the world’s peoples, to create, through struggle, a new humanity, a new humanism, a New World consciousness, and within that context collectively control our destinies” (qtd in Okamura: 2003: pg. 174). The international connections made by militant student and community activists has left an indelible mark giving birth to the field of Asian American Studies (AAS) that has forwarded a critical analysis of United States history while taking into account the marginalized Asian immigrant experience for students born out of racism, patriarchy, and internal colonialism. Another essential legacy of the AAS project was to fortify the connections between knowledge production, political activism, and service so that

education would be mobilized to meet the needs of communities beyond the sanctioned walls of the classroom.

In 1994 with more than three decades of entrenchment in academic institutions across the country, the editors of the *Amerasia Journal* would observe an increased discrepancy between increased academic scholarship and the lack of a parallel expansion in activist and community-based research. Glenn Omatsu concluded that Asian American Studies was in a crisis with an emphasis in developing theory that was devoid of social practice. Omatsu further observed that the field had deviated from its founding objectives of “serving the people” and instead had become an exclusive phenomenon confined largely within elite academic institutions (Omatsu, 1994).³⁷ Asian American scholars would take such criticisms seriously. For instance, in 1998 a collection of 20 essays was anthologized around the title Teaching Asian America: Diversity and the Problem of Community with an important organizing theme of “reconsidering community” (Hirabayashi, 1998). Contributors to this important collection would conceptualize community within various classroom sites as they explored exclusively how diverse college and university students could be mobilized for social justice.

Outside the walls of the classroom, service learning models and community-based research projects are the central means where Asian American scholars have linked research and pedagogy to community. For instance, Keith Osajima published an article in the Journal of Asian American Studies titled, “Pedagogical Considerations in Asian American Studies” where

³⁷ Kenyon Chan in his article, “Rethinking the Asian American Studies Project” critiqued Omatsu’s analysis labeling his designation of what counts as community as a “form of elitism.” Furthermore, Chan argues that proponents who frame Asian American studies as community versus campus have created a binary much like the dualism in the black/white paradigm of race relations. I believe that in rendering the debate in such terms, Chan elides an important observation most notably the field’s increased depoliticization as a result of the structural and cultural climate of “publish or perish.” Such a climate has certainly limited scholars from truly engaging and committing to community-based collaborations as well as oppositional / transformational research projects.

he maintains the incorporation of service learning and collaborative community research are the avenues to “develop the skills and sense of empowerment needed [for students] to become politically active” (1998; pg. 285). An important example of such a program is the Pin@y Educational Partnerships (PEP) founded in 2001 and based in San Francisco State University’s Asian American Studies Department.

Filipino/a American scholars within Asian American Studies have demonstrated a primary interest in studying community within specific locales inside the United States historically occupied by Filipino/a youth, immigrants, activists, and other cultural workers (Espiritu, 1995; Bonus, 2000; Fujita-Rony, 2003; Habal, 2007). Complicating narrow conceptions of community within Asian American Studies, *Amerasia Journal* published a special issue in 2003 with the title “Pedagogy, Social Justice, and the State of Asian American Studies.” Divided into two sections, the first highlighted the importance of reconnecting education to social justice as contributing scholars from a far ranging scope of theoretical frameworks such as critical pedagogy, constructivism, and indigenous epistemology agreed that social justice education demanded strong ties within communities as a prerequisite for realizing research projects of transformation and justice. The second grouping of essays, recognize how Asian America is a formation within the United States as well as constituted by “Pacific crossings” and “Asian diasporas.” Taking into account global social formations and diasporas, contributing scholars called for a broadening understanding of community marked by transnational flows of migration. Okamura explains, “the transnational relationships of Filipinos in diaspora are developed and maintained through cultural practices such as balikabayan (returnee) visits home, the sending of remittances and consumer goods to relatives in the Philippines, and international telephone and email communication that provides for instantaneous information flows to and

from the homeland” (Okamura, 177). Roxas’s testimonio and my larger research project that critically assesses educational exposure programs to the Philippines, contribute to the important conversations taking place within AAS. It does so with particular consideration to Filipino/a communities that are globally scattered as a result of the Philippines historical and (neo)colonial relationship to the United States. As such, Roxas’s testimonio provides an initial case in point as to how alternative pedagogical, cultural, and social practices can be carried out that link Filipino/as globally beyond provincial practices of sending money, shipping commercial products, or consuming the various forms of cultural flows that traverse to and from the Philippines. Similar to the wider goals of the student and activists who helped in the formation of Asian American Studies, I take the position that educational exposure programs such as the one Roxas participated in breathes life into a bottom-up, oppositional, and global approach to an Asian American studies project. The fact that the creation of AAS was contingent upon the strength of youth involved in pan-ethnic, community-based formations that were linked to global social movements must never be erased from collective memory. Exposure programs to the Philippines builds upon such movements offering an important global vision of community that is united across various forms of difference and national boundaries in its defiance of U.S. imperial domination and the gross violation of human rights witnessed around the world.

Toward A Diasporic Counter-Consciousness

In August 2005, with the rising cases of human rights violations occurring in the Philippines, Roxas participated in an international fact-finding mission organized in collaboration with BAYAN – USA. The mission convened participants from the United States and around the world to gather, collect, and hear stories from victims and survivors of human rights violations in the Philippines. During this one-week trip in the Philippines, Roxas listened

“to countless incidents of killings, abductions and torture of Filipino citizens, mostly those who were active in protesting the government’s oppressive policies. These were peasants who were advocating for their right to their land; these were workers who were striking for better wages at a factory; these were students, professionals and church people; these were women who wanted better living conditions and education for their children.” This trip would solidify Roxas’ political commitment to pursue human rights work in the Philippines. In 2007, she returned to the Philippines to conduct an extended exposure program to pursue “human-rights advocacy full-time” by conducting community-based health work and writing poetry that pertained to the social conditions she encountered throughout her travels.³⁸

For two and a half years, Roxas’ life was dedicated to furthering a culture of human rights and social justice in the Philippines as she worked with various health, workers, indigenous, women, and cultural groups in Central Luzon. Reflecting on her experiences she states, “each day I was with the community, I learned how precious a birth can be, how to appreciate life, and I slowly began to understand what they meant when they whispered me their names and told their stories” (Roxas, June 21, 2009).³⁹ At around 1:30pm on May 19, 2009, while conducting health care surveys in La Paz, Tarlac in an effort to plan for future medical programming in the area, Roxas and two of her companions were forcibly abducted by a group of heavily armed men. Roxas states:

³⁸ Unknown Author. (2009, May 5). Melissa Roxas moved to Philippines to pursue Human-Rights Advocacy. *Bulatlat*. Retrieved June 1, 2011, from <http://bulatlat.com/main/2009/05/25/melissa-roxas-moved-to-philippines-to-pursue-human-rights-advocacy/>

³⁹ *Thank you message from Melissa Roxas*. (2009, June 1). Retrieved June 1, 2011, from <http://justiceformelissa.org/2009/06/thank-you-message-from-melissa-roxas/>

I was writing about human rights in the Philippines. And although I was aware of the human rights situation in the Philippines, I never thought that I would be targeted and become a victim myself. But one of the most brutal and alarming characteristics of the Philippine government's counterinsurgency campaign, Oplan Bantay Laya, is that the government considers as suspect and subversive anyone who helps and is on the side of the poor; those who support the Filipino people's right to actively participate in and decide about their own communities; people who are human rights advocates and those who advocate for truth and justice⁴⁰

In legal affidavits submitted to the Philippine courts, Roxas details the conditions of her captivity in a location believed to be a military camp of the Philippine Army. According to her legal testimony, for six days, she was blindfolded, handcuffed, interrogated, and physically and psychologically tortured. Roxas's captors confiscated her possessions, including two years of her literary writings, deprived her legal counsel, and physically harmed her in an attempt to coerce Roxas into signing a document stating she was a member of the New People's Army (NPA) – the military component of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The physical abuse inflicted upon her was severe as her captors were described as

[C]hoking her a number of times, repeatedly boxing her on her jaw, chest and rib cage, and banging her head on the wall, while the others uttered: 'matigas ' to. Barilin na lang natin [She is stubborn. Lets shoot her]. Every time she would fall on the ground because of the beatings, other men would force her to stand to resume assault. Once, a plastic bag

⁴⁰ Melissa Roxas Speaks: A Survivor of Torture in the Philippines. 2010, March 17) from http://www.workers.org/2010/world/melissa_roxas_0325/

was placed on her head which suffocated her and caused her to lose her breath for a while (Writ of Amparo).

Roxas' abduction is consistent with the militarist strategies of the counter-insurgency plan she referenced called, Oplan Banatay Laya (OBL), launched in 2002 by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Human rights organizations including the United Nations have criticized OBL as a strategy that allows military forces in the Philippines to dangerously target activists and progressive individuals working with openly legal community based organizations, churches, labor unions, and cultural groups.⁴¹

On May 25, 2009 Roxas was released near her uncle's house in Quezon City. Despite all that has happened to her, Roxas speaks to the importance of educational exposure programs to the Philippines.

What happened to me only shows how brutal and suppressive the Philippine government and military is. It was not because of the exposure program that this happened to me. The exposure program only opened my eyes to reality and introduced me to a movement that gave me the tools of analysis to understand the problems and also offer solutions. ...Like

⁴¹ OBL was implemented in the Philippines shortly after the U.S. global "war against terrorism." It enabled the Arroyo regime to target those critical of her regime and deprive individuals their rights through rendition, abduction, or even killings of suspected 'terrorists. In 2007, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston recommended that military officers refrain from making public statements that conflated the democratic activities of activists and progressives with terrorists groups and "armed rebels." Alston's report denounced aspects of the counterinsurgency program that have led to the targeting and execution of many individuals working with civil society organizations. In fact, in April 2009, the UN Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) released a 12-page report expressing grave concern at the "routine and widespread use of torture " in the country and the "climate of impunity for perpetrators of acts of torture including military, police, and other state officials."

many other activists, I wanted to contribute towards genuine change in the Philippines and in the world and worked in the communities that were the most vulnerable, the most marginalized. We provided health care, we helped improve conditions in the community, provided education, and we taught communities to be self-sufficient. This is not a crime. The crime is not providing the people with what they need, the crime is not giving a hungry child food, the crime is those that prey on illiterate farmers and take away their land, the crime is torturing someone because they worked in favor of these people and believed in change (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

The dehumanization Roxas faced only strengthened her political resolve to speak out against the historical social conditions that permit the violations of human rights in the Philippines and around the world. She has traveled throughout the United States, defiantly retelling her testimony. Roxas states, “It is often hard, even up to now, to talk about my experience. But the reason why I tell my story is because it is also the story of many others, and it reflects the experience of many Filipinos who have been abducted and tortured in the Philippines.” Thus, the importance of Roxas’ politicization and her experiences while on exposure in the Philippines lies not only in its ability to stand in solidarity with the victims and survivors of human rights violations in the Philippines but also in its capacity to suggest the formation of a unique counter consciousness emerging within the Filipino/a American community. The methodological form of testimonio has been advantageous in providing a cognitive map as to how one individual - as a part of a historical collective mode called Filipino/a Americans - acquired what I am calling a “diasporic counter consciousness.” Incubated through a Third World practice of immersion, engagement, and dialogue, Roxas’ educational exposure to the Philippines enabled her to witness how the circuits of critical reflection and radical practice can be forged. Such collective praxis

would become the essence of a new Filipino/a identity and diasporic counter consciousness she would aspire to attain that connects local struggles for social transformation in the United States as ultimately linked to the fate of a neocolonial polity dispersed throughout the globe and the not yet realized pursuit for sovereignty in the Philippine homeland.

On an exposure program it is designed to show you the Philippines – all of it, the nice parts and the not so nice party so you can really see what stark inequality is. Why so many are so hungry and why there is an overabundance in other places, how different it is also from our lives in the U.S. It changes you, it moves you, you begin to understand your parents more, your family, you begin to complete that definition of what Filipino really means (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Through her educational exposure and her own personal struggles for survival, a diasporic counter consciousness would materialize, committed as Roxas explains in creating “true meaningful change based on the concrete reality of Filipinos in the U.S...and addressing the root causes of their problems. This means helping to promote and create meaningful change in the Philippines ...because a movement to change conditions in the Philippines is towards a global movement to improving conditions everywhere” (Individual Interview, 16 October 2010).

Roxas’ testimonio demonstrates that a diasporic counter consciousness is emerging within the Filipino/a American community that builds upon the vision and praxis of militant Filipino labor organizers as well as the student and youth activists who aligned with the struggles of a Third World polity. As I have maintained, both movements implied an internationalist perspective of community where contestations against racism, patriarchy, and exploitation in the United States were bound to the global struggle for freedom, genuine democracy, and self-

determination in the Philippines and throughout the Third World. Roxas' testimonio is unique in that she demonstrates how a human agent not only becomes politicized to these ideals but also through her social practice actively participates in developing radical sites of critical pedagogy that is diasporic in scope.

Unsatisfied with local interruptions to a global system of dehumanization, educational exposure programs to the Philippines have enabled Roxas to actively learn and confront a global capitalist system. As a result, she has committed herself with the most subjugated sectors of Philippine society in overcoming the global conditions that have set in motion massive impoverishment and state violence. To be sure, defeating such historic conditions requires an active agency with the consciousness, courage, and commitment to struggle for a better world. No one ethnic or racial group alone can transform such global historic conditions. Nevertheless, Filipino/a Americans linked to global social movements abroad through such programs as educational exposures hold the promise of ushering new forms of human experiences. Such narratives may one day speak to the end of state violence, gendered exploitation, and racist subjugation. Until then we have the words of Melissa Roxas to remind us:

Me being able to write this right now is testimony of how your collective love, support, prayers, and such action is helping me and others like me through this experience. I know that your support is also part of a larger movement to create change towards a world free of poverty and oppression...There are many more desaparacidos, more abductions, torture, and extra-judicial killings going on in the Philippines and around the world. Let the new birth come when there is an end to all of the killings, abductions, and torture. Let the noise come from all directions. They are no longer whispers but shouts for justice.

The connection of racism to global capital accumulation and class rule is essential in the formation of a diasporic counter consciousness equipped in challenging the historic relationship of subordination between the Philippines and the United States in the present tense. In the next chapter, generating greatly from the insights of W.E.B. Du Bois, I explore how Filipino/a Americans are utilizing cultural production and in particular hip hop to teach against a history of racialized oppression and challenge the structures of global apartheid.

CHAPTER VI: RHYMING, RESEARCHING, & RESISTING
GLOBAL APARTHEID:
Hip Hop Exposure to the Philippines and the Renewal of
W.E.B. Du Bois's "Guiding Hundredth"

"[T]he problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea" (Du Bois, 1989: pg. 13).

W.E.B. Du Bois,

"The method which we evolved for opposing slavery and fighting prejudice are not to be forgotten, but learned for our own and other's instruction" (Du Bois & Aptheker, 2001: pg. 143-144).

W.E.B. Du Bois

Educator, African American scholar, and Pan-Africanist activist W.E.B. Du Bois introduced a multitude of important concepts in a rich career that spanned eighty years (1883 to 1963). His research projects relied upon mixed methods and multidisciplinary analysis to confront pressing global issues such as the problem of the color line, which Du Bois identified as the greatest dilemma of the twentieth century. Du Bois's scholarship has been taken up in various fields including sociology, history, ethnic and cultural studies as scholars have generated much from his theoretical and methodological insights into matters of culture, race, political economy, and, history. Unfortunately, Du Bois's research has not generated much interest for his critical contributions to the field of education. Educational philosopher, Derrick P. Aldridge maintains, "Du Bois has been for the most part neglected as an educational thinker in twentieth-century American history, and his educational ideas have been largely ignored by the fields of

educational and intellectual history” (Aldridge, 2008: pg. 1).⁴² Recent works of educational philosophers and critical race theorists have undoubtedly contributed in building upon Du Bois’s ideas in conversation with the field of education.⁴³ Yet, in surveying existing literature, contemporary educational scholars have concentrated almost exclusively upon Du Bois’s earlier writings such as the essays contained in his most famous text, The Souls of Black Folk. A young Du Bois certainly expressed a radical urgency for change on behalf of those constrained within a veiled world that “yields him no true self-consciousness but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world.” Du Bois continues, “It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two

⁴² Why have Du Bois’s insights especially his works published after 1903 not been taken up more intently within the field of education? While not the focus of this chapter, I can speculate a host of possibilities to Du Bois’s omission within contemporary educational scholarship. First, the sheer scope and depth of Du Bois’s writing that span the conditions and contradictions of African Americans after the U.S. civil war, the Great Depression, two world wars, and the commencement of the Cold War while rich, generative, and multidisciplinary, certainly bode difficult in extrapolating educational research projects. Second, his lasting contributions to anti-racist political thought through such writings as his 1903 publication and most famous text, The Souls of Black Folk, his founding of the Crisis, as well as a rich archive of work has resulted in a greater focus of contemporary research in aptly confronting the psychological impacts of white supremacy and the problems of the color line. Such themes have generally been outside the purview of educational scholarship before the advent of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the 1990s. Third, Du Bois’s internationalist scope and his attention to issues pertaining to Pan Africanism presents difficulties to an educational field that has largely ignored and thus have not contributed to the debates centering around postcolonial theory as well as Asian, African, and other global diasporas. Recently, Du Bois’s writings have served as an important point of reference for contemporary scholarship that explores the historical, political, and cultural relationships between African and Asia diasporas. Interest in Du Bois’s pioneering work on global diasporas, globalization, anti-colonialism (produced long before each were fashionable to examine within the academy) - has recently set in motion interdisciplinary research in “Afro-Asia.” Unfortunately, I know of no work within the field of education that has contributed to the development, debates, and discourse of this rich and emerging subfield. Finally, and perhaps most significant of all, the aversion of Marxist theory within schools of education and institutions of higher education in general have obscured and greatly reduced the significance of Du Bois’s work to educational thought in general. His generative application of historical materialism to matters of learning, labor, and living within African American contexts were very much central to the research he would undertake after his publication of The Souls of Black Folks. However, the anti-communist fervor of the Cold War and the ongoing distaste for historical material frameworks have contributed in limiting Du Bois’s contributions to the field of education to his much earlier works.

⁴³ See for instance: Eugene Provenzo’s Du Bois on Education (2002) and Terry O’Neal Oatts’s “W.E.B. Du Bois and Critical Race Theory: Toward a Du Boisian Philosophy of Education (2003).”

warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (Dubois, 1989: pg. 3). Yet, by building almost exclusively upon Du Bois’s youthful writings as well as concepts he admitted to be inchoate and underdeveloped (such as his thesis of a “talented tenth”) in many ways quarantines his educational insights from the revolutionary, democratic, and internationalist scholarship he would forward in the years following the publication of The Souls of Black Folk in 1903.⁴⁴

Du Bois’s conceptualization of a “talented tenth” was a leadership model he would ultimately refute - upgrading to a more global and democratic perspective of leadership, education, and social transformation that he coined the “guiding hundredth.” Revisiting Du Bois’s outline of a “guiding hundredth” originally introduced in 1949 has important implications for contemporary educational research, both theoretically and methodologically as it pushes against the compartmentalized boundaries of researching issues of race and class within the field of education. I take the position that Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” is embodied as well as extended in the praxis of educational exposure participants to the Philippines. Furthermore, I take the position that a study of such community-based exposure programs can offer valuable insights into current debates taking place between and across the terrains of critical race theory and critical pedagogy. For instance, scholarly debates have ensued about whether or not critical pedagogy, as a field of study, has adequately incorporated issues of race and racism into its analysis of learning, consciousness, and social transformation.⁴⁵ Specifically, educational

⁴⁴ See the scholarship on Du Bois from noted theorist Reiland Rabaka who notes, “many scholars have both masked and marred Du Bois’s contributions to philosophy of education by focusing exclusively on his “talented tenth” theory (Rabaka, 2003: pg. 399).

⁴⁵ The Journal for Critical Educational Policy Studies (JCEPS) is an important online journal that houses many of these scholarly debates. See for instance: Mike Cole’s “On ‘white supremacy’ and caricaturing, misrepresenting, and dismissing Marx and Marxism” (2009); Deb Kelsh and Dave Hill’s “The Culturalization of Class and the Occluding of Class Consciousness: The knowledge Industry in/of Education” (2006) as well as David Gillborn’s “Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing?” (2010) and his article “Who’s Afraid of Critical Race Theory in

scholars have critiqued Marxist foundations of critical pedagogy maintaining that such a framework does not seriously account for the complexities of race, gender, and culture rendering such issues as epiphenomenon to matters of production and class relations.⁴⁶ On the other hand, critical race and cultural radicals have been accused of foregrounding the experiences of historically subjugated groups in a manner that is ultimately divorced from the messy historical terrain of political economy. Furthermore, Marxist scholars argue that in “culturalizing” the social relation of class or utilizing it as a mere descriptive category to denote income or life chances has only helped fuel a politics of celebratory difference in the educational left and radical scholarship that instead of challenges the logic of neoliberalism ultimately compliments it. Scatamburlo-D’Annibale and McLaren argue that theorizing matters of difference such as race relations in isolation from material relations ultimately elides the “economic carnage wrought by capitalism” resulting in a scholarly “situation where textual acrobatics are equated with system shaking ‘revolutionary action’ (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale & McLaren, 2003). In this chapter, I turn to Du Bois’s outline of a “guiding hundredth” as an important mediation between such debates enabling transformative scholarly and community approaches that are equipped to challenge - what the late social theorist, Manning Marable has aptly described as the dehumanizing structures of global apartheid.

Diagnosing the consequences of mass impoverishment and dispossession for a global majority of people of color, Marable defines global apartheid as the “racialized division and stratification of resources, wealth, and power that separates Europe, North America, and Japan

Education” published in *Power and Education* (2009).

⁴⁶ Mas’ud Zavarzadeh has noted in his incisive essay, “The Pedagogy of Totality” that “in advanced capitalism, women and men, black or white, gay or straight, ‘All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use.’ What matters is the cost of labor not the identity of the laborer – which is another way of saying that the only issue is the class issue” (Zavarzadeh, 2003: pg. 16).

from the billions of mostly black, brown, indigenous, undocumented immigrant and poor people across the planet” (Marable, 2008: pg. 4). Marable argues that while racialization has a unique history in the United States, a refracted or global analysis is needed to genuinely account for the reach of racial subordination embedded in patterns of asymmetrical economic exchanges that penalize nations of the Third World with predatory policies of structural adjustment and exorbitant loan payments. He states:

[A]n internationalist perspective...explain[s] the dynamics of the brutal transnational processes of capitalist political economy – the forced movement of involuntary labor across vast boundaries; the physical and human exploitation of slaves; the subsequent imposition of debt peonage, convict leasing, and sharecropping in postemancipation societies; and the construction of hypersegregated, racialized urban ghettos, from Soweto to Rio de Janeiro’s slums to Harlem. (Marable, 2008: pg. 3)

Marable recognizes important distinctions of U.S. racial domination and resistance in an epoch of global apartheid that Du Bois did not live to critically analyze. Marable argues that earlier forms of U.S. racial domination such as slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and urban ghettoization of the 20th centuries were “largely predicated upon the confines or realities of domestic markets and the policies of the U.S. nation-state” and thus “meaningful social reforms such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were debated almost entirely within the context of America’s expanding domestic economy and a background of Keynesian, welfare state public policies” (Marable, 2008: pg. 7). To be sure, in a contemporary moment of neoliberal corporate globalization, the making and managing of race is greatly different now than from the times of Du Bois’s scholarly works.

Today, it is no longer permissible to openly claim biological differences between races. The implementation of neoliberal color-blindness in schools, curriculum, and educational policies have in many ways repackaged white supremacy and with the historic election of the first black U.S. president it is not uncommon for mainstream cultural, media, and educational apparatuses to even deny the very existence of racial inequalities.⁴⁷ Furthermore, in an era where transnational capital has the freedom to roam the world with no regard to nation state boundaries (while human beings are restricted such freedoms), U.S. communities are challenged with the de-industrialization of entire regions, vast unemployment, stark inequalities, mass incarceration, as well as the depletion of social and educational services. Marable would certainly agree with educational scholar Jean Anyon who describes the condition of our nation's urban schooling environment where over two-thirds of the United States' poor youth of color reside as "urbanized segregated communities" - lacking adequate infrastructure, overcrowded, and deficient in basic school materials and monetary funds (Anyon, 2005, pg. 5). Since the state of our nation's social and educational affairs cannot be divorced from global social relations of inequality, militarism, exploitation, and race, efforts to transform such conditions must also be transnational in scope.

Conditions of global apartheid have created a dismal social reality for working class, immigrant youth within U.S. public schools as well as educators of a Philippine Diaspora. For instance, U.S. school districts in need of qualified teachers have turned to the recruitment of Filipino/a contract workers to serve as a band-aid fix for vacant teaching positions as well as to ameliorate classroom overcrowding in the "urbanized segregated communities" of Los Angeles, New York, and New Orleans. According to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), an estimated 19,000 migrant teachers work in U.S. schools, many who are women from the

⁴⁷ Such a makeover of racial discourses is most evident in the debates over immigration, as the corporate media, school administrators, as well as the white working class have been able to promote xenophobic social and educational policies by asserting unbridgeable cultural differences between immigrant groups and home populations.

Philippines.⁴⁸ Furthermore, recruiting firms have exploited Filipino teachers charging an upward of \$16,000 – approximately four times what they could earn annually as a teacher in the Philippines – to place Filipino educators in schools around the United States.⁴⁹ It is sardonic that Filipino/a teachers from the United States’ first Asian colony are now responsible for teaching our nation’s youth of color such subjects as math, science, as well as English composition.⁵⁰ Marable is resoundingly clear that integral to understanding such global contradictions “is racism, sometimes openly vicious and unambiguous, but much more frequently presented in race-neutral, color-blind language” (Marable, 2006). In light of global racial formations that implicate as well as transcend U.S. national boundaries how can our modes of scholarly and community inquiry assist in demystifying such “race-neutral, color blind language” as well as propel international forms of resistance to the structures of global apartheid?

In this chapter, I take the position that Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” for global leadership and social transformation has great use-value in pursuing such an inquiry. Of

⁴⁸ See American Federation of Teachers’ web site <http://la.aft.org/index.cfm?action=article&articleID=714e57d6-a8c7-4480-a410-b21de9efdb25> and <http://www.aft.org/newspubs/news/2011/053111philippines.cfm> (accessed on March 20, 2012).

It is important to note that these statistics must be placed in appropriate context as Filipino/a educators represent just one segment of the 3,400 Filipinos leaving their country each day in search of work abroad. In fact, during the span of 2001 to 2008 more Filipinos left the Philippines as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) than at any point in the country’s history.

⁴⁹ U.S. based recruiting companies – most notably Universal Placement International Inc, and the company’s president Loiurdes Navarro - have been accused of keeping Filipino educators in “virtual servitude” by holding onto their U.S. work visas, restricting who they interact and live with, and charging inflated commission fees.

⁵⁰ Educational and language policies in the Philippines cannot be divorced from the logic of global apartheid. The veil of English often coined as the “language of globalization” together with a corresponding educational system in the Philippines has served as powerful vehicles for the ideological reproduction of unequal global relations that continues to pull the souls, minds, and bodies of Filipinos abroad. On August 2006, Philippine president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo instituted Executive Order 210 (EO 210) that established the English language as the preferred medium of instruction in the country. Under this law, the percentage of time allotted for learning areas conducted in English should be no less than 70% in all high school levels. The objectives of this policy initiative are shaped by the global marketplace, where international communications and the call center industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the Philippines with its specific need for semi-skilled, English speaking workers.

particular interest is his ability to fuse an experiential accounting to the lived conditions of racial oppression with an invaluable global critique of political economy. While Du Bois and his outline of a “guiding hundredth” is of great reference for contemporary educational scholars interested in furthering research projects that critically explore the global connections of race and class, I take note of the observations made by ethnic studies scholar, Reiland Rabaka who maintains Du Bois’s “educational thought is a virtual treasure trove in theoretical terms ...but often [he] gave few clues as to how and to whom his educational theory could and should be applied” (Rabaka, 2008: pg. 61). Through my research of educational exposure programs to the Philippines, I explore how contemporary Filipino/a American praxis provides concrete examples as to “how and to whom” Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” can be extended to document, analyze, as well as transform the racialized experiences that exist within Filipino/a (diasporic) American communities. Drawing from the cultural media created from a hip hop exposure program to the Philippines (by way of a documentary called *Sounds of a New Hope*), I critically explore how Du Bois’s concept of a “guiding hundredth” is made legible through the radical global practices of Filipino/a Americans. Before I outline findings from my cultural media analysis – notably the hip hop exposure’s pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological contributions to a critique of race with a fused analysis of global political economy - it is imperative that I first outline how Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” serves as a theoretical upgrade to his earlier intellectual framework of a “talented tenth.”

From Talented Tenth to Guiding Hundredth

Embedded in Du Bois’s rich archive of writing is a creative and critical account for the lived dimensions of racial oppression. Du Bois utilized various forms of cultural, personal, and experiential expressions in his research as he demonstrated how they were not only important

sites of data collection but also essential forms in forwarding new ideas, imaginations, and strategies for black social transformation. For example, in reverence to the roots of African American music, Du Bois placed at the beginning of each chapter in his most famous text, The Souls of Black Folk a hymn from a Negro folk song signifying the resistance and resourcefulness embedded within the historical experiences of African Americans. In his essay, “Of the Sorrow Songs,” Du Bois explains that as a young child the music and cultural production of Negro spirituals stirred him, “full of the voices of my brothers and sisters, full of the voices of the past” (Du Bois, 1989: pg. 178). Du Bois maintains that historically, song was one of the few channels that slaves could speak their experiences and struggles to one another and to the world. He states,

And so by fateful change the Negro Folk-song – the rhythmic cry of the slave – stands to-day not simply as the sole American music, but as the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas. It has been neglected, it has been, and is, half despised, and above all it has been persistently mistaken and misunderstood; but notwithstanding, it still remains as the singular spiritual heritage of the nation and the greatest gift of the Negro people (Du Bois, 1989: pg. 206).

For Du Bois, the experiential knowledge articulated in songs imparted an empowering voice of resistance for those constrained behind the veil as well as enabled a critical lens for historical and social critique.

In his autobiography, Dusk of Dawn, Du Bois makes use of his personal experiences - in what would now be coined by contemporary critical race theorists as a “counter narrative” - to demonstrate how experiential knowledge can offer critical points of analysis when refracted beyond the personal to analyze the social, material, and historic terrains that he and an entire

group of people (black folk) are situated. Du Bois speaks to his personal struggle and process related to the issue of “the color line” as he maintains, “had it not been for the race problem early thrust upon me and enveloping me, I should have probably been an unquestioning worshiper at the shrine of the social order and economic development into which I was born” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 27). Du Bois explains that his interest in writing Dusk of Dawn was to write, “not so much my autobiography as the autobiography of a concept of race, elucidated, magnified and doubtless distorted in the thoughts and deeds which were mine” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. viii).

Of particular interest in my research is how Du Bois utilizes his life experiences to scrutinize the social contradictions of racism and its global connection with underlying social forces. He explains, “beyond my conception of ignorance and deliberate ill-will as causes of race prejudice, there must be other and stronger and more threatening forces, forming *the founding stones* of race antagonisms, which we had only begun to attack or perhaps in reality had not attacked at all” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 283-284). In his autobiography he envisions a global populace, which he would later term the “guiding hundredth,” that is theoretically, culturally, and politically equipped in confronting “the founding stones of race antagonisms.”

Based upon his own life experiences and personal success in traversing public schools and elite academic institutions of higher learning, Du Bois forwarded the idea of a “talented tenth” in his essay of the same name, which he included in his famous text, The Souls of Black Folk. For Du Bois, a “talented tenth” was an educated group of African Americans who he believed could commit their studies and learning to transform the racialized plight of the black community in the United States. Du Bois underscored his belief that classical education was required in crafting a cadre of intellectuals committed in improving the life chances of the African American community and challenging the dominant logic of U.S. racism.

As a student and a young scholar, Du Bois assumed an African American “talented tenth” - consisting of elite college-trained individuals - would focus their studies upon the problems of African Americans and work to “make personal sacrifice for solving these problems” (Du Bois, 1948). For Du Bois, the formation of a talented black intellectual elite was dependent upon higher education and a curriculum grounded in “intelligence, broad sympathy, knowledge of the world that was and is, and of the relation of men to it – this is the curriculum of that Higher Education which must underlie true life” (Du Bois, 1903). With broad training in the sciences and the humanities, Du Bois believed a “talented tenth” would be the central agents in ushering improved conditions on behalf of a wider African American community in schools, civic life, and beyond. Du Bois’s ideas of a “talented tenth” were informed by his own background growing up in Great Barrington, Massachusetts where as an adolescent he was afforded privileges not provided to the majority of African American youth of his time.⁵¹ Du Bois’s conception of combating and overcoming racial oppression correlated with his ideas of a “talented tenth” as he took the position that black intellectuals, such as himself, were advantageously positioned to accurately and thoroughly present the “monstrous wrong of race hate” to a wider American public so that its immorality and illogic would dissolve from popular opinion and institutionalized practices (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 282).

Du Bois’s “talented tenth” was in stark contrast to other ideas for black leadership and education advocated by his rival Booker T. Washington and his Atlanta compromise. Washington had reached an agreement with Southern white leaders, which enabled blacks access

⁵¹ For instance, Du Bois had “little contact with crime and degradation” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 16) and as a black youth he was encouraged to excel in his studies. Having access to academic institutions that was primarily reserved for privileged whites, Du Bois would gain admittance to Fisk University and soon thereafter becoming the first African American to earn his doctorate degree from Harvard University.

to industrial education and other educational charities so long as African American would not challenge white political rule or advocate for structural change or larger democratic rights. Du Bois critiqued Washington arguing the Atlanta compromise preserved the long-term interests of a predominantly white power structure while hindering black political power and limiting black education to mere vocational training. To be sure, Du Bois's "talented tenth" was not without criticism especially in regards to his paternalistic ideas of a black intellectual vanguard as the central agents in ushering change on behalf of the African American community. In The Souls of Black Folk Du Bois would posit, "Was there ever a nation on God's fair earth civilized from the bottom upward (Du Bois, 1989: pg. 139). His answer, "never, it is, ever was and ever will be from the top downward that culture filters. The talented tenth rises and pulls all that are worth saving up to their vantage ground (Du Bois, 1989: pg. 139). Later in Du Bois's life, he would reevaluate his ideas of black leadership as he continuously explored new phenomenon, reexamined global social affairs, and analyzed the social conditions for those confined to life behind the color line. As a result, four decades after publishing his theory of the "talented tenth," Du Bois would forward an entirely new, global, and more democratic framework in a speech/essay he appropriately titled, "The Talented Tenth Memorial Address" (Memorial Address).

It is in the Memorial Address that Du Bois acknowledges the shortcomings of earlier leadership paradigm and in particular its elitist, parochial concerns of black intellectuals at the expense of a larger black community.⁵² He states:

⁵² In "The Talented Tenth Memorial Address" Du Bois further admits how his earlier ideas of a Talented Tenth lends itself to "a group of selfish, self-indulgent, well-to-do men, whose basic interest in solving the Negro problem was personal: personal freedom and unhampered enjoyment and use of the world, without any real care...as to what became of the mass of American Negroes or the mass of any people" (Du Bois 1948). Remediating these shortcomings, Du Bois endorses a democratic framework of a Guiding Hundredth where "the world would thus escape the enduring danger of being run by a selfish few for their own advantage" (Du Bois, 1948).

[S]ome years ago I used the phrase “The Talented Tenth,” meaning leadership of the Negro race in America by a trained few. Since then this idea has been criticized. It has been said that I had in mind the building of an aristocracy with neglect of the masses. This criticism has seemed even more valid because of emphasis on the meaning and power of the mass of people to which Karl Marx gave voice in the middle of the nineteenth century, and which has been growing in influence ever since (Du Bois, 1948).

In an attempt to address such criticisms while forwarding a global and democratic leadership model for radical social change, Du Bois introduces his concept of a “guiding hundredth.”

He outlines the indispensable role of an organized leadership open to the democratic leadership and experiential knowledge of youth, cultural workers, educators, and organic intellectuals not only located in the United States but across the globe. He maintains, black leadership must be grounded in the “concept of a group-leadership, not simply educated and self-sacrificing, but with clear vision of present world conditions and dangers, and conducting American Negroes to alliance with culture groups in Europe, America, Asia and Africa, and looking toward a new world culture” (Du Bois, 1948). He recognizes that African Americans can form international solidarities with other global populations grounded upon a shared resistance to racial oppression, colonization, and exploitative human relations. In Dusk of Dawn, Du Bois clarifies this point as he explains, “the social heritage of slavery, and their endurance of discrimination and insult” bound the diasporic communities of Africa together. Du Bois continues, “in face of this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through yellow Asia and into the South Seas” (Du Bois, 1984: pg. 117). Thus, for Du Bois African American resistance and revolutionary praxis attains its full transformative potential

when equipped with a global standpoint. As I will demonstrate later in this chapter, the formation of a transnational oppositional bloc that Du Bois speaks of must not simply occur in abstraction. Through the analysis of a Filipino American exposure programs to the Philippines, research findings demonstrate that participants exhibit an invaluable ability to not only imagine but also organize through such a global agency.

Du Bois argues that embedded within the experiences of racialized communities is a rich archive of cultural resistance that can be utilized in a struggle that recognizes matters of difference while organizing across such differences and geographies. For Du Bois, culture is an invaluable site of struggle waged not only by African Americans but also various other racialized groups in confronting shared conditions of global capitalism. Cognizant of the violence thrust upon the cultures of black communities in the United States and across the globe due to the historical vestiges of enslavement and dehumanization, Du Bois queries, “how and by whom can Negro culture be preserved? Not simply for the social movements of America, but for the greater world of human culture” (Du Bois, 1948). For the purposes of this chapter and my own research interests, I extend Du Bois’s inquiry to the Filipino American experience. More specifically, I take the position that Du Bois’s conceptual frame of a “guiding hundredth” is made legible through contemporary cultural practices of Filipino Americans in their exposures to the Philippines. As a dialectical theorist, Du Bois would certainly discount the idea that his ideas could mechanically be reconstituted for another time and place. Thus, as I introduce my analysis of a hip hop exposure program through the documentary, *Sounds of a New Hope*, it is imperative that I speak to how Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” is not simply exported but rather reinvented so that it is culturally relevant and politically appropriate for the specific conditions and unique history of Filipino/a Americans in an epoch of global apartheid.

Sounds of a New Hope and Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy

In contrast to the hip hop industry driven by a neoliberal logic that appropriates the various sounds and cultural practices of people of color throughout the globe, hip hop culture is an important avenue for immigrant and racialized communities to craft their identities, produce art, and communicate to the world around them. As such, hip hop can play an instrumental role in cultivating historical consciousness as well as relationships that traverse social differences and solidarities that navigate across a global diaspora. This is certainly the case in the 2009 documentary, *Sounds of a New Hope* produced by Eric Tandoc. The film follows Filipino American emcee, Kiwi (Jack De Jesus) as he explores the role hip hop plays in both his politicization as well as an organizing tool in his exposure program to the Philippines. The film begins with Kiwi walking the streets of his childhood - Los Angeles' Koreatown - reflecting upon his youth and the reasons he got involved with a gang. He explains, "I remember always feeling on the edge. Always having to watch my back. I'd always have to run home because you never would know when crews were cruising looking for someone...I never got that sense of [community] here ...except when I was involved with a gang." Upon enduring the death of a close friend as a result of gang violence, Kiwi would search for alternative avenues, namely hip hop, for identity and community formation. He states:

[A]s soon as I encountered hip hop, I related to it like that [snap of a finger]. My consciousness started with hip hop [and such artists as] Public Enemy, KRS-One, X-Clan, Paris, even NWA. All those folks from that era who spoke about Black Nationalism, Black Consciousness, Afrocentricity, the only access I had [to political education] was through the black struggle (Tandoc, 2009).

Through the documentary, Kiwi speaks to how he related to the counter-hegemonic messages of

rap music and its political articulations of an oppositional black identity. While he was introduced to the black struggle through the messages of African American hip hop, he was able to explore its messages of alienation, inequality, and racism in relation to his own history and organizing in the Filipino American community. He explains, “at some point, I had folks around me, some friends, who were getting into community organizing in the Filipino community. I became introduced to a youth and student organization called Kilusan ng Progresibong Kabataan – the Movement of Progressive Youth - and that later became the League of Filipino Students (LFS) in L.A.” It was through his participation in LFS that enabled Kiwi to attend his first exposure to the Philippines in 1998. He states, “I just went [on exposure]...I didn’t understand everything because everybody there was like in college and I was like only one of the non-college person there. But when I went to the Philippines in 1998, I just saw firsthand the conditions.” Not only was Kiwi able to witness the impoverished conditions of a Third World polity, he was also able “to see how advanced and strong the movement is ... and just how serious it is over there.” His exposure to the Philippines would deeply transform Kiwi as a cultural worker and community activist as he explains, “I felt like going to the Philippines, really made me accountable for the words that I was saying. Everything that I talk about whether its overtly political or not, is still political. Hip hop became even more important [for] being a tool or a method or raising the awareness or the consciousness of the folks around what is going on in our community and back home in our country” (Tandoc, 2009).

His involvement with Filipino American community based organizations, enabled Kiwi to develop a language and resistant worldview that could speak to his own community’s history of discriminatory policies and racist institutional practices. As such, hip hop became an empowering avenue to nurture what Du Bois has described as the “gift” of “double

consciousness” - where historically subjugated communities are more adequately positioned to recognize and understand the limitations of an exploitative, racist, and patriarchal social system. Such an optic is not limited to the people of African descent. In other words, hip hop as a historically diverse and shared cultural form was a constructive pedagogical (and political) vehicle for Kiwi to explore, analyze, and articulate experiences with marginalization and dispossession.

The cross-pollination of hip hop with critical pedagogy has undoubtedly garnered the attention of various educational researchers and social scientists in exploring the role of hip hop in nurturing a militant politics and critical consciousness motivated in transforming social relations of race, class, gender.⁵³ The documentary, *Sounds of a New Hope*, contributes to this emerging archive as it highlights the problem-posing techniques of a Filipino American cultural worker who utilizes hip hop to dialogue with youth participants and explore their collective “double consciousness.” Through emcee workshops, organized in a community-based program called Active Leadership to Advance the Youth (ALAY), Kiwi utilizes hip hop as an avenue to illuminate problems of police brutality, racial discrimination, school conditions, identity, and numerous other issues facing Filipino/a American and youth of color. The documentary provides a window to the culturally relevant and transformative teaching strategies – aptly described as critical hip hop pedagogy (CHHP) - that hip hop proffers educators, community organizers, and scholars (Akom, 2009). In particular, Kiwi utilizes hip hop music as a method of critical literacy to identify and critically analyze a history of colonialism in the Philippines, racial formation in the United States, and how the vestiges of such histories continue to constrain the

⁵³ A rich and growing archive of interdisciplinary studies on hip hop that I draw from include but is not limited to: *Can't Stop Won't Stop* (Chang 2005); *Hip Hop Desis: South Asian Americans, Blackness, and a Global Race Consciousness* (Sharma, 2010); “Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy as a Form of Liberatory Praxis” (Akom, 2009); *Performing Identity, Performing Culture* (Dimitriadis, 2001); *Hip Hop's Inheritance* (Rabaka, 2010); *Hip Hop(e)* (Porfilio and Viola, 2012); and *Beats, Rhymes, and Classroom Life* (Hill & Ladson-Billings, 2009)

life chances of Filipino/a immigrants as well as Filipino/a American youth.

Reflecting upon the objectives of ALAY's hip hop workshops Kiwi explains how they are "not just to provide a space where [youth] can express themselves, but also [to] have critical discussion around issues that actually really effect these participants" such as the policing and surveillance of their communities. In an especially insightful scene, Kiwi leads a discussion focused around the lyrics of KRS-One's⁵⁴ "Sounds of Da Police." Lyrical excerpts denote the rich social commentary embedded within this song:

There could never really be justice on stolen land
Are you really for peace and equality?...
Now here's a little truth...
Yeah, officer from overseer
You need a little clarity?
Check the similarity!
The overseer rode around the plantation
The officer is off patrolling all the nation
The overseer could stop you what you're doing
The officer will pull you over just when he's pursuing
The overseer had the right to get ill
And if you fought back, the overseer had the right to kill
The officer has the right to arrest
And if you fight back they put a hole in your chest!
(Woop!) They both ride horses

⁵⁴ A. Akom argues that KRS-One "paved the way for a younger generation of critical hip hop pedagogies")

After 400 years, I've got no choices!

Through the documentary's footage, one is able to witness how hip hop provides an entry point for ALAY youth as they historicize race relations in the United States or in the words of the participants critically examine "this weird relationship between me and my homeys and the police" framed by more than "400 years of oppression" (Tandoc, 2009).

It has been astutely argued that within the United States hip hop is "the music of the outcast and oppressed, the 'blue notes' and break-beats, the dark rhythms and rhymes emerging from the underbelly of and exiles in America, and as such it has historically and currently continues to serve sociopolitical purposes" (Rabaka, 2010: pg. 5). While I agree with such observations, my particular interest is the film's documentation of Kiwi utilizing hip hop as a global organizing tool in his exposure program to the Philippines in 2007. It is here where Du Bois's concept of a "guiding hundredth" is extended and recreated by a Filipino American cultural worker connecting with a Third World populace predicated upon the language of hip hop and the politics of human liberation.

Guiding Hundredth and Hip Hop Exposure to the Philippines

In Du Bois's "The Talented Tenth Memorial Address," he would build upon earlier themes introduced in his autobiography, Dusk of Dawn such as the tactics for transforming black social conditions in the United States. He understands such a strategy as twofold where black Americans must not only agitate but also work together in unison as a national and global agent of change. As such, Du Bois calls upon the racialized and historically subjugated communities to "evolve and support your own social institutions; you must transform your attack from individualism to the massed might of an organized body" (Du Bois, 1984, pg. 304). This organized body is what he would later call the "guiding hundredth." In the Memorial Address,

Du Bois introduced his conception of the “guiding hundredth” to an audience of African American elites involved with Sigma Pi Phi – an organization of African American professionals founded in Philadelphia in 1904. He implored the audience to seek out new members of diverse backgrounds, occupations, and experiences as well as to implement a corresponding leadership model that was democratic and collective in nature. Du Bois highlights the necessity of immersing oneself in the cultures of working class, people of color so that an organized body consisting of “one one-hundredth, or thirty thousand persons is indicated” would not “sympathize with the rich” but rather forge an identity in alignment “with the poor and hungry.” Such a diverse collective would guard against a black leadership that in his own words was:

[S]elf-indulgent, well-to-do men, whose basic interest in solving the Negro problem was personal; personal freedom and unhampered enjoyment and use of the world, without any real care, or certainly no arousing care, as to what became of the mass of American Negroes, or of the mass of any people (Du Bois, 1948).

For Du Bois the role of community organizing was essential because such praxis had the potential to mobilize African Americans nationally as well as incorporate them with Pan-African as well as other subaltern groups holding analogous ideals of justice and visions of a peaceful world.

Throughout Du Bois’s “Memorial Address,” he highlights how African Americans must fight against the commonly held belief that the United States was “the center of the universe and lately as the predestined leader of civilization” (Du Bois, 1948). He takes the position that “[t]he dark hosts of Liberia and Ethiopia and other parts of Africa together with Asia, the Pacific lands, South and Central America, and the Caribbean area” have not only “been influential in their contributions to the past, but today, there is a leadership from the colored world which is

beginning to be powerful on earth” (Du Bois, 1948). Thus, in Du Bois’s conceptualization of a “guiding hundredth,” historically subjugated groups within the United States must not only possess a “clear vision of present world conditions and dangers” but also assist in forging alliances “with culture groups in Europe, America, Asia and Africa, and [others] looking toward a new world culture” (Du Bois, 1948). Educational exposure programs to the Philippines embody such characteristics extended to the Filipino/a American experience and upgraded to a 21st century context.

Sounds of a New Hope captures footage of Kiwi in the summer of 2007 as he conducted a hip hop exposure to the Philippines and was hosted by the national democratic youth organization Anakbayan. Explaining his interest in returning to the Philippines and utilizing hip hop as a pedagogical and organizing tool, Kiwi states:

I wanted to be able to do an exposure trip from the hip hop perspective. [Anakbayan organizers] had been like ‘we work with youth from Caloocan⁵⁵ and they rap and we think you would be able to relate with them because you are a rapper.’ A lot of the organizers there, at least the main ones, they don’t do hip hop. They don’t have the same context of hip hop that we have here in the states. This particular trip was really concentrated on organizing through hip hop (Tandoc, 2009).

Anakbayan organizes Filipino youth around a program of National Democracy (ND).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ The City of Caloocan is one of the cities that comprise of Metropolitan Manila. It is greatly populated, the country’s third most populous and has a high poverty rate. Historically, the city was the center of activities for the Katipunan, the militant society that launched the resistance against Spanish colonization in the 19th century. In fact, it was in a house in Caloocan where Philippine revolutionary, Andres Bonifacio and other leaders of the Katipunan held their secret meetings.

⁵⁶ According to the documentary, the ND program or movement seeks to transcend three core and historic problems of imperialism (or U.S. foreign control of the Philippines’ economic, social, and political policies); feudalism (or unequal land distribution); and bureaucratic capitalism (or corrupt government officials).

Anakbayan and other sectors of the ND movement (such as the women's movement, organized labor, human rights, and religious organizations) take the position that only in overcoming root problems facing the Philippines, will Filipino/as be able to realize genuine expressions of freedom, democracy, as well as attain the basic needs of a living wage, housing, education, and human rights for a population dispersed in a global diaspora. Thus, as Filipino/as are dispersed throughout the world the ND program is international in scope articulating and mobilizing a militant Filipino/a identity in what I have identified as a diasporic counter-consciousness. Such an identity has emerged as a potentially empowered human agency unifying those who with roots or who self-identify to the struggle in the Philippines.

In *Sounds of a New Hope*, the film's producer, Eric Tandoc, documents Kiwi's exposure program and his specific efforts to organize Filipino youth gangsters in Philippine shanty areas⁵⁷ through the medium of hip hop. Kiwi explains, "lots of people want to reach out to the community but not to the gangsters because they might feel intimidated or they might feel the gangsters do not provide any value to their campaign. In this instance, [Anakbayan] are organizing the people who are the most marginalized in their community" (Tandoc, 2009). Throughout the film we see how hip hop provides Kiwi with the vocabulary and language to dialogue within the community he is immersed in thereby enabling an acute ability to communicate across various terrains of difference and explore points of commonality. For instance, Kiwi reflects upon the irony when he finds out that one of the youth gang members he meets while in the Philippines claims "Temple Street," which he points out is also a gang in Los Angeles. Utilizing hip hop as a global language to link the convergent and contradictory experiences of Filipino/a Americans with Filipinos in the urban city of Caloocan, the

⁵⁷ Kiwi aptly describes these areas as "scenes from a movie" or "Filipino versions of [the film] City of God."

documentary captures Kiwi involved in a cypher (or collectively rapping in an improvised freestyle). He rhymes:

For friends and comrades,

all the babies and elders

of the masses,

and not just for the hell of it.

This isn't just a gimmick when we're yelling makibaka. [Translated as "to struggle"]

This is our life, seen from inside of a cage

The hate that hate made.

Wake up we're straight slaves

Who says you gotta

Break a dollar to make change.

Do what you gotta do

Whatever it takes mang.

Like a 3rd string quarterback

Fool I ain't playing

Whether here or back home

We're saying the same thing (Tandoc, 2009).

This lyrical excerpt is in stark contrast to the dominant articulations of hip hop espoused by corporate media. Du Bois's critical observations of "America's virtues" in his "Memorial Address" certainly apply to the qualities that represent today's dominant form marketed by the hip hop industry. Du Bois states, "We Negroes have... tried to become more American than the Americans; loud in our conversation, our boasting and arrogance, showy and ostentatious in

dress, careless in manners, wasteful in conspicuous expenditure, and smug and uncritical in judgment. Like all America we read few books; we get superficial "news" from radio gossip and doctored opinion from a press known to be prejudiced and monopolized" (Du Bois, 1948). Thus, the importance of the *Sounds of a New Hope* is that it points to an alternative form of global hip hop culture that serves as the antithesis to the "American virtues" Du Bois speaks of, which has been facilitated globally through the mechanisms of cultural imperialism. In other words, instead of appropriating and stealing from various cultures of the world in an American quest for profit and power, the strand of Filipino American hip hop that Kiwi nurtures is grounded in an entirely different identity and worldview where equality, respect, and humanization are the foundations for cultural exchange.⁵⁸

While hip hop is many things including social commentary (that too often hypersexualizes and objectifies women's bodies) and social critique (Porfilio & Viola, 2012) the hip hop culture that Kiwi nurtures is not confined solely to the realm of critique or identity formation. Throughout Kiwi's exposure to the Philippines, hip hop serves a strategic role in equipping a diasporic counter-consciousness with a vocabulary to unmask and confront the historic processes of racialization, (neo)colonialism, as well as the more recent forms of domination that plague a Filipino/a global polity.⁵⁹ However, for Kiwi and other exposure program participants, the rich cultural expressions as well as the historical experiences of the vibrant communities they are immersed within cannot be understood, analyzed, or transformed apart from the contemporary sociopolitical and economic arrangement organized by global

⁵⁸ The cultural exchange between two countries such as the Philippines and the United States cannot be divorced from history and political economy. Thus, if a new relationship of equality and respect are to be truly realized between two cultures such a relationship must also be forged in social, political, and economic exchanges as well.

⁵⁹ This is especially apparent during a segment of the documentary where Kiwi facilitates a hip hop workshop utilizing the music of Filipino hip hop artists, Francis M, Gloc 9, and the Kasamas to explore social themes of poverty, forced immigration, and Philippine education.

capitalism. Such a position further builds upon Du Bois's thesis of a "guiding hundredth."

For Du Bois, the praxis of a "guiding hundredth" in reshaping diverse cultures and identities while confronting the global logic of white supremacy must not divert from central issues of political economy. In reference to such historic efforts, Du Bois is clear:

Now the central thought of any cultural effort to restore the civilization which has collapsed in two world wars, and to build something better is economic reconstruction. Ignorance of this central fact is widespread. Economics is not being taught as it should be in the schools and colleges today: and I mean of course by economics—knowledge of the meaning of work, of how it may best be done; of the significance and ownership of machines, of the role of credit and money; of the distribution of goods and services, of the possibilities of human effort today (Du Bois, 1948).

Considering that global power relations of race are operationalized at both the material (political economic) as well as the representational levels (cultural / ideological processes), Du Bois's "guiding hundredth" has important implications for contemporary theorizing of race. Du Bois demonstrates a keen ability to dialectically analyze matters of culture and race in conjunction with global political economy. His astute ability to explore historical articulations of race embedded within capitalist social relations capture the historically specific nature of racialization. Such a maneuver is applicable in our contemporary moment to transcend the divide and conquer tactics of essentialist notions of race toward a more empowering perspective that links subaltern and marginalized populations in their more radical efforts toward social change through their resistance to the processes of race making and its links to a neoliberal global market. Through my media analysis of the documentary *Sounds of a New Hope* I have

indicated how Du Bois's doctrine of a "guiding hundredth" is enacted from the racialized and diasporic standpoint of an exposure participant who utilizes hip hop and its experiential language as an organizing tool in the confrontation of global apartheid. By placing the documentary in critical conversation with Du Bois's "guiding hundredth" enables a generative application of race-class concepts that can be refracted upon a Filipino/a population dispersed throughout the globe while unifying the indispensable circuits of critical theory and community organizing. At this point, I would like to point to how such a fusion enters into a generative conversation with contemporary research methods of critical race theory, which has gained much traction in the field of education to denaturalize and transform unjust race relations. However before doing so, I must reiterate that while I take the position that Du Bois's "guiding hundredth" is an important point of departure, by no means in exploring its application and extension to educational exposure programs to the Philippines do I suggest that a strategy for social transformation developed from the experiences of black struggle can be mechanically transplanted and simply imported for others seeking similar goals of equality, justice, and peace.

Du Bois says it best that "the method[s] which we evolved for opposing slavery and fighting prejudice are not to be forgotten, but learned for our own and others' instruction" (Du Bois & Aptheker, 2001: pg. 143-144). As such, the powerful contributions Du Bois as well as more contemporary black scholars and community activists to the framework of CRT must not be understated or devalued. Specifically engaging such work and critical scholarship, how can Du Bois's outline of a "guiding hundredth" in critical conversation with Filipino/a American exposure programs to the Philippines contribute to the practices of anti-racist researchers and community organizers as well as the growing scholarship of critical race theory and its corresponding methodology of counter-story telling?

Implications for Research Methods Against Racism

At present, critical race theory (CRT) and its methodology of counter-storytelling (also called counter-narratives) have been utilized within educational frameworks as a means to explore the ways that race operates in U.S. schools and society. While CRT emerged from legal scholarship it has always been closely linked to the endeavor of schooling, pedagogy, and educational policies. Furthermore, as a brave anti-racist political project, pedagogical framework, and research methodology its genealogy was born not entirely within the walls of the classroom but in the unpredictable social environment of protest and opposition during the 1980s and early 1990s.⁶⁰ Recognizing the great value in the stories and narratives of marginalized communities navigating a social world where legal institutions, public policies, and classroom curriculums largely ignore or defectively characterize their histories and cultural practices, CRT scholars advocate the teaching, researching, and theorizing of minority group experiences.

⁶⁰ For example, youth and students were organizing against the liberal myths of a colorblind curriculum, the abandonment of affirmative actions, and the growing racial achievement gap in the 1980s and 1990s. In the edited anthology, Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement, the editors recognize the efforts of Harvard law students who challenged their Ivy League institution in demanding courses that spoke to the concerns of the students. As such, when Bell left Harvard, the editors note:

Student activists, particularly students of color, demanded that Harvard hire a teacher of color to replace him and to teach his courses in constitutional law and minority issues. The liberal white Harvard administration responded to student protests, demonstrations, rallies and sit-ins – including a takeover of the Dean’s office – by asserting that there were no qualified black scholars who merited Harvard’s interest (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, and Thomas, pg xx: 1995).

Because the administration was unwilling to meet their demands, the students organized their own curriculum and offered a student run class titled, “The Alternative Course.” The activities of the students to create spaces without the sanctioned support of their institution in order to critically dialogue around issues of racial power, social oppressions, and the law is widely recognized as the “first expression of critical race theory” (Taylor, Gillborn, Ladson-Billings, 2009: pg. 3). Harvard was certainly not the only site where student-led protests were demanding more ethnically diverse educators and nurturing culturally relevant pedagogies. According to Talyor, Gillborn, and Ladson-Billings, “students of color in major law schools throughout the country organized a boycott of classes in 1990. Most major law schools had no Latino/a professors or African American or Asian Americans” (Talyor, Gillborn, and Ladson-Billings, 2009: pg. 3) Thus, CRT as a research and political project emerged from an environment of protest and opposition. As such, it contained a wellspring of methods and tools for actions that other disciplines could draw upon and further develop. It is with this understanding of CRT’s foundations that I find it a valuable resource to explore as a lens in my research of educational exposure programs to the Philippines.

In examining the growing CRT literature, one is able to readily identify the impression Du Bois has had upon the field and its methods of foregrounding the experiential narratives of those who are struggling with the very real experiences of racial oppression suffered by youth and communities of color (Taylor, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2003). As I have already suggested, Du Bois's methodological approach, which draws upon the cultural production, hymns, and songs of the diverse black experience are invaluable sites of data collection as well as intellectual resources useful in forwarding transformative ideas, strategies, and imaginaries for the creation of a new world. Du Bois's approach strongly resonates with contemporary CRT methods in documenting the diverse narratives of youth and communities of color that challenge the hegemonic white majoritarian ideologies espoused by dominant curriculums and public discourses. In the past two decades, there have been a multitude of critical race theorists who have extended Du Bois's trailblazing methodological approaches and in particular, utilize what is now called counter-storytelling as a methodological tool to document racialized experiences and provide important insights and descriptions of racism inside and outside classroom settings (Gillborn, Taylor, and Ladson-Billings, 2009, Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Daniel Solorzano and Tara Yosso's insightful article, "Critical Race Methodology" outlines five central tenants of the research methodology that: 1) foregrounds the totality of race and racism in the research process and its intersections with other forms of social oppressions; 2) challenges dominant and naturalized paradigms, social scientific research, or mainstream stories that deficiently explains the experiences and cultures of communities of color; 3) values the knowledge inherent in lived experiences in overcoming social injustice predicated on existing race, class, and gendered social relations; d) views scholarship that highlights the marginalized stories and experiences of youth of color as empowering and contributing to the values of social justice; 5) incorporates the

insights of other disciplines to better understand the experiences of youth and communities of color. The authors are clear that these five aspects “are not new in and of themselves, but collectively, they represent a challenge to the existing modes of scholarship” (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In fact, Rabaka maintains, “many, if not all, of the key concerns of critical race theory are prefigured in Du Bois's discourse on race and racism in ways that makes one wonder whether critical race theory is simply a continuation, or a contemporary version of Du Boisian race theory by another name” (Rabaka, 2006). It is with this point that I disagree with Rabaka’s insights. While I definitely find points of similarity across CRT and Du Bois’s scholarly efforts - such as an unabashed advocacy on behalf of those who live behind the veil suffering personally, psychologically, and systemically from racial injustice - CRT scholars have not at all built upon Du Bois’s insights of a “guiding hundredth.”

Du Bois’s framework of a “guiding hundredth” advocated for the radical democratization and internationalization of social inquiry and organized action. While CRT has provided invaluable strategies for racialized youth and subjugated communities to document their everyday experiences with racial oppression, its concern is almost solely within the United States context. My central argument is that a vast menu of research and political projects could flow from a deeper engagement with Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” - which brought Du Bois’s race analysis into dialogue with the exploitative workings of global capitalism. As I have alluded to throughout this chapter, Du Bois offers invaluable starting points highlighting the indispensability of race critique within a historical materialist and internationalist framework. Such a frame could assist CRT’s method of counterstorytelling with a globalized critique in challenging the lived experiences for racialized groups (such as Filipino/as and Filipino/a American) who reside within the intersecting processes of racialization and globalization.

Devoid of a global (and historical materialist) optic, I cannot help but to question CRT's effectiveness in theorizing and transforming new constructions of race under the regime of global apartheid. Without the ability to confront global racial formations set in motion by global capitalism, I take the position that CRT's efforts will be anemic in assisting the formation of transformative solidarities and radical coalitions forged beyond the context of the U.S. nation state.

This is one of the most important aspects of the documentary *Sounds of a New Hope* in that it demonstrates how educational exposure programs and its incorporation of cultural production assists in nurturing global solidarities while developing new ways of thinking about race relations in an epoch of transnational corporate globalization. As I have illustrated, hip hop can play a central role in the formation of identity uniting seemingly disparate individuals across a global diaspora through lyrics and beats that speak to common experiences as well as common disasters. Through the film, Kiwi harnesses the political potential of hip hop not only as a means to organize against global apartheid but also as a method for both understanding and relaying forms of experiential knowledge. The language of such knowledge is concerned less about abstractions or projects of political assimilation than with concrete steps in creating a new world from the bottom up. As Du Bois observed, the creation of "a new world culture" requires the active and democratic participation of not merely a talented tenth of the population but more so the active involvement of at least "one one-hundredth" of the most historically marginalized by global capitalism and its complimentary logic of white supremacy. The activation of such a global populace is taking place throughout the world in such programs as exposure programs to the Philippines.

Hip Hop: Articulating a Global Language of Resistance

Building upon the race radicalism of W.E.B. Du Bois and Manning Marable the dismantling of global apartheid requires nothing less than a movement that is collective and transnational in scope. Such a global movement must provide solutions to the problems facing people of color not only within the United States but also the racialized peoples of the periphery who consist of 80% of the world's population. Educational exposure programs such as the one organized around hip hop enable Filipino/a Americans to immerse themselves and witness (even for a brief time) the naked realities of racist imperialism and its barbaric effects in the Philippines. Furthermore, exposure programs enable the formation of counter-hegemonic blocs that link Filipino/a Americans to Filipinos in the homeland and to communities across a global diaspora. As I have argued hip hop can help nurture a politicized culture and language that seeks an outlet for expression but also a focal point for opposition. It is not enough for hip hop culture to merely provide "voice" to the varied experiences of poverty, state brutality, crime, and institutional racism. Such social realities must be opposed and transformed through critical analysis and collective action.

Du Bois's "guiding hundredth" reminds us of the importance of cultural fronts that consist of diverse ethnic groups from various sectors that include students, activists, educators, labor organizers, cultural workers, hip hop artists, and the vast spectrum of change agents contributing to new ways of thinking and acting in the world. For a "guiding hundredth" to be radically equipped to transform social relations in an epoch of global apartheid such a formation cannot rely upon the practices of the past. A "guiding hundredth" for the 21st century must renew and recreate methods to confront institutional racism, state power, and corporate globalization. Furthermore, without a global standpoint, anti-racist work and social justice

movements (especially within the United States) will be confined to what Marable identifies as a “liberal democratic tendency” with a particular concern in reducing societal conflict through reconciliatory public discourse, civic engagement, and multicultural diversity. He explains that a liberal democratic impulse “seeks not a complete rejection of neoliberal economic globalization, but its constructive reform and engagement, with the goal of building democratic political cultures of human rights within market-based societies” (Marable, 2006). Educational exposure programs to the Philippines introduces and immerses participants within an alternative democratic tendency that builds upon an anti-racist tradition of national liberation as opposed to top-down solutions advocated by the nation-state. While the political spectrum of anti-racist and social movement organizing in the United States is certainly diverse, it is in the Philippines and other peripheries of a non-western, (neo)colonized world where social movements have been most resilient in mobilizing to construct a counter-hegemonic bloc. The objectives of such movements are not to work within and fine-tune historical system of racism and domination but rather completely alter global relations of exploitation, oppression, and injustice so that a new world of possibility and peace can emerge. *Sounds of a New Hope* demonstrate how cultural workers such as hip hop artists have an important role in such a project.

As I have demonstrated, there is an alternative hip hop culture offering a powerful language to articulate a global, anti-imperialist, and anti-racist identity. Hip hop artists such as Kiwi provide a vernacular that can bridge a multicultural liberal tendency largely found in the United States with the more radical and egalitarian impulses across the non-Western racialized world. Through the particular analysis of a hip hop exposure to the Philippines, I have demonstrated how the reincarnation of Du Bois’s “guiding hundredth” does not surrender situated knowledge and historical consciousness that is unique to particular racialized groups. It

is only in the contribution of Filipino/a Americans with a multitude of dominated and exploited groups struggling to create a “new world”⁶¹ that local histories and culturally specific ways of knowing will be defended and provided with the very means to prosper in the Philippines, the United States, and throughout the globe.

⁶¹ I utilize the term “new world” in conversation with Samir Amin’s incisive essay, “The Trajectory of Historical Capitalism and Marxism’s Tricontinental Vocation.”

CHAPTER VII: TOWARD A FILIPINA DIASPORIC STANDPOINT

“The exposure isn’t just supposed to show you all these horrific things that are happening to Filipino people but rather first ground you in the conditions and help you understand why the movement is fighting for national democracy. That is where the hope comes in....an exposure trip is really there to help you understand the root conditions through integration, through education, and through the personal experiences that you have with the [people] there. But also to learn from the activists around what is a viable solution. I think that is what has kept me in the movement. I have yet to hear from anyone else or any other organization that has provided me with an adequate solution” (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Pin@y sa Seattle Member

Thus far I have detailed how a study of radical Filipino/a American praxis by way of educational exposure programs to the Philippines contributes to critical pedagogy and theories of race circulating in the field of education. I have argued for the importance of educational research that examines the knowledge production of community-based organizations as invaluable sites in remedying the structural and ideological injustices limiting the life chances of youth of color. Throughout, I have injected a historical analysis of the internal and neocolonial conditions that have both dispossessed a Filipino/a polity but also cultivated a diasporic counter-consciousness within a global agency organizing to transform international structures of domination and exploitation. Furthermore, I have stressed the importance of social movements and community-based activism both in the Third World and here within the United States as playing an indelible role in the formation of such academic subfields as multicultural education,

critical pedagogy, ethnic studies, and gender studies. I warn against theoretically obscuring the contributions of community-based formations and social movements in efforts to improve their schooling and education but also the social, political, cultural and economic conditions constraining their lives. Doing so consigns educational theories and strategies of transformation to a “talented tenth” or worst outside the realm of possibility for Filipino/a Americans as well as a diverse global agency consisting of cultural workers, youth, immigrants, and of particular focus in this chapter the life activities of women.

The contradictions of global capitalism has undoubtedly led to the important political mobilizations led by working class, people of color in the United States and throughout the world. Instrumental to such pursuits have been the women’s liberation movement such as the activities of the late 1960s, which Giminez argues paved the way for the advent of feminist theory in the academy (Giminez, 2004). However, in reflecting upon the contemporary state of the women’s movement and feminist theorizing, a cadre of notable scholars that include Giminez, as well as Barbara Epstein (2001), Teresa Ebert (1996), Nancy Hartsock (1998), Rosemary Hennessy (1996), and Delia Aguilar (2004) have not been entirely sanguine. For instance, Barbara Epstein argued “feminism has become more an idea than a movement, and one that often lacks the visionary quality that it once had” (Epstein, 2001). Epstein maintains that such observations are symptomatic of not only feminism and the women’s movement but also of wider progressive movements of the left, which she diagnoses as having decentered capitalist critique as well as the possibility of collective action in facilitating change (Epstein, 2001). Giminez aligns with such observations adding that once the radical movements of the 1960s perished the academy “became the dominant venue for feminist activity, as theorizing and research became functional alternatives to feminist activism and feminist politics” (Giminez,

2004). As a result of the undoubtedly important gains made by women in institutions of higher learning, new issues would arise. One such issue that Gimenez astutely problematizes is the formation of what she calls a female aristocracy content in forwarding theories rooted in their own individual life experiences, which were far different from women of color and in particularly women residing in the (neo)colonies of the Third World.⁶² Delia Aguilar takes an especially critical position arguing “the decline of social movements and the deliberate harnessing of intellectuals in the service of capital, feminists, now tethered to academic concerns, have traded clarity of analysis and purpose for ambivalence, obscurity, and mystification” (Aguilar, 2012). My study of educational exposure programs to the Philippines offers an important counterpoint to the observations made by these important and complex feminist scholars. In analyzing the social movement activism of Filipina Americans, I demonstrate the feminism they promote does not shy away from objectives of eliminating global capitalism as a necessary requisite in the historic efforts of an ongoing social and women’s movement to combat the myriad forms of oppression impacting Filipinas as well as other women around the world.

Substantiated in the particular reflections of Filipina Americans in their exposure experiences to the Philippines, I take the position that class analysis is not an abandoned site of contestation for a resilient social movement linking Filipina women across a global diaspora. Against the trend where class is rendered into another form of oppression severing class power from the exploitative dynamics of global capitalism, this chapter explores how a revitalized, creative, and culturally relevant Marxist feminism resides in the social movement praxis of Filipina Americans. Drawing specifically from the focus group and the individual reflections of educational exposurists to the Philippines (comprised of members from the women’s

⁶² Gimenez observes that the rise of working women within North American academies was made possible through an international division of labor and “the exploitative relationship between the imperialist countries and their colonies (neo-colonies)” (Gimenez, 2004).

organization, Pin@y sa Seattle), I point to a Filipina diasporic standpoint that offers a vision of possibility for a world where the labor, land, and lives of Filipina women are not alienated from them but rather channeled in the service of their own needs and the potentials of a greater humanity.

Why Standpoint Continues to Matter

In examining the unique experiences of Filipina Americans in their exposures to the Philippines, I employ the concept of standpoint for theoretically specific reasons. Standpoint theory emerged in feminist critical theory in the 1970s and 1980s challenging the assumption that taking political positions ultimately obstructs and delegitimizes the validity of (scientific) knowledge production. Feminists such as Sandra Harding (2004), Nancy Hartsock (1998), Kathi Weeks, (1996), Patricia Hill Collins (2000), Dorothy Smith (1988), Donna Haraway (1991), and many others would extend Marxist analysis to interrogate gender and the politics of knowledge. Feminist scholars drew greatly from insights of Georg Lukacs who in his book, History and Class Consciousness (1983) recognized that the alienated experiences for those who work (the working class) is qualitatively different from the few who benefit from the extraction of surplus value from such work (property owning or ruling class). Feminist scholars would build upon the insights in taking the “standpoint of the proletariat” or from the social location of those on the underside of capitalist production in innovate and new ways.⁶³ Thus, feminist theorists from a variety of disciplines would generate diverse multidisciplinary research projects under the banner of feminist standpoint theory arguing that certain social locations, specifically those of women

⁶³ Frederic Jameson argues, “the most authentic descendancy of Lukacs’s thinking is to be found, not among the Marxists, but within a certain feminism, where the unique conceptual move of *History and Class Consciousness* has been appropriated for a whole program, now renamed (after Lukacs’s own usage) standpoint theory... These path-breaking texts now allows us to return to Lukacs’s argument in a new way, which opens a space of a different kind of polemics about the epistemological priority of the experience of various groups or collectivities (qtd in Harding, 2006: pg 88).

and historically marginalized groups offer valuable starting points for not only scrutinizing unjust social relations but also guiding research projects in the service of justice oriented movements.

Since its introduction feminist standpoint theory has been taken up in various fields⁶⁴ and propelled by a multitude of theoretical directions including historical materialism, postmodernism, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, and others. As a result, contestation and controversy have followed. I do not have the space in this chapter to address the multiple sources of tension and debate that feminist standpoint theory has generated nor do I have the ability here to speak comprehensively as to how it has helped bring “fresh perspectives on some of the most difficult and anxiety-producing dilemmas of our era” (Harding, 2004: pg 1).⁶⁵ However, in highlighting central themes of feminist standpoint theory that my analysis of educational exposure programs more attentively pivots, I draw greatly upon Nancy Hartsock’s articulation of a feminist standpoint, which she argues can foster “the ground for specifically feminist historical materialism” (Hartsock, 1984).

Hartsock argues that feminist and Marxist theories, methods, and goals are not antithetical but can in fact complement one another.⁶⁶ My research gleans much from Hartsock as her inquiry of women’s activity distinguishes between two important levels of analytical abstraction. Gimenez provides insights in this important demarcation:

⁶⁴ Within the field of education, the scholarship of Wayne Au (2012) and Noah Delissovoy (2008) are important to note as they have generated and extended upon the insights of a feminist standpoint.

⁶⁵ A valuable text that identifies the source of many theoretical tensions and debates within and about feminist standpoint theory is The Feminist Standpoint Reader (2004) edited by Sandra Harding.

⁶⁶ Hartsock argues that feminist theory can draw upon central “aspects of the Marxist tradition.” She explains that Marxist “represent important resources for insisting on the impossibility of neutrality and necessity of engagement, for recognizing that social relations structure (though do not determine) the ways we understand the world; and providing tools that can allow us to trace the ways our concepts and categories structure and express the ways we interact with the world (Hartsock, 1984: p.75).

...[I]n understanding feminism, we need to distinguish between two levels of analysis. The first is at the level of mode of production, while the second is social formation. Marx's methodological injunctions is that we must differentiate between conflictual, objective macro-level processes of structural change and the ideological ways in which people become conscious of these conflicts and fight them out. At the level of analysis of the mode of production as such, it is possible theoretically to identify the capitalist macro-level processes of surplus extraction which operate both in the world as a whole and within nation-states. At the level of analysis of social formation, however, the political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts within which these processes unfold are extremely complex and diverse (Giminez, 2004).

Thus, in forwarding what she calls a historical materialist feminist standpoint, Hartsock draws upon Marx's methodological insights, which she organizes epistemologically and politically into five central themes.

First, material life (class position as well as other social relations) has structured and set limits upon the life activity, consciousness, and experiences of women. Second, since material life is structured by a global and exploitative class system as well as organized hierarchically around social formations of race, gender, sexuality, nationality, and other forms of difference, those who benefit from the existing order hold a partial, perverse, and in many cases oppositional view of social life than the majority of women and other ruled populations. Third, the vision of the world from the optic of the dominant group is not simply false - as they have the power to structure the ways women and other oppressed groups participate in social life. Fourth, and as a consequence of the previous, a standpoint is not simply bestowed or spontaneously attributed to identity, individual experience, or social location. In other words, a standpoint is an achievement

born of collective struggle where women, oppressed groups, and their allies gain awareness of the naturalized processes impeding their lives and do what they can to fight in order to both unveil and structurally transform such material conditions. Fifth, the adoption of a feminist standpoint that “makes visible the inhumanity of relations among human beings” (Hartsock, 1998: pg: 229) carries with it the potentiality of liberation. Hartsock’s conceptualization of a feminist standpoint is of great value to my research project as it stresses the continuing theoretical and political relevance of confronting capitalist processes that implicate the fate of all working people and of particular interest to my research the fate of Filipina women who have been rendered an optimal and movable labor force in service of capitalist accumulation throughout the globe.

Social theorist, Sandra Harding has noted despite the wide circulation of feminist standpoint outside of Hartsock’s historical materialist framing and in various disciplinary fields it is “even more widely controversial today than it was initially” (Harding, 2006: pg 85).⁶⁷ Controversies centered around misinformed critiques of epistemological relativism,⁶⁸ the tensions of asserting greater objectivity in research projects that are also unapologetically politically engaged, as well as discussions of essentialism and the eliding of robust differences in

⁶⁷ Harding cites philosopher Alison Wylie who comments, “standpoint theory may rank as one of the most controversial theories to have been proposed and debated in the twenty-five to thirty year history of second wave feminist thinking about knowledge and science. Its advocates as much as its critics disagree vehemently about its parentage, its status as a theory, and, crucially, its relevance to current feminist thinking about knowledge” (qtd in Harding, 2006: pg 86).

⁶⁸ I call the critiques of standpoint theory as promoting epistemological relativism misinformed only because the framers of feminist standpoint theory are actually quite clear in taking a position against relativism - where every socially located subject position holds equal value in understanding the world. For instance, Sandra Harding argues adamantly “against the idea that all social situations provide equally useful resources for learning about the world and against the idea that they all set equally strong limits on knowledge.” Thus, Harding takes the position that “standpoint theory provides arguments for the claim that some social situations are scientifically better than others as places from which to start off knowledge projects” (Harding, 2004: pg. 131). In further contradistinction to relativist critiques, Nancy Hartsock argues against claims of relativism maintaining that the “view from the margins...is clearer and better” in offering accounts of capitalist exploitation and other hierarchical social formations (Hartsock, 1998: pg. 80).

the accounting of women's experiences. As I have mentioned, these debates require more attention than can be offered in this chapter. However, a particular discussion that my analysis of Filipina American experiences in their exposures to Philippines may contribute is the theoretical and practical tensions of recognizing "differences" and recuperating social class as it relates to Filipinas in the United States, the Philippines, and throughout a global diaspora. While projects that focus upon the oppressive constructions of difference and identity have certainly been important in enabling empowered subjects to make sense of their lives, what I find especially unique is how the Filipina Americans I interviewed in a focus group and various individual interviews connect their identities, needs, and lived experiences to a history of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. Thus, in stark contrast to the types of academic feminism that Teresa Ebert has recently described as "ludic feminism"⁶⁹ or what Rosemary Hennessy and Chrys Ingraham identify as having "implicitly and at times even explicitly embraced capitalism or, more commonly ignored it" (Hennessy and Ingraham, 1997: pg. 2) my research points to a culturally relevant women's standpoint that does not retreat from a historical materialist class analytic in understanding the lived conditions of Filipinas and the experiences of Filipina Americans. As I will demonstrate through shared reflections of exposure participants to the Philippines, a Filipina diasporic standpoint expands upon Hartsock's feminist historical materialism in generative conversation with an anti-imperialist and national democratic struggle being waged in the Philippines. However, before I can present my findings, it is imperative that I speak to the important debates of "difference" that have emerged within feminist standpoint

⁶⁹ Ebert defines "ludic feminism" as guided by theoretical assumptions that rewrite difference as a proliferating play of significations, give priority to the local, the autonomous and the "bodily," and privilege desire as a liberatory agency and consumption as the arena of social change." As such, ludic feminism forwards a politics that ultimately displaces revolutionary praxis aimed at emancipating women from the exploitation of labor and need.

theories and explore a particular murkiness of how social class has been taken up as “difference” - particularly through the dominant frame of intersectionality.

Intesectionality: A Corrective to the Controversies of Difference and Social Class?

As I have briefly outlined, feminist standpoint theory, including Hartsock’s explicitly historical materialist demarcation, emerged during a time when Marxism was viewed with great hostility in the U.S. left during the 1980s. Harding aptly explains how standpoint theory’s roots in Marxist thought generated much discomfort for academic feminists:

Standpoint theory had an earlier history in Marxian thought, upon which most of the early feminist theorists explicitly drew. For those disaffected by Marxian thought and practice, this legacy was bad enough. Some criticize standpoint theory for this legacy and even try to sanitize it by reframing it in empiricist or radical poststructuralist terms. Others, whether from ignorance of or hostility to Marxian insights, ignore this framework, often thereby attributing features to standpoint theory that its framers neither intended nor desired (Harding, 2004: pg 2).

It is clear that Harding is referencing the scholarly debate, which ensued in the journal of *Signs* where political philosopher Susan Hekman utilized a broad brush to discredit feminist standpoint theory and how it generated from Marxist theory to explore gendered experiences and conditions.

Hekman complicates feminist standpoint’s project and its position that the optic of marginalized women offers a privileged and more objective vantage point for uncovering unjust power relations within society. Constructing standpoint to an individual subject position or point of view, Hekman queries “if we abandon a single axis of analysis, the standpoint of women, and instead try to accommodate the multiple, potentially infinite standpoints of diverse women, do

we not also lose the analytic force of our argument? Or, in other words, how many axes can our arguments encompass before they slip into hopeless confusion?” (qtd in Harding, 2004: pg. 237). Hekman locates the inability of feminist standpoint theory to explore the myriad forms of difference in the individual lives of women in its “less sophisticated past” of Marxist theory.⁷⁰ Hekman forwards a new paradigm for feminist standpoint theory that looks to promote a multifarious and individualized politics of “local and situated activity undertaken by discursively constituted subjects.” The responses to Hekman’s critiques offered by Hartsock, Harding, Smith, and Collins are especially robust. They point in various ways to how Hekman depoliticizes feminist theory as well as its historical legacy of collective praxis by rendering feminist standpoint theory to a project that is confined to the alteration of individual subjectivities, micro-processes of power, the discursive, and social construction.⁷¹ Furthermore, in rendering the subject into “aggregates of individuals” (as Hartsock and Collins both critique Hekman of doing) as opposed to a “collective subject” or “group-based experiences” advocated by the framers of feminist standpoint theory, Hekman is condemned for eliding collective women’s struggle and offering very little clarity or purpose in transforming power relations that constrain the collective lives of diverse women.

Hekman elides a central aspect of feminist standpoint theory that my research of exposure programs to the Philippines actually seeks to highlight, which is the centrality of collective and political struggle in achieving a standpoint. Despite the numerous debates within

⁷⁰ Hekman states, “Particularly among younger feminist theorists, feminist standpoint theory is frequently regarded as a quaint relic of feminism’s less sophisticated past. Several developments in the late 1980s have led to this declining influence. First, the inspiration of feminist standpoint theory, Marxism, has been discredited in both theory and practice. Second, feminist standpoint theory appears to be at odds with the issue that has dominated feminist debate in the past decade: difference. Third, feminist standpoint theory appears to be opposed to two of the most significant influences in recent feminist theory: postmodernism and poststructuralism (Harding, 2004: pg. 225).

⁷¹ Hekman’s concluding remarks are especially telling for a feminist praxis that she imagines. She argues that point of feminist theory is to change “the language game of politics” (Harding, 2004: pg. 239)

and across feminist standpoint theory, its framers would agree that a standpoint is not simply bestowed or spontaneously attributed to identity, individual experience, or social location alone. In other words, even if one shares in the experiences of historically marginalized groups that alone does not guarantee cognizance of unjust historical relations or fuel commitment to altering such conditions. A standpoint requires participation in projects of social transformation and cannot be carried out from an individual subject position alone but rather it is achieved and constructed collectively. A standpoint is an achievement born from the praxis of struggle where women, oppressed groups, and their allies gain awareness of the macro-level processes impeding their lives and do what they can to resist so that such structures can be unveiled and structurally transformed.

It is important to note how in their individual responses to Hekman's misreading of feminist standpoint, Collins and Harding both point to the emergence of intersectionality⁷² in their respective argument for enhancing and accounting for difference. At present intersectionality, which explores the interlocking vectors of race, gender, and class as well as a myriad of other differences, has become a dominant paradigm (both within the field of education and feminist theory) to examine issues of inequality and social oppression. Such widespread circulation is undoubtedly an important testament from the 1990s onward to a new generation of feminist and educational scholars that would emerge and embark upon an important project to map the "intersections" of social difference and identity as a corrective to the alleged blind spots of a second wave feminism. For the purposes of my research, allow me to briefly explain an important particularity as to how such the dominant framing of intersectionality has diverged

⁷² Sandra Harding explains, "it took feminists of color, and multicultural and global feminism, to develop the powerful resources of 'intersectionality' necessary to analyze social relations from the standpoint of their daily lives, which were shaped by the mutually supportive or sometimes competitive relations between androcentrism, Eurocentrism, and bourgeois projects (Harding, 2004: pg. 258).

from Hartsock's conception of a feminist and historical materialist standpoint. To be absolutely clear, my purposes are not to dismiss tout court the important contributions of intersectional scholars, who are comprised primarily of activist scholars (of color) within the academy. Their work has undoubtedly forwarded educational projects that explore the in-depth brutalities of social oppressions as well as various sites of resistance. Rather, my purpose is to point to analytical limitations as to how social class is taken up in exploring the lives of women and people of color as articulated in the dominant framing of intersectionality. Making this delineation is important as it enables later clarity in theorizing the experiences as well as the pedagogical and political practices of Filipina Americans who participate in exposures to the Philippines.

A comprehensive and critical study of intersectionality and its emergence as a theoretical framework is an important endeavor that has yet to be undertaken. Many scholars have commonly attributed the concept to critical race scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw in her legal essays, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex (1989) and "Mapping the Margins" (1991). Crenshaw underscores the multidimensionality of black women's experiences (Crenshaw, 1989: pg. 139) and the "various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's...experience (Crenshaw, 1991: 1244). Delia Aguilar in her essay, "Tracing the Roots of Intersectionality" complicates this historical lineage to strictly an academic foundation, as she explores the roots of intersectionality in women's liberation movements of the 1970s. Of particular significance for Aguilar are community based organizations such as the Third World Women's Alliance and their newsletter "Triple Jeopardy: Racism, Imperialism, Sexism" as well as the "Black Feminist Statement" written by the Combahee River Collective in 1977. Aguilar maintains:

Confining [intersectionality's] inception to an already professionalized feminism erases the historical fact that its conceptualization was actually honed in the intensity of revolutionary struggle by women-of-color organizations. It likewise obscures the historical fact that women's studies came into existence only because of the clamor out in the streets by women's liberation activists (Aguilar, 2012).

The containment of ethnic, labor, women's and other social movements in the United States cannot be divorced from the accommodation of neoliberal ideologies in the U.S. academy and the hegemony of class relations in a wider public domain.⁷³

Internationally, the failings of national liberation movements, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the undemocratic practices in China only fueled repudiation within the academy of critically exploring the nature of capital accumulation and its consequences upon a vast population of women and people of color not only within the United States but also throughout the Third World. With the decline of social movements, the global pervasiveness of class power, and the confinement of feminist and anti-racist praxis to largely professional realms of ethnic and women studies programs, "difference" became the new buzzword in institutions of higher learning. Entirely new theoretical frameworks would gain traction by abstracting elusive individual identities and fragmenting subjectivities along every conceivable axis of difference. It is from this climate of the early 1990s that the framework of intersectionality (also synonymous with "multiple oppressions," and "matrix of oppression") would also gain considerable visibility in critical scholarship.

On the surface, an intersectionality approach is analytically well defined as it takes into account the diverse, distinct yet interlocking systems of oppression (with a particular focus of the

⁷³ The maxim of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, when asked about possible challenges to capitalism, "there is no alternative," exemplifies the naturalization of capitalist production and corresponding social formations of hierarchy and inequality in a post civil rights era.

triplet of race, class, gender) upon marginalized communities. An important task for feminist theorists utilizing such a framework is highlighting the distinct positioning and intersecting experiences of various oppressions upon women in order to complicate an undifferentiated or universalizing feminist standpoint. Nancy Hirschmann explains:

[A]n unmodified ‘feminist’ standpoint logically presupposes an unmodified group of women who share similar experiences. Feminists of color are particularly critical of the way that standpoint’s universalist potential has been unwittingly promoted by many white feminists through such usage of the term ‘feminist standpoint’ or ‘white feminist standpoint.’ Such criticisms are valid... While such substantive exclusions seriously undermine feminism, they do not mean that standpoint as a method is fundamentally irreconcilable with the lives of women of color or with the notion of ‘difference’” (qtd in Harding, 2004: pg. 321).

The scholarship of Patricia Hill Collins has offered important pathways for feminist standpoint theory in critically analyzing the significance of black women’s experiences in conceptualizing resistance, knowledge production, and the mechanisms of interlocking oppressions (Collins, 2000). My research of Filipina American experiences in their exposures to the Philippines builds upon Collins’ groundbreaking work, particularly her argument that placing excluded groups and their experiences in the center of analysis presents new possibilities for thinking of oppositional consciousness, agency, and feminist praxis within “one historically created system” (Collins, 2000: pg. 229). Furthermore, in challenging such a system she takes the important position that feminism must participate and seek strategies for forming alliances across fields of difference as well as beyond the national borders of the United States. She explains, “U.S. Black feminism should see commonalties that join women of African descent as well as differences that emerge

from our diverse national histories” (Collins, 2000, pg. xi). Yet, it is important to note that exactly how such solidarities are crafted utilizing the framework of intersectionality in Collins’ work remains conceptually open-ended and undeterminable.

My examination of Filipina American experiences in their exposures to the Philippines, points to the constitution of transnational alliances across various forms of difference (topographically as well as in regards to identity) in theory as well as human practice by foregrounding the material struggles for labor, life, and land. As I will further demonstrate, solidarity can be forged for Filipinas in a global diaspora not only by common experiences of oppression but also through a shared location within global relations of production and a similar understanding of capitalist exploitation as the fuel for U.S. imperialism. As such, outlining a Filipina diapsoric standpoint embarks upon a drastically different course than that offered by Collins in her deployment of intersectionality “to reveal much about the more universal process of domination” (Collins, 2000: pg. 227). It is true that examining marginalized women’s experience through a “matrix of domination” can foster “an enhanced theoretical understanding of how race, gender, and class oppression are part of a single, historically created system” (Collins, 2000: pg. 225). To be sure, gender, racial and other forms of oppressions have their own tempo of development that are not reducible to class struggle. Nevertheless, I take the position that Collins’s “matrix of domination” and more generally the framework of intersectionality are not completely operational in providing a transformative understanding of how these intersecting oppressions are organized within and sustained by the processes of global capitalism.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ For an important analysis of Hill Collins and the limitations of her project, see Martha Gimenez’s article, “Marxism and Class, Gender and Race: Rethinking the Trilogy” (2001) published in Race, Gender & Class, Volume 8, no. 2, pg. 23-33.

Because social class is largely understood within intersectional frameworks as another form of difference experienced by women and oppressed groups through differential incomes, occupations, or lifestyles, the social relation of class is divorced from exploitation and the historical antagonisms of wage labor and capital. With such a partial understanding of a class-based system that infiltrates so much of women's lives, the intersecting sources of unjust differences (such as race, gender, sexuality, nationality, and so on) as well as their reproduction throughout history is untenable. Furthermore, since changing a practice or structure requires a perceptive understanding of exactly what one is working to oppose, the analysis of class into a stratification perspective or a marker of identity leads to resistant acts that are principally individual in its nature. Descriptive and evocative examples of such resistance abound in the academic literature ranging from more mindful consumptive practices to what feminist scholar, Teresa Ebert calls "micropolitics" - the localized acts of reform that elide capitalist social arrangements thereby enabling the system to shift the sites of its exploitation to yet another form of difference (Ebert, 1996).

My engagement with educational exposure experiences to the Philippines critically captures the gendered experiences of Filipina Americans in the sharpening division of social class where surplus value is extracted from human labor-power, land is expropriated in the service of profit, and human beings estranged from nature and their social environments. In contrast to the intersectional frameworks, the Filipina American participants I interviewed in individual interviews as well as a larger focus group do not view the social relation of class through a stratification perspective or solely as a socioeconomic status indicator of income, occupation, and educational attainment. For the exposure participants, the social relation of class

is deeply rooted in their lived experiences as well as the contemporary realities of (neo)colonization, dispossession, and exploitation.

Global class relations have resulted in the reproduction of poverty for not only Filipinas in the United States and in the Philippines but for women all over the world. The writing of feminist scholar Martha Giminez clarifies this point more clearly:

The vast majority of the world's working population is female; women are the poorest of the world's poor. 70% of the 1.3 billion who live in absolute poverty are women.

Women work 2/3 of the world's working hours, produce half of the world's income, and own less than 1% of the world's property (Giminez, 2004).

My understanding of feminist standpoint theory demands critical analysis of the material circumstances Giminez illuminates so that systems, ideologies, and institutions supporting conditions of global patriarchy will be critiqued and ultimately transformed. It is with such understanding that I explore the experiences of Filipina Americans in their exposures to the Philippines, which I contend points to the continued relevancy of class analytic and the necessity of attending to difference – not as a simple additive to Marxist categories – but in the determined efforts to influence the dialectics of social change.

In documenting the stories of Filipina American women involved with the community-based organization, Pin@y sa Seattle⁷⁵ my primary intention was to explore their experiences participating in exposure programs to the Philippines. Exposures are one aspect of the various activities Pinay sa Seattle organizes around which include more localized endeavors of cultural work, educational programming, and community workshops. Comprised of Filipina American women involved in the Philippine national democratic movement struggle, Pin@y sa Seattle

⁷⁵ “Pinay” is the term that originated with the first Filipino immigrants in the United States referring to women of Philippine descent.

stresses the importance of celebrating “multifaceted identities, revolutionary history, and rich culture.” As an organization they do not promote individualistic or fractured notions of a Pinay identity but rather a global understanding of the problems confronting Pinay women grounded in a historical analysis of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. Thus, in conceptualizing the standpoint of militant and empowered Filipina Americans actively involved in a transnational social movement – or more specifically what I call a “Filipina diasporic standpoint” - my unit of analysis is not individual experiences but a historically shared, group-based experience.

As elaborated by Hartsock, Harding, Collins and other feminist scholars, the logic of a standpoint is produced within a larger group experience in a collective practice of struggle. While some theorists, including Collins have conceptualized more localized or “self-actualized standpoints” (Collins, 2000), the central aspect of a feminist standpoint is that it can only emerge in circumstances of shared oppression and collective resistance. Thus, while the stories and experiences I draw upon are certainly comprised of unique individual reflections, I seek to highlight a collectivity of empowered Filipina American women based on their common location in structures of oppression. I agree with the analysis of Martha Gimenez who insightfully maintains, such structures of oppression “are a complex unity of universal and particular elements: the universal is capitalism, the particular is the historically specific constellation of kinship, racial, ethnic, and religious inequalities that characterize the social formations where these movements emerge” (Gimenez, 2004). Accordingly, the experiences of Filipina American exposure participants are important because they direct our attention to the diverse and combined forces of gender, race, culture, sexuality, and other axis of difference that impact the lived experiences of Filipina Americans without eliding conditions of exploitation that continue to frame a diverse myriad of social formations. Distinct from interintersectionality, which affirms the

importance of difference without showing how particular exclusions and points of intersecting oppressions are a requirement and accelerated by the existing mode of production,⁷⁶ a Filipina diasporic standpoint explores the very real experiences of patriarchy and racialization for a Filipina global polity as it is constituted within “a single, historically created system” (Collins, 2000: pg. 225), namely that of global capitalism.

As I have already discussed, academic scholarship and social justice movements have benefited from the central tenants of feminist standpoint theory and its expositions that: (1) material life not only structures but sets distinct limits for women and oppressed groups in understanding social relations; (2) within a global system of exploitation and domination (where life is structured in fundamentally opposing ways for oppositional groups) the optic available to those who benefit from such arrangements are partial while the optic of those oppressed have the potential for “stronger objectivity;”⁷⁷ and (3) the vision of those who rule, have the institutional power to structure social relations in which the vast majority of people are forced to participate. In conceptualizing a Filipina diasporic standpoint I concentrate attention upon two other distinct points. Since a feminist standpoint is an achievement born in the process of “systematic analysis and the education that can only grow from political struggle to change those relations” (Hartsock, 1998: gg. 229) it is important to explore what such a process can look like for specific groups. A study of Filipina American activists and their experiences in educational exposure programs to the Philippines enable such an investigation. Furthermore, taking the position that a

⁷⁶ For an insightful article exploring intersectionality and its implementation in the field of education see: Deb Kelsh & Dave Hill's "The Culturalization of Class and the Occluding of Class Consciousness: The Knowledge Industry in/of Education." Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies. Volume 4, Number 1.

⁷⁷ Sandra Harding first coined the term “strong objectivity” in her argument that starting from the experiences of those who have been traditionally left out of the processes of knowledge production in the (social) sciences can produce more relevant and objective ways of knowing the world. See: Science and Social Inequality: Feminist and Postcolonial Issues (Harding, 2006) as well as Sciences From Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities (Harding, 2008).

standpoint carries emancipatory potential as marginalized groups attempt to see and recreate the world from the perspectives of their own lives; I explore the imaginary of diasporic Filipinas and in turn how their particular vision for humanity can inform other knowledge projects.

Systematic Analysis Sharpened in the Experiences of Exposure

In a collective statement written by the women's organization, Pin@y sa Seattle they envision, "liberation by and for all Filipinos living in the diaspora through a national democratic movement that will gain sovereignty for the Philippines" (Pin@y sa Seattle Web Site). Such a vision fuels their practice in organizing exposure programs to the Philippines, which is instrumental in fulfilling their objective of building "safe and intentional spaces for Pinays from different generations and class backgrounds to share, learn, and engage in resilient action, centering the experiences of the most marginalized Filipina women" (Pin@y Sa Seattle Website). Almost all the Filipina American activists that I interviewed had already conducted an exposure with the women's sector of the Philippines (one individual at the time of the focus group was making preparations to go for the first time). As such, their understanding of global gender relations and feminist politics was greatly influenced and informed by the advancements of a uniquely Filipina women's movement struggling to transform the material conditions in the Philippines and across a global diaspora. A member of Pin@y addresses the tensions and personal difficulties in addressing unjust global relations from the experiences of "the most marginalized Filipina women:"

[W]e do need to attack sexism. But at the same time, when the view comes from a certain first world perspective and a certain class perspective...than we are not talking about all women. That has always been the problem with feminism because it does not address what happens to brown women. When Filipino women have risen... they have

taken it on as if it's their issue. They are like, we can tell your story better than you...They have kidnapped all these stories...and are not allowing women of color and Filipino women to tell their own stories (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Echoing the insightful critiques of many feminist scholars of color, this quote speaks to the importance of community-based programs created by as well as for Filipina Americans to listen, share, analyze, and contribute in global stories of social transformation.

I agree with Harding that oppressed groups including working class, Filipina Americans, must become “a group ‘for itself,’ not just ‘in itself’ in order for marginalized groups so see the importance of engaging in larger political, social, or scientific struggles to see the world from the perspective of their own lives” (Harding, 2004, pg. 68). However, the process of seeing the world from the perspective of Filipinas is especially challenging when that group has been dispersed to every point of the globe as a result of corporate globalization or more specifically the imperial processes of primitive accumulation in the Philippines. This underscores the use value of exposure programs as they enable diasporic Filipinas and Filipina Americans in particular to return to their respective “homeland” and in the words of one participant, “see the conditions that we read about and its three root problems in the flesh.” A Pin@y member further elaborates their organizational analysis of three root issues impacting Filipina women:

A lot of the struggle is based in the understanding that the different hardships the Filipino people go through stem from three root problems, which [include] *feudalism and land relations*. Having a very small percentage of people who own most of the land and the people who work for those people don't benefit from it. *Imperialism*...particularly U.S. imperialism, which is what we have been under the influence especially economically and that effects the way that we are [not] able to create industry for our own people. This

[U.S. imperialism] really impacts women, through militarization,... prostitution, the trafficking, and the export of women workers. The third root problem is *bureaucrat capitalism* [which] is a lot of the folks who benefit from...people in government or the families who have always been in government. [Their policies] only benefit or trickles down to a few people but the majority of the people are left really dirt poor (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

It is not possible to grasp these conditions in the Philippines let alone radically alter them in the formation of what Chela Sandoval has coined, an “oppositional consciousness” without a class analytic. With such an understanding of the historical and material conditions impacting the lived experiences of Filipina women, the stories gathered from participants on their exposures to the Philippines carry the centrality of struggle through a collective process of transforming oneself while in a dialectical process of challenging larger social relations.

The participants I interviewed in the focus group as well as in individual interviews agreed that going on exposure provided “a clear, crisper picture of who you are in a global context.” The insights of a particular individual who was also one of the first Pin@y members to ever go on exposure is important to quote at length:

An exposure is not just a personal experience but a collective one. It’s an experience that is rooted in objectives [that are] both personal and organizational and with the intention of really coming back to share those stories to build upon that pool of concrete conditions in the Philippines and become better organizers. The exposure is not just the time in the Philippines. It’s very much the planning, the time there, and how you utilize those experiences when you come back. How you utilize those experiences when you come

back is actually more telling of the trip than the actual trip itself (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

What is especially unique is how the Pin@y members were able to link their own identities as women of color located specifically in the United States with a more global or diasporic understanding of who they are as Filipinas. E. San Juan explains this connection more clearly, “Filipinos in the United States possess their own historical trajectory, one with its own singular profile but always linked in a thousand ways to what is going on in the Philippines” (San Juan, 2007: pg. 111).

Through exposures to the Philippines, Pin@y members located an essential connection that binds their identities as Filipina Americans with other women in the Philippines and throughout the diaspora. That connection is the realization that Filipina American identity cannot be separated from the historical vestiges of U.S. imperial domination and collective women’s resistance in the Philippines. One individual explains:

Going to expo...my world just blew up. I was really able to understand myself in the context of the relation to who you are compared to other people’s conditions. When you get a chance to meet another Filipina - that is a peasant, that is a farmer, that is working at a brothel - really meeting so many different Filipino identities in this whole global spectrum of what is Filipino, it does make you understand yourself more...when people say [the exposure] is transformative and that you come back a different person, you really do. It is inevitable” (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Another Pin@y member speaks to how the exposure strengthened her understanding of herself in connection with the millions of Filipinas in the Philippines through the opportunity to dialogue with Filipina women and in particular hearing mothers’ stories about:

[T]heir son or daughter who was killed and their demands for justice, or a lola [grandmother] who talked about being a comfort woman [during World War II] and demanding justice for that, and it just goes on and on from all these incredible and strong women who may not ever call themselves a feminist or even necessarily have that at the forefront of their identity. [They] are the strongest women that I have ever [met]. And then really coming to understand myself in that context as they rose up in resistance to what has happened in their lives...knowing the strength, and getting chills, and crying...its different to read it in a book. But these living breathing women go through [so much] because they are looking for their daughter who has been disappeared. It's an everyday reality. It's their everyday struggle (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Thus, the sharing of stories and experiences of collective women's struggle "in the flesh" that reflect a unique historical and cultural context enabled many of the participants to "really come to understand myself in that context of resistance" (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Toward a Filipina Diasporic Standpoint

Based upon the numerous stories I have excerpted and analyzed of Filipina American exposure participants, I align with Sandra Harding's observation that a standpoint - including more specifically a Filipina diasporic standpoint - is a project and engaged approach that [c]hallenges members of dominant groups to make themselves 'fit to engage in collaborative, democratic, community enterprises with marginal people; it requires educating oneself about their histories, achievements, preferred social relations, and hopes for the future; it requires putting one's body on the line for 'their' causes until they feel like 'our' causes; it requires critical examination of the dominant institutional beliefs and practices that systematically disadvantage them; it requires critical self-examination

to discover how one unwittingly participates in generating disadvantage to them...and more (Harding, 2004, pg. 135).

While, Harding's quote is especially insightful it does not capture the important tensions that exist for Pin@y exposure participants as they readily admit "you will never know what its like to live in Smokey Mountain or to live in Payatas or with the urban poor."⁷⁸ We will never understand that. In the back of our heads we remember we have a shower to go to when we go home" (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011). Thus, the process of "putting one's body on the line" even momentarily in exposures to the Philippines can undoubtedly lend itself to many things including two warring oppositions: empowerment and a numbing despair. Before I can address how the individual participants I interviewed were able to gravitate toward the former as opposed to the latter, allow me to briefly elaborate how these conflicting feelings were articulated in the experiences of Pin@y exposurists.

During the focus group, after a Pinay member spoke candidly about the hardship of sharing stories and witnessing even briefly the lives of dispossessed Filipinas she began to reflect how "this could have been my life if my mother choose different things especially as a single woman in the Philippines. Just hearing all these stories and the resilience of survival is amazing. It puts your life in perspective. This is what survival is and this is where I come from." The ensuing conversation that occurred as a result of this sincere reflection is especially insightful:

Pin@y Member One: You see all this poverty and you're breaking down when you're not supposed to break down [with]...this whole idea of privilege in the context of [being

⁷⁸ Smokey Mountain and Payatas are two garbage dump sites in metropolitan Manila. Smokey Mountain, which operated for more than 40 years was shut down in the 1990s. The dumpsite was known for decomposing at such high temperatures that it would catch fire, hence its name. The closing of Smokey Mountain resulted in other garbage sites such as the one in Payatas that is currently operational and with a large squatter population. See article: "The Magic Mountain: Trickle-down economics in a Philippine garbage dump" written by Harper Magazine's Matthew Power.

Filipina American] in the Philippines. I remember sitting on a bus in the Philippines... and there are all these people banging on the window like begging for money and food and stuff like that. They are asking for money and I couldn't stand it, so I put my headphones on I began listening to music and closed my eyes. I started crying because I couldn't take it.

Pin@y Member 2: You numbed yourself?

Pin@y Member 1: Yes, and I still feel guilty about it. You know putting my headphones on.

Pin@y Member 2: How do you turn that off?

Pin@y Member 1: It [was] a bandaid.

Pin@y Member 3: That's the thing. You are going to see a lot of children but it shows you that everybody will take what they have to make a living. It will show you the extent to what people will do to survive (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Another individual shares how her time on exposure living with the urban poor in the community of Vitas, Tondo in metropolitan Manila and how it was “the most challenging weeks of my entire existence, not on some personal level [but more] like I'm having a hard time [simply] living.” She explains how the community she conducted her exposure was “a project that was built on top of what was formerly the Smokey Mountain garbage dump. After it was burned down, these projects were built on top of it.” She elaborates how many of the women within that community make their living by peeling garlic for huge restaurants. “They give them sacks full of garlic and they have to peel a certain amount and they are paid like 10 pesos⁷⁹ per sack. It's something that takes them hours and hours to do. This is their livelihood” (Focus Group Interview, 30 January

⁷⁹ The equivalent of 10 pesos in American dollars is a little more than 20 cents.

2011). During her two-week immersion, she shares the hardship she experienced as the community was engulfed in flooding.

There was this really bad flood for like three days and at the same time they were doing something with the water so there was no running water. It was so dirty because all this garbage and feces would come up and float around. There was no clean water. It was one of the hardest things I had to go through as a human being. I was like, ‘this is their lives.’ Its not to say that I didn’t complain, I was like, I really need to take a shower...not even a shower, like a tabo and some clean water real quick...that was like a reality check for how a majority of the people live in the Philippines that I hadn’t really thought of or been exposed to (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

These stories illustrate a central thematic of struggle that reverberate in the insights of feminist standpoint theory, particularly that the practice of collective and political struggle involves “an active intervention, a conscious and concerted effort to reinterpret and restructure our lives.” Thus a Filipina diasporic standpoint is a “project, not an inheritance; it is achieved, not given” (Weeks, 1996: pg. 101). However, in light of such oppressive conditions witnessed through educational exposure programs to the Philippines, how were the participants able to prevent themselves from submitting to utter feelings of hopelessness, or what has been described as the “numbing” to the “lack of humanity” in the social conditions facing the majority of women in the Philippines?

As I have maintained, the exposure experiences of Pinay members in particular were immersed in social conditions of poverty and social inequality is an important point of departure to understand the deeply rooted conditions for Filipinas in the Philippines as well as their dispersal throughout the globe. However, experiences alone are not the basis for the constitution

of transnational coalitions or the alteration of global power relations. In other words, human experiences, no matter how marginalized and oppressive, are not in themselves surrogates for critical analysis of broader material relations and imperial conditions. It could be a reasonable hypothesis that upon returning to the United States the Filipina Americans I interviewed would have been debilitated or overwhelmed with the impoverished conditions they encountered as opposed to the empowerment they actually expressed in being among “Filipina women who will make their mark on history” (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011). Thus, through the essential tools of critical analysis and collective action sharpened in their exposure to the Philippines, Pinay members were able to interrogate their exposure experiences and translate them into a militant politics, based not upon an identity (such as being a woman or a Filipina) but instead upon a politics of liberation from gendered dispossession and systematic exploitation.

It is important to reiterate that an alternative vision for the future, informed by the movement for national democracy in the Philippines, informed the praxis, politics, and pedagogy of exposure programs. Consequently, the process of struggle to realize such a program for a better world inoculated Pinay members with hope and empowerment. According to one Pinay member, “exposure programs equip us with the tools of analysis...to understand the conditions of the Philippines and the ways or an option of getting out of these really unjust conditions that the majority of Filipinas are in.” The tools of analysis, crafted and sharpened through a global social movement, is an anti-imperialist, class-based perspective that according to a Pin@y member gives “meaning to the [activism] that we are doing...that you carry back with you...that is lifelong and marks your permanence of understanding” (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

In outlining a Filipina diasporic standpoint, a critical analysis of the social conditions imprisoning Filipina women as well as a transformative understanding of the experiences acquired in exposure programs has much to do with social class. As the interviews with members of Pin@y sa Seattle have demonstrated, “centering the experiences of the most marginalized” reveals how class pertains to the lives, labor, and land of Filipina women. In fact, a common phrase that circulated throughout many of the interviews conducted was the phrase, “land is life.” A Pin@y member gives further meaning to the phrase as she explains, “going on exposure was the first time I felt I was connected to this land, like in a really deep and meaningful way. It was something I always took for granted.” She elaborates how through her exposure she became more aware of “the relationship between Filipinas and the land and how it is integral to everyday life and people’s livelihood.”

The reason why people fight for their land is basically they will literally die without it. So really realizing why the struggle is so important because they are so much more connected to it [the land] than everyone else is....that land is life. They could live off the land. It’s the breakdown...where the Philippines can survive on its own. And breaking down all the resources, like the bananas to the trees, to even the women, all these things...it can be [utilized] for self-sufficiency but [instead] it is basically all exported (Focus Group Interview, 30 January 2011).

Thus, informed by the praxis of Filipina Americans involved in a social movement for national democracy in the Philippines, a Filipina diasporic standpoint holds the struggle for land, labor, and life with the utmost importance. Yet, it is a position that does not delegate the real, lived experiences of women or people of color to an inferior or secondary position. Rather, the intelligibility of a social movement position that proclaims an insightful class understanding

where “land is life” and continues to grow with the experiences gained in collective action and critical analysis is a uniquely feminist and Filipina standpoint that holds the seeds of possibility for not only diverse constituents of Filipinas but the multitude of women around the world organizing bravely so they too can “make their mark on history.”

CODA: FILIPINO/A CRITICAL (FILCRIT) PEDAGOGY

“We live our lives, we tell our stories. The dead continue to live by way of the resurrection we give them in telling their stories. The past becomes part of our present and thereby part of our future. We act individually and collectively in a process over time, which builds the human enterprise and tries to give it meaning. Being human means thinking and feeling; it means reflecting on the past and visioning into the future. We experience; we give voice to that experience; others reflect on it and give it new form. That new form in turn, influences and shapes the way next generations experience their lives” (Lerner, 1997: pg. 211).

Gerda Lerner

“Filipinos in the United States possess their own historical trajectory, one with its own singular profile but always linked in a thousand ways to what is going on in the Philippines” (San Juan, 2007: pg. 111).

E. San Juan, Jr.

In this manuscript, I have made a series of arguments drawing upon the praxis of Filipino/a Americans in their exposures to the Philippines. I have argued that Filipino/a Americans in their involvement with youth, social, labor, multiracial, and women’s movements have made important pathways to alternative configurations of education and social relations, yet such contributions are hardly recognizable in educational discourses. As a result, in this project, I have placed Filipino/a Americans and their transnational praxis at the center of analysis in

order to ground my explorations of important tensions and intersections within critical modes of educational theory.

I highlight central tenants of critical pedagogy and remind readers of its inauguration with Paulo Freire in the dwelling places of landless peasants in the Third World, the alleys of the urban poor, in the streets of worker and student strikes, and other locales of unsanctioned knowledge production. In what I consider to be an important precursor to the exposure programs initiated by contemporary Filipino/a Americans, Freire developed a “dialogical” practice of teaching and learning with marginalized communities that have been aptly utilized in classrooms throughout the world. It is important to note that dialogue and the collective sharing of impoverished experiences were key aspects of Freire’s critical pedagogy so that the groups he worked with could not only acquire the tools for literacy but also better perceive that - while they were located in the peripheries - they do not reside outside of a global society. Freire explains, the oppressed “‘have always been ‘inside’ – living the structure that made them ‘beings for others.’ The solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression but to transform the structure to they can become ‘beings for themselves’” (Freire, 1989: pg. 74). In many ways the analysis I have conducted of educational exposure programs to the Philippines is a return to essential foundations in Freire’s critical pedagogy. This homecoming, of sorts, reveals an alternative curriculum informed by social movement practices and politics. The reflection of one exposure participant interviewed conveys this point as she describes a learning experience grounded in dialogue (or in a Filipino context, “kuwentuhan”) where she “got to sleep at a strike site for striking SM [Shoe Mart] workers.” She elaborates:

We slept in front of the store. It was kind of intimidating because this was all new to me being introduced to anything worker related –actually caring about different workers

issues. I remember that we slept in a row in front of the store, and then there would be a line of security officers like behind us in front of the entrance to the store. And they would play like really loud, obnoxious music the whole night. Talk about intimidation. But you know, you have to deal, right? At [one] point in front of the Shoe Mart, we were kind of like in a circle. And the people, who were sleeping at the strike site, were talking about their issues and why they were on strike. And we were all doing a sharing on why we were here [with them]. It was all very eye opening when I think back to it because there were a few workers who were like, “why are you here?” You know, “you [as a Filipina American] make a lot of money.” And it was good to share and bridge that connection and dispel those generalizations that we both had about each other (Individual Interview, 11 February 2011).

While the recreation of Freirean “cultural circles” with striking workers in the Philippines is key feature, such practices by themselves do not fully encapsulate what I have outlined as Filipino/a Critical (FilCrit) Pedagogy.

Heeding the advice of Freire, who reminds us that it is not possible to simply import or export his pedagogy, FilCrit Pedagogy recreates and extends Freire’s invaluable insights from the positionality of Filipino/a Americans involved in a social movement for national democracy in the Philippines. For instance, FilCrit pedagogy takes into account the culturally relevant tools mobilized by Filipino/as dispersed in the United States and throughout a global diaspora as they reflect upon their own unique experiences, historicize their circumstances, and collectively act to transform the conditions of possibility for an alternative future. As I have demonstrated, such tools include the creativity of cultural production as Filipino/a Americans have incorporated hip

hop, documentary film, poetry, art, and other cultural testimonies to foster a unique form of “diasporic counter-consciousness.”

Identifying a diasporic counter-consciousness - where Filipino/a Americans are conceptualizing their identities and local struggles (that include such issues of race, gender, sexuality, and other forms of difference) as contingent upon: 1) the fate of a population dispersed throughout the globe and; 2) the eradication of neocolonial conditions in the Philippines – was not entirely possible through the framework and methodology laid out by critical revolutionary pedagogy. This is not a critique of an emergent subfield that emphasizes: the importance of critical reflection and collective practice (praxis) in an attempt to transform one’s history in the present tense; the location of various social oppressions within historically specific modes of capitalist production; and the building of international coalitions in various sites of knowledge production (schools, labor unions, church groups, and community-based organizations). More so, it is an indication of what more needs to be done to propel the relevance of this framework for the educational struggles we currently face. For example, in its present theoretical gestation, critical revolutionary pedagogy has produced very little research engaging contemporary sites where communities of color, women, cultural workers, and youth are animating this theory beyond the context of Latin America. As I have demonstrated, for the insights and methods of this subfield to be more than revolutionary cogitations, qualitative studies utilizing the various methods of focus groups, case studies, individual interviews, testimonio, counter-storytelling, and other modes of inquiry must provide in-depth understanding as to its specific locations as well as explore how, why, and where a revolutionary educational agenda is embodied in collective human practice. Thus, FilCrit Pedagogy addresses a glaring blindspot within critical

revolutionary pedagogy while entering into generative dialogue with other critical discourses in educational theory.

I have taken a staunch position that the important efforts of other community groups to overcome and theorize their conditions of exploitation and oppression has great pedagogical relevance for Filipino/as throughout the diaspora. However, without a firm grasp of our own history and material conditions, FilCrit pedagogy runs the risk of becoming a clone while neglecting the requests of Freire to be creative in regards to our own circumstances and aspirations for the future. Thus, the principle attention for FilCrit pedagogy is building upon (Filipino/a experiences) in the advancement of culturally relevant and transformative sites of knowledge production. While FilCrit pedagogy is informed by the transnational activism and praxis of Filipino/a Americans participating in a diasporic social movement, I have demonstrated in my research that such a project has strong implications for other knowledge projects throughout the globe. In other words, by placing Filipino/a American activism at the center of analysis, FilCrit Pedagogy offers acumen to critical theories, research methods, and educative social practices that seek the transformation of oppressive social relations in an era of neoliberal globalization.

For instance, drawing upon the cultural media created from a hip hop exposure to the Philippines I have demonstrated how FilCrit Pedagogy has implications for the theorizing of race. Through a generative conversation with the scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois and his outline of a “guiding hundredth,” FilCrit pedagogy points to the indispensability of race critique within a historical materialist and internationalist framework. Such a frame imparts ballast to critical race theory and its corresponding methodology of counter-storytelling. It does so in pointing to the necessity of a transnational optic to challenge the lived experiences of Filipino/as and other

marginalized groups who reside within the intersecting processes of racialization and globalization.

Taking quite seriously intersecting oppressions sustained by the processes of global capitalism, FilCrit pedagogy is also committed in theorizing and building solidarities across gender, race, sexuality, and other forms of difference. As such, substantiated in the particular reflections of Filipina American women in their exposure experiences to the Philippines, I have outlined a “Filipina diasporic standpoint.” Such a standpoint diverges from the dominant framing of intersectionality - where the social relation of class is reduced to another form of difference or subject position. In contradistinction, a Filipina diasporic standpoint and its analogous pedagogy offers a vision for a world where the labor, land, and lives of Filipina women are not alienated from them but rather channeled in the service of their own needs and the potentials of a greater humanity.

The research I have presented in many ways is only a sketch. The creation of any of sketch, regardless of whether it is artistic or scientific, means that the overall conceptions must be augmented and filled in at a later time. It would be a great honor for what I have outlined in these pages to be engaged, tested, utilized, and enriched in the future. However, it is important to recognize that testing such a methodology is difficult to verify in strictly academic terms. Instead, the proofs are not of the past but of a future struggling to be born. The issue of validation is less one of truth claims than advocating for knowledge that makes the world better for Filipino/as and other “border crossers” forcibly dispersed throughout the world. Furthermore, just as “the road is made as one walks”⁸⁰ our theories and methods must continue in its adaptation to the sharpening forces of history. Academic scholarship will always be

⁸⁰ This is a quote attributed to Freire - see Bell, Gaventa, & Peters, 1990. However, I believe it was Antonio Machado who poetically explained: “Cominante, no hay camino, se trace el camino al andar.” / Traveler, there is no road. The road is made as one walks.”

implicated in such forces. Thus, it is with great hope that this research of U.S. educational exposure programs to the Philippines can humbly contribute toward the realization of a pedagogy that yearns for justice, liberation, and a lasting peace.

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