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Engaging the Hyphen:
University-Community Collaboratives in an Urban Context

By

Emily Gleason

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In

Education

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Women, Gender, and Sexuality

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Glynda Hull, Co-chair
Professor Ingrid Seyer-Ochi, Co-chair
Professor Barrie Thorne
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Abstract

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Professor Glynda Hull, Co-Chair

Professor Ingrid Seyer-Ochi, Co-Chair

Using ethnographic methods, this research explores how two multicultural groups of young people encounter and understand each other. One group consists of 18–22-year-old university students from a prestigious public university in Northern California; the other group of 14–18-year-old high school students from economically disadvantaged urban high schools located near the university. This research draws upon extensive participant observation and interviews to capture complex processes of negotiation between two groups of young people differently positioned on educational trajectories, yet bound together through university-community partnerships.

This study offers a theoretical intervention in the literature on service learning and university-community partnerships by adding a racialized and classed analysis, and by situating the research within broader conversations about educational inequality, discourses of urbanity, and geographies of youth. The research contributes racial, linguistic, and spatial analysis, exposing the ways in which two particular service-learning programs operated through bodily, linguistic, affective, and spatial practices.

The research reveals, through an analysis of field notes, interviews, and written materials, that for undergraduates and inner-city youth, perceptions of urban spaces, educational opportunities and inequalities, as well as understandings of racial, ethnic, and classed identities

shift over time through participation in educational programming. However, for undergraduates and youth, perspectives evolve in divergent ways. This study also finds that assumptions about *places* are projected onto populations of *people*, and those constructions exert influence in forming conceptions of schools, neighborhoods, and the people who make up those sites, illustrating the role of the imagination in maintaining borders. Larger discourses about urbanity, education, race, and class, which circulate in society, shape the contours of the conversations, movements, and meanings in between groups of young people. However, this research suggests that far more continuity between university and community populations exists than homogenizing categorizations such as "university" or "community" would indicate. Finally, this study asserts that, while ideals of hope, humanity, and academic excellence are often fostered at the individual level through university-community partnerships, colorblind ideology, meritocracy, and institutionalized borders may be perpetuated as well.

Furthermore, this research produces new knowledge about how relations of power shape young people's educational routes, assumptions about the world, and understandings of difference, revealing how institutional and individual experiences within educational sites are intertwined and play out through bodily, linguistic, and spatial practices. It contributes theoretical and practical insights related to ways that university-community relations might be strengthened and re-imagined. While university-community programs work to intervene in patterns of educational inequality, they also potentially reproduce colorblind ideologies and discourses that circulate in schools and society. The research concludes with a set of pedagogical and curricular recommendations aimed at achieving greater collaboration and interdependence at institutional and individual levels. With curricular support that offers socio-cultural guidance, this study suggests that partnerships can be theoretically rigorous, multidirectional, and serve as sites of re-imagination about people and places.

I dedicate this work to my incredible kid, Quinlan, 22 months old, whose spirit, joy and larger-than-life love has kept me feeling whole. May greater understanding about people and places be imagined and re-imagined over time, and may this study help to make the world a better place for you and for many others.

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Prologue

Field Note 5.

Edwin Su

Education 180: Fieldwork Site: Haven High

Friday, March 28, 2009

Activities: Tutoring math, and talking about the future.

Featuring: Darnell, Tenisha, a boy and two girls.

General Observations:

Today I started off at Ms. Harrison's classroom and made my way into the other classrooms. In Ms. Harrison's classroom, Darnell told me that he's not going to be at Haven much longer because he's moving with his mom. "I'm glad to be moving out of this school though. Everyone here is so loud and no one respects the teachers. Plus there aren't even any sport teams in this school. I remember back in my other school, I tried out for football. I went after school to work out and train for the season. I'd come back from that and I would be so tired from the exercise." I jerked back a little. I had known that Haven High was a small school, but I had never noticed that it had no sports teams.

After the conversation, I made my way into a classroom on the second floor. There I started to help Tenisha again on math homework. She was struggling with simple mathematics, and I felt slightly guilty when she claimed that, "(I) am so smart. How do you get all of this?" Afterwards, I talked to another girl about her life. She wanted to go to a beauty school after she graduated. She told me that she had a tough time after school because she had a baby boy who was one year old. She told me that her parents help her out, but that she spends a lot of time with him. "So, I was planning to save up some money with a part time job and then go to beauty school," she told me.

Lastly, I talked to another boy and a girl who were doing their homework. When I asked the guy what he was doing, he replied, "I'm doing my history homework." When I asked him what he wanted to be (when he was older), he told me that he wanted to rap for the rest of his life. When I asked the girl next to him, she replied that she was going to be a singer. "My favorite singer is Beyonce", she said.

"Does that require extra schooling?" I asked.

"No, but I still want to go to college. My sister is in college."

"Isn't it hard for your parents to pay for her college?" I naively assumed.

"No, my dad works at PG&E and my mom works at Kaiser as a nurse."

Soon enough, it was time to go.

Reflection:

There were a lot surprises today. First, I was shocked to hear that the school has no sports teams. In my own high school, we had almost every sports team available from football to golf. It was peculiar that after school, there was nothing that could rally them up to be proud of their own school. In my high school, many of the kids would go to the basketball game or football game to cheer on their own high school. People would randomly show up to track meetings or swim meetings to see their classmates compete. Even at Kirkland University, I feel like one of the reasons that I am proud of being a Kirkland student is because of our football and basketball games.

Secondly, I was sad when Tenisha told me that I was smart because it meant that she felt stupid. I wanted to teach her in a way where she could also see me struggle while doing the problems, but the questions really were simple, so I had a tough time hiding the ease. I told her that I had trouble with it when I was learning it too. I told her that it just takes a lot of repetition and practice before math becomes easy. It was interesting to me that so many kids at Haven High had their problems, but not everyone was badly off. An instance of this would be the girl who has a one year old boy. I understand how it could be difficult with a child for her to go to high school and then to college. Because of all these stories that I had heard over the course of the time I taught at Haven, I automatically assumed that everyone was poorly off. However, when I found out that both the girl's parents had good jobs, I was shocked. Overall, today was a wonderful day. I learned much about the kids and their dreams. I realized that some kids have it really tough, but some of then are well off.

Edwin Su, a fourth-year college student enrolled at Kirkland University, composed this field note for his education fieldwork course which placed him and many other undergraduates in local city schools as tutors. Edwin's description documents a day in his life as a tutor at Haven High, a small continuation high school in the city of Ashland, CA[1]. This selection was excerpted from of one of the ten ethnographic field notes composed by Edwin over the course of his semester tutoring. The field note is an appropriate entrée into a larger examination of university-community collaborations in an urban context, as this study investigates how cross-sections of undergraduates and local high school students from diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic, educational, and geographic backgrounds imagine each other's worlds, much as Edwin imagined the world of the students of Haven High. This selection hints at the processes of meaning-making, identity-negotiation, and critical reflection that take place as young people engage across difference, but it also leaves much to the imagination of readers.

I have selected this field note as an opening to my dissertation on engagement across university-community contexts for several reasons. At the beginning of his tutoring session, which was Edwin's fifth visit to Haven High as part of his required fieldwork, many assumptions about the local high school students were already circulating in Edwin's imagination. These assumptions related to inner city schooling and students' future possibilities, as well as their socio-cultural realities. Yet, as this ethnographic field note articulates, Edwin arrived at new

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[1] All the names of people and places have been changed. From this point on in this study, all names reflect pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of the individuals and communities, programs, courses, and sites.

understandings about "others" as well as the local high school site as he engaged in conversations with students over the course of the afternoon.

This relatively banal window into Edwin's experience illustrates the ways in which meaning-making across difference takes place in uneven, personal, and sometimes unpredictable ways. And yet, from this field note, which represents a typical undergraduate narrative of fieldwork for the education course, and a sliver of the kind of data that this dissertation draws from, we are left with far more curiosities than conclusions. We have learned almost nothing about the youth's thoughts on Edwin's presence, nor do we know how they "read" (Freire & Macedo, 1987) his geographical positionality, university affiliation, or his racial, ethnic, and socio-economic status. Likewise, we are left wondering what Edwin thought about Tenisha and Haven High *before* he spent time there with students — as well as where those ideas came from.

Edwin deploys an array of oppositional framings throughout this field note, suggesting layers of meaning about identity constructions such as "smart" versus "stupid," "well-off" versus "poor," and "success" versus "failure." Notably, conflations of race, class, and geography hover in the backdrop of Edwin's note, although cloaked by carefully coded word choice. Accordingly, topics of language and the politics of description will also be addressed throughout this study, as we zoom outward from the micro examples to examine larger discourses and rhetoric that circulate about urbanity, poverty, education, and ambition. In terms of Edwin's particular perspective, we must question why he is so surprised to meet a young woman attending an inner city school who has two parents that work "good jobs," and why he assumes economic instability and limited aspiration for Haven students. Additionally, we are left wondering about the ripple effects of such multicultural programming; did Edwin's awakening acknowledgements of resource disparity and educational inequality impact him, and if so, how? Conversely, how did Tenisha and Darnell experience Edwin, a Korean college student from a nearby prestigious university, and how did they imagine his social, academic, and cultural milieu? In other words, how did participants experience each other and each other's "figured worlds" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998)? This study exposes the wealth of assumptions about particular people and places that lurk in the background — and sometimes in the foreground — of individuals' engagement across difference.

In short, this field note leaves us with a deep curiosity to know what happens in the subterranean moments between university and high school students from diverse backgrounds. I understand these subterranean moments to be the complex and nuanced processes of meaning-making that take place within and across inequitable educational arrangements as well as racial and classed difference. Much of the time, these subterranean processes resulted in prosaic engagement, although moments of rupture, reconciliation, and growth also took place over time, as this study reveals. Central questions remain about educational inequality at large, as well as about interventions like the one in which Edwin and Darnell took part: How did young people from disparate backgrounds make sense of each other, and how did they engage in processes of imagining and re-imagining each other and each other's locations in the world? Also, how did diverse young people negotiate interpersonal dynamics with each other? How they did theorize about inequality, opportunity, education, and identity over time?

This dissertation moves beyond undergraduate field notes read in isolation to try to understand big picture theories and phenomena related to "diversity," "multiculturalism," and engagement across "difference." Analyzing collections of experiences over the course of a semester, this study hones in on points of tension and unity related to the racialized, classed, educational, and geographical intersections that take place between young people engaged in

university-community partnerships. Students' engagement resulted in frequently mundane — sometimes enriching, sometimes eruptive — "contact zones" across difference (Pratt, 1999). A contact zone comes to life as a diversity of people from different vantage points come together in a small space, such as a classroom. The contact zones within university-community collaborations reflect points of connection and dis-connection between young people from disparate cultural, ethnic, racial, geographic, and educational vantage points. This metaphoric space is animated by misunderstandings, jokes and mis-cues, and multicultural meaning-making. Admittedly, the undergraduates and high school students, despite living within a few miles of each other, might never have crossed paths were it not for the university-community engagement that their respective schools chose to participate in. Their lives became entangled to varying degrees of intimacy over the course of a semester.

This study interrogates the ways in which participants on both sides of the university-community collaboration had ideas about each other that floated between them, based on the 'other's' geography, educational institution, race, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality and a myriad of other social and cultural variables. Assumptions about each other had a life of their own, as this project unveils.

Statement of Problem

The backdrop of California as an increasingly diverse, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic landscape is where this project begins. Even with the democratizing and potentially unifying forces of technology, new media, and high-speed communication, questions about who belongs "here" and "there" occupy the consciousness of many, and in California these questions are more pressing than ever. The research project examines how people in one greater metropolitan region in Northern California, from different neighborhoods, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds, perceive each other and struggle together to understand each other's social locations and educational contexts. Much has been written about shifting urban demographics across the globe, but less has been written about how racial, ethnic, and class divides have impacted educational contexts in American urban centers with higher education included in the purview (Lipman, 2006; Dmitriadis & Kamberelis, 1997). Looking at a cross-section of public educational sites in one metropolitan region illuminates the ways in which identities and opportunities are intimately connected as well as how borders are maintained.

This research examines multi-faceted problems related to educational inequality. First off, this study explores how inequalities related to education play out at the individual level, shaping understandings of identities, geographies, opportunities, and constraints. Secondly, this study looks at one kind of multicultural educational intervention that aims to unite a cross-section of diverse young people for mutual enrichment. Thus, this research examines multiple scales of educational dilemmas. Across a span of just a few miles, radically different educational opportunities characterize the landscape. This study examines the lived inequalities and symbolic borders between people and places, as well as multicultural educational interventions that strive to address such inequitable contexts. My research is influenced by both advocacy for and critique of the many strands of multiculturalism, as university-community partnerships are situated in the murky terrain of modern day multicultural education efforts that try to move beyond tokenism and tolerance, but with limited tools.

In the realm of schools and after-school programs, students, teachers, and program directors find themselves up against unique challenges in terms of engaging with individuals from disparate geographies, cultural contexts, languages, religious beliefs, and racial and ethnic

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backgrounds. In educational contexts, a new socio-cultural chemistry makes communication between people of different backgrounds more likely than ever, and yet more fraught with possibilities for misunderstanding (Olsen, 1997; Lipman, 2006). Anthropologist Mary Louise Pratt terms this edging of diverse people in close quarters a "contact zone." She contends that contact zones exist in spite of *and* because of platitudes toward multiculturalism that permeate American society. Contact zones refer to "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (1999). While these contact zones can be rich sites for meaning-making, cross-cultural understanding, and development in educational contexts, contact zones can also be fraught with tension, marked by differentiated experiences, assumptions about the world, access, and mobility. This dissertation argues that some of the most productive possibilities for learning about inequalities and identities come from moments of tension when "differences" are exposed, and opportunities for dialogue and reflection are provided.

An Ethnographic Study

This study examines how two groups of young people encountered and understood each other: one group made up of 18-22 year-old university students from a prestigious public university and the other group made up of 14-18 year-old high school students from economically disadvantaged urban high schools. Both groups were heterogeneous racially and socio-economically, but the university students were on a trajectory leading to class privilege, whereas the high school youth were not. This study explores what assumptions about each other look like, and how contact zones created by university-community partnerships lead to conflict as well as identification related to race, class, and educational assumptions. I investigate how these encounters are integral to processes of reflection, growth, and critique about race, class, and educational opportunities and inequalities. Ultimately, this research argues that inequalities and dis-locations are both disrupted as well as reified through university-community engagement at the individual and institutional levels.

I performed two case studies of university-community collaborations that bring together "youth" (ages 12 to 22 years of age) for the explicit purpose of mutual enrichment, learning, and development. Situated in Northern California, this study concerns university-community partnerships between Kirkland University, a large public research institution, and the surrounding cities of Ashland and Harbor Bay, California, two large metropolitan cities near the university. Employing a socio-cultural lens, the research relies on theories of literacies, place and space, urbanity, and multiculturalism in the U.S. to make sense of the interactions between highly diverse individuals and groups of young people[2]. This ethnographic project provides insight into how both urban youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods and schools and undergraduates from a prestigious, public university negotiate difference and construct

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[2] When I refer to "young people" here, I include both undergraduates as well as high school students in this category. Throughout the dissertation, however, I distinguish between the two populations, referring to either undergraduates or high school participants. Although definitions of "youth" are debate-able, I understand "youth" to be a socially constructed category, reflecting the hopes, ideals, tensions, and fears of a society. Constructions of both adolescence and youth are laden with dominant ideas about development, biology, maturity, culture, and so forth, and expectations of youth are context-driven (Lesko, 2001). I imagine youth to mean a broad category of *becoming*, distinct from linear models of development. For the purposes of the dissertation, I argue that both sets of students from the university and high school might be considered "youth".

understandings about each other and themselves through social, linguistic, embodied, and spatial practices.

University-Community Partnerships and the Urban Context

This research is significant and timely as universities are increasingly creating collaborations with community-based organizations, public schools, and other community partners for strategic purposes, and the populations that are united through these partnerships are often highly diverse groups of young people who are on different educational trajectories and paths of mobility. I utilize the framework of university-community partnerships as an entry point into contact zones of multi-age youth from diverse backgrounds. I selected two university-community projects that link undergraduate courses at Kirkland, a large public university in Northern California, with local high schools in the surrounding urban region. Both collaborations unite multi-racial and multi-ethnic groups of college students and high school students weekly through educational programs located in and around high school sites.

The two selected programs reflect a trend at American universities to reach beyond the parameters of the campus gates to surrounding communities and neighborhoods. Over 50% of universities in this country are situated in urban centers (Rodin, 2007) and historically many bordering communities have had complex relations with their university neighbors, as uneven patterns of development have typically characterized the topography where universities and local communities intersect. The now-hackneyed term "town and gown" attempts to capture the often-uneasy relationship between perceived elites of the university and local citizens who live close by, but often out of reach of, the "Ivory Tower." Historically, American universities were located in remote rural regions, self-identifying as bastions of cultivation, knowledge, and intelligentsia, separate from the societal ills associated with cities. However, throughout the early and mid-1900s, as industrial expansion and population growth re-shaped the American landscape, many universities were absorbed into city limits (Martin, et al., 2005). Universities erected campus gates and walls to differentiate between *university* and *beyond*. Inside the halls of the academy focus on research, publishing, and ambitious scholastic agendas drove the engine of many institutions (Harkavey, 1998). Not surprisingly, the long-standing disjuncture between "town" and "gown" has resulted in palpable tension, race and class-related divisions, and hostility in many contexts historically. I will address this historical trajectory further in Chapter One.

Thus, the import of university-community partnerships is great, as processes of meaning-making about race, place, education, and identities rise to the surface through engagement across "difference" and expose common-place narratives and language usage about people and places, opportunities and inequalities. Understanding more about the ways that young people talk, write, and communicate across difference could be hugely significant for enacting social change at the level of the individual and institution. Yet, while the potential for disrupting patterns of inequality through educational interventions is possible, the risks at the root of such projects are also substantial. Therefore, thinking critically about how partnerships are working and *for whom* remains of the utmost importance as this dissertation testifies. By incorporating race and class analysis, my research enhances the theoretical discussion of contact zones and develops new ideas about how constructs of difference shape the ways that people communicate, clash, and collide with each other within university-community partnerships. This dissertation also contributes key pedagogical suggestions for promoting thoughtful race and classed analysis, as well as increased reciprocity, on the ground.

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Engaged Scholarship and Service Learning

A growing trend toward community engagement has taken off at public and private universities throughout the nation as universities across the nation have sought to construct hyphenated identities and to cross borders literally and figuratively. At Kirkland University a high-profile initiative recently emerged for the explicit purpose of nurturing university relationships with community-based organizations, public schools, and other local resources. This new initiative supports faculty to incorporate fieldwork, community-based research, and "service" into their existing or new courses. This new engaged scholarship initiative aims to be a formalized institutional structure that will assist in coordination, support, and development of coursework structured around fieldwork and community engagement. This dissertation responds to this growing trend and serves as a necessary critical exploration of the behind-the-scenes experiences on either side of the metaphoric university-community divide.

With renewed efforts to build relations between university and community interests, and constant buzz about "community engagement," the need for inquiry into these relationships and collaborations is at a premium. At universities and colleges across the nation, the proliferation of the partnerships is undeniable, and without critically examining how learning happens and in what ways understandings of self, geography, community, and power are being shaped, we run the risk of further reproducing inequity, misunderstanding, and uneven structures of power. Professor Randy Stoecker, a professor at the University of Wisconsin who studies university-community partnering, reminds us, "Academic institutions are focused on making sure their students learn from the service-learning experience, but they aren't always paying similar attention to the interests of the organizations that provide that experience, much less the clients they serve" (Strom, 2009). While this research argues that multidirectional learning and growth is possible through university-community partnerships, and often happens in spite of and because of contact zones that grow out of unequal relations of power, this project looks beyond the parameters of particular partnerships. Examining socio-cultural phenomena that generate contact zones and individual moments of rupture and reckoning drives this dissertation. Looking at the up-close texture of encounters between diverse young people affords a window into larger social forces at work.

Moreover, in the current political, economic, and social climate, in which racial and ethnic stratification, poverty, educational inequities, and violence continue to threaten our youth, this study, which examines *how* social practices and places, relationships, and understandings are negotiated between diverse populations, becomes all-the-more critical. In order to increase geographies of opportunity, and create more cross-cultural connections across "difference," we need to understand how university-community partnerships might produce intersectionality, hybridity, and more productive contact zones between diverse individuals and communities. Magnifying tensions around racial, class, ethnic, geographic, and cultural differences, these partnerships produce spaces in which relations of power are negotiated and contested. In order to create more equitable university-community collaborations, however, examining both the methods and the outcomes of such initiatives (in theory and practice) proves crucial. Furthermore, this research contributes new knowledge about how geography, diversity, and socio-cultural contexts inform our young people's perspectives on themselves, learning, and their places in the world.

Guiding Questions

Despite the growing trend of university-community partnerships, studies of the impact of university-community alliances are sporadic, and have rarely been subjected to ethnographic study and racialized and classed analyses. These partnerships are colloquially "university-community" partnerships, however, it might be interesting to imagine what "community-university" partnerships might look like. At the present moment, such an inversion of terms may not necessarily be appropriate as most collaborations originate at the university, and extend out into the community secondarily. Thus, relations of power shape the construction and implementation of many university-community alliances. This dissertation thinks critically about the meanings and negotiations that take place within university-community contact zones, with regard to power, politics of spaces and places, and subjectivities. This project explores the life experiences of participants from both sides of university-community partnerships using ethnographic methods, such as intensive participant observation and informal and formal interviews. I argue that for undergraduates and inner-city youth, perceptions of urban spaces, educational opportunities and inequalities, as well as understandings of racial, ethnic, and classed identities shift over time through participation in educational programming. However, for undergraduates and youth, perspectives evolve in significant, yet divergent ways.

This research is guided by five central questions:

1. How do relations of power shape university-community partnerships and how do programs impact youth participants and university participants in various ways?
2. What do encounters across race, class, geography, ethnicity, and educational contexts look like and how do participants from both sides of the partnership negotiate "contact zones" that emerge in and around the program space?
3. How do participants make sense of constructs of difference, "otherness," and inequality in response to program participation over time?
4. How do participants understand their relationships to the local urban landscape, and in what ways do notions of "place" shift over time?
5. Finally, do partnerships affect change at different levels or scales, and if so, what are the implications for those changes?

This interdisciplinary ethnographic education research builds on two case studies to illuminate larger theories about cross-cultural understanding, the politics of place in an era of increasing stratification, and practices of youth who have been socially marked as "different" from each other. Employing qualitative methods, the project investigates how dealing with difference in life experience, language, and landscape plays out for participants in multicultural university-community collaborations, as well as how education programs both enable and constrain cross-cultural understanding.

Outline of Dissertation Chapters

Chapter One reviews the literature that this study builds on, as well as situates the research in the current socio-historical landscape of public education in the United States and within California. This chapter also introduces key terms that are salient throughout the study. Finally, this chapter details the theoretical framework that shapes the research study, design, and analysis. Chapter Two addresses the methods I employed throughout the research as well as explains the ways that I thought about university-community collaborations methodologically. I present an overview of the data sources, including written undergraduate assignments, and then

discuss the ways in which my positionality as researcher shaped the study, particularly the kinds of data I was able to gather.

 Chapter Three serves as the first of three data analysis chapters. This chapter shows how common perceptions of urban contexts, including schools, shaped the first impressions of the university students in regards to the local high school youth and the possibilities associated with them. This foundational chapter traces the kinds of meanings associated with people and places and how those constructions wielded power. Chapter Four builds on the discussion of first impressions and social constructions of difference. This chapter illuminates how partnerships represent sites in which conflict and unequal power relations characterize the relations between the university representatives (undergraduates) and community partners (youth). This chapter expounds on a particular incident between undergraduates and urban youth that reflects multiple layers of contact zones, as participants struggled to make meaning with each other as well as address conflict and (mis)understandings about race, place, power, and identity. This chapter argues that learning often happens within contact zones, especially when opportunities for dialogue are facilitated.

 Thus, in Chapters Three and Four, I explore a variety of ways that assumptions about urban youth and university students are *imagined*, as well as how these perceptions gain power to construct borders between people and places. Moving onto Chapter Five, I interrogate if and how those preconceptions break down or shift due to engagement in service-oriented programs. I show how, in some cases, identification and demystification took place through individual connections and conversations that fostered curiosity about each other. However, this research finds that transformative change is a slow, at times painstaking, project, and education initiatives such as university-community partnerships have the power to reify — as well as disrupt — lived inequalities. Finally, in Chapter Six, I re-visit the study's central questions related to how cross-sections of diverse students make sense of each other and each other's worlds at various levels. In this concluding chapter, I unpack what identification with one another looks like in a variety of contexts — animating youth perspectives on feelings of belonging in both spatial and racial senses, as well as university students' perspectives on identification with local youth. This chapter then explores how ruptures, reciprocity, and re-imagining might take place in university-community partnerships. I close by making a series of recommendations for the future concerning pedagogy, and I offer suggestions for achieving greater collaboration, reciprocity and connection at institutional and individual levels.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Overview of the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that drives this dissertation draws from several scholarly fields: education, cultural geography, sociology, critical theory, urban studies, and literacy. Scholars who address educational experiences in relation to the intersection of race, class, ethnicity, and gender have influenced the construction and analysis of this study (See Carter, 2005; Ferguson, 2000; Fine, 2003; Fordham, 1996; MacLeod, 1995; Noguera, 2003; Pollock, 2004a). With an eye on social processes that take place between individuals, this research is modeled after scholarship before me that addresses individual experiences in relation to larger socio-cultural institutions and contexts (Burawoy, 2000; Cushman, 1998; Lipman, 2006; McLeod, 1995; Nespor, 1997; Pollock, 2004a).

Theories that address how schools and educational institutions are sites of power inform my work as well. These theories take as axiomatic the individual as embedded in larger social and cultural constructs and therefore dictate that change efforts must be necessarily *structural*, in addition to *individual*. Seeing university-community partnerships within broad frameworks of educational trends and relations of power helped me to construct this project with an emphasis on the interplay between individuals and institutional forces. These institutional forces include schools, neighborhoods, and community partnerships themselves, as well as constructs of race, class, opportunity, and inequality.

The current state of multicultural education.

Multicultural education as originally conceptualized emphasizes the preservation, celebration, and acknowledgment of cultural differences in order to "build bridges"(Sleeter & Grant, 1998) between the diverse ethnic groups that comprise today's classrooms and educational contexts, and as a way to eliminate educational inequalities (Banks, 1988, 1997, 2004; Gorski, 2006; Nieto, 2000). Critical multiculturalism was designed to equip students with the tools to critically engage in topics of race, class, culture, ethnicity, and inequality. It also emphasizes the value of alternative "ways of knowing" and the importance of transforming inequitable relations of power (Banks, 2004). It was envisioned as a critical framework within which to resist dominant forms of schooling that secure racial privilege and maintain the status quo. Critical multicultural education aimed to transform systems of power through all-encompassing institutional and cultural change in the educational arena (Apple, 2000; Banks, 2004; Gorski, 2006; McLaren, 2003; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1998).

However, despite multicultural education's initial intentions, some believe that it has been co-opted in so far as it now reflects watered-down efforts to "celebrate" diversity, while ultimately privileging a "core" set of knowledge and cultural competences (Díaz-Rico, 1998; Gorski, 2006; Hirsch, 1987, 1996; Buras, 2008; Sleeter, 2001). In light of conservative influences, critics cite concerns that it increasingly represents empty platitudes — á la holiday foods and festivals — which reflect a dangerously tokenistic and neo-liberal attending to "difference" (Apple, 2000; Buras, 2008; Giroux, 2003; Leandro, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Grant, 1998). This "heroes and holidays" (Gorski, 2006) approach has become the dominant mode of multiculturalism in schools. As such, discourses of "diversity" and "difference" have been infused into curricula, but with limited potential to enact change at the institutional level or to challenge systems of power (Apple, 2000; Giroux, 2000; Gorski, 2006; Leonardo, 2009).

Mainstream multicultural education efforts have also been interrogated for an emphasis on individualism and the underlying assumptions that change results from a shift in attitudes and behaviors, with the individual actor as the agent for change (Buras, 2008; Giroux, 2003; Jackson & Solis, 1995; Leandro, 2009; McCarthy & Willis, 1995). This is in contradiction with the original intent — that the system must change as well as the individual.

In order to achieve the original vision of multicultural education as a transformative practice, critically engaged methods and curricula in classrooms must be re-imagined and re-claimed (Banks, 2004; Buras, 2008; Sleeter, 2009). Critics of well-intentioned, but largely ineffectual, liberal multiculturalism, as well as of conservative approaches, advocate that multicultural education must involve more than the celebration of differences, holiday fairs, and food festivals (Buras, 2008; Gorski, 2006; Leandro, 2009; May & Sleeter, 2010; Sleeter, 2009). It must strive for social reconstruction and the re-distribution of power and privileges by changing institutions of power, and by empowering students with the language and skills to challenge social inequalities.

Civic engagement and the Academy: University-community partnerships.

Over the past thirty years, strategic coalitions between universities and community partners have increasingly developed between public and private universities and surrounding regional public service entities. Partnerships between universities and a host of community partners engage in a variety of capacities ranging in size, scope, and purpose. The larger intention of many of these partnerships, such as high school literacy programs, rural and urban development initiatives, public health campaigns, youth development organizing, and other service-oriented programs, is to support the auspices of often under-resourced, under-served local public organizations and education sites. Building on a long-standing movement to expand the public nature of university life, both public and private institutions have been entrenched in reaching beyond the campus gates in order to reach a broader population for over a century. "Land-grant" institutions, established in the 1800s, aimed to reach a wider population and to make higher education more accessible for those who had previously been excluded from private colleges and universities. The purpose of land grant institutions was also to broaden the kinds of curricula offerings, so that classes might appeal to a working class populace more interested in vocational training (Bonnen, 1998).

After the turn of the century with the expansion of services and student populations at many institutions, the physical needs of universities began to shift dramatically (Bierbaum, 2005; Bonnen, 1998) Infrastructure development necessarily began to encroach on nearby neighborhoods and communities. As Bierbaum historicizes in her study of the role of universities as urban developers, "The convergence of federal urban renewal programs and university expansion needs in the 1950s and 60s meant that institutions of higher education became a new actor in the clearing and reconstruction of neighborhoods as part of the controversial federal urban policies" (2005). With universities playing the role of "developer" in many urban and regional centers, tensions built between populations sharing the local space as the needs and interests of those in the "Ivory Tower" have not always been in sync with community residents'. Rooted in class and often-times racial divides, the "town versus gown" phenomenon refers to this historic rift that characterizes much of landscape across the country where universities and "communities" collide in close quarters.

In attempts to minimize divisions and to serve as catalyst for social change, many universities and colleges have embraced the need to reach across the metaphoric and geographic

divides to build alliances with local organizations and entities (Bierbaum, 2005; Harkavey, 1998; Martin, Smith, & Phillips, 2005; Maurrasse, 2001; Rodin, 2007)[3]. University-community partnerships take many different forms across a spectrum of disciplines and interests. Enhancing economic and regional development, local public schools, city planning projects, public health campaigns, neighborhood revitalization, and other education and social service related collaborations are examples of university-community partnerships that have proliferated in the past three decades. Recommendations for how to create and sustain such partnerships are well-documented. A common take-away message from much of the literature recommends universities proceed with respect and sensitivity — as well as commit to long-term engagement. Historic rifts stem from many examples of the university playing a domineering and over-powering presence in collaborations, which have invariably led to short-lived or imbalanced partnerships. These kinds of collaborations may alienate rather than build bridges. Accordingly, David Wilson, Associate Provost of Auburn University who has written about key tenets of successful partnerships, explains, "When residents, organizations, agencies, and local communities actively participate in outreach projects, the commitment to sustain the project is much greater than community projects that are spearheaded and conducted solely by academicians." Moreover, a key to building reciprocal relations lies in enabling university and community stakeholders to actively participate in multiple levels of the collaborative process, from the partnership's inception to the execution and evaluation.

Stretching back through history, aspirations for outreach and expansion beyond the campus gates remained fundamental to the central tenets of the university as an educational institution (Bonnen, 1998; Maurrasse, 2001). And in sync with changing demographics and cultural shifts in the U.S. in the last few decades, it has become apparent that to enact multicultural education for university students, a connection must be made between the university sphere and the community sphere. Attempting to minimize the gulf between these two spheres, strategic coalitions between universities and communities have developed steadily over the past three decades (Bringle, 1999; Checkoway, 1997, 2001; Harkavy, 1998; Martin, Smith, & Phillips, 2005; Maurrasse, 2001; Rodin, 2007). These strategic alliances have resulted in re-development and city planning projects, reform efforts in urban schools, business coalitions to promote "green" industries in under-resourced neighborhoods, community-based research in health clinics, and many other multi-faceted projects of varying size and scope. It is safe to say that university-community partnerships are becoming increasingly fashionable as private and federal funding sources often privilege partnered projects (Maurrasse, 2001).

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[3] The University of Pennsylvania has been cited as a classic example of an urban university that, in light of tension with outlying communities, responded by building coalitions and strengthening relations. In the 1980s, crime and violence ravaged through the neighborhoods of West Philadelphia, adjacent to the campus. The university, feeling threatened by the encroaching risk and danger of the surroundings, mobilized by seeking to revitalize West Philadelphia neighborhoods and collaborate with community interests, organizations, and populations. According to former university president, Judith Rodin, Penn spearheaded some of the nation's first university-community partnerships, which were designed to heal wounds and build bridges. Now considered a pioneer for university-community partnering, University of Pennsylvania has paved the way in erecting sustainable collaborations that have become models for other universities across the nation. At other public and private campuses, such as Arizona State, University of California, Yale University, University of Wisconsin, University of Texas, and University of Massachusetts, to name just a few, university-community partnerships have proliferated. Many outreach programs emerged in direct response to challenges such as crime, economic disparity, and violence in the greater university "communities" (Maurrasse, 2001).

Academic literature that addresses university-community partnerships has been primarily housed in the "service-learning" arena. This literature grapples with pedagogies for teaching and learning, civic engagement, and youth development (Angelique, 2001; Chapin, 1998; Harkavy & Benson, 1998; Shumer & Belbas, 1996; Waterman, 1997). Some service-learning research explores the "border crossing" that occurs through service opportunities, exploring ways in which students learn to navigate social and structural borders and critiquing how such boundaries are constructed (Chesler, et al., 2006; Dunlap, 1998; Hayes & Cuban, 1997). Within this literature, critiques tend to center around the universities' overly idealistic visions and goals that often accompany these programs. Rosy rhetoric about "giving back" to the community and "civic responsibility" often obscures a focus on the structural inequities that divide the students engaged in service from the communities in which they are working (O'Grady, 2000; Wade, 2000). Some studies invoke caution, reporting that without proper reflection, dialogue, and contextualization, service-learning programs can even amplify misunderstandings about poverty, race, ethnicity, and structural inequity that could lead to intensified racism or bigotry (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Raskoff, 1994; Rhoads, 1998; Wade, 2000). Critics worry that service-learning programs recycle social hierarchies by focusing on surface-level efforts rather than driving the transformation of structures of power (Densmore, 2000; Nieto, 2000; O'Grady, 2000; Wade, 2000).

Interestingly, the majority of studies within the service-learning arena focus on the learning and development of students who *perform* service, rather than on those students or communities that *receive* the services. As Professor Linda Flower, an advocate for community-based research and collaborative inquiry, explains: "The research on service-learning is indeed preoccupied with *our* expertise; with developing pedagogical agendas, interrogating our middle-class ideologies, producing satisfying academic dichotomies and incisive critiques" (2002, p. 184).

Arguably, the service-learning literature remains beyond the reach of deep theoretical inquiry, as much of this research exists in resource books, program evaluations, and "tool kits" for emergent collaborations. And despite the number of partnerships that have grown at public and private colleges and universities nationally, there exists a dearth of theoretically rigorous and critical literature on them (Pew Partnership, 2004). For these reasons, I will not spend extensive time on this area of scholarship; instead, I will address the broader themes, topics, and theories invoked and engendered by the selected partnerships. This study responds to this gap in the literature by looking closely at two university-community collaborations while applying a deep theoretical lens to the data. This study complements a growing body of literature on service-learning and the nature of university-community partnerships, as well as adds new dimensions to the robust, yet ever-changing bodies of literature on "urbanity," multicultural education, racialization and theories of space and place, and finally, educational inequality in the United States.

Overview of this Chapter

From the starting point of multicultural education as it is theorized and enacted, as well as how university-community partnerships enter into that ongoing conversation, this chapter reviews the literature that guides the design, execution, and analysis of this dissertation. I will traverse the theories that form the landscapes of this study, situating my own work amidst the larger socio-historical terrain. Selected scholarship that I briefly review to set the stage for this study include: 1) space and place, 2) constructions of the urban, and 3) racialization and

colorblind ideology. Clearly, each of these bodies of literature represent a forest unto itself, with entangled branches and arms that reach far afield from each other into various disciplines and discourses. Accordingly, in this chapter, I will not do justice to the historical lineage of each field, nor to the breadth of the subject matter. However, this is not my ambition. Rather it is my intention to introduce the literature, highlighting key concepts and reviewing how each topic has been broadly understood in order to describe how my own study has been designed, analyzed, and theorized. I will also familiarize the reader with my theoretical framework, which is grounded in social constructivist theories related to how meaning making takes place, as well as how power, identities, and literacies are interconnected. Finally, this literature review illustrates the import of a study such as mine as there are significant gaps at the nexus of these bodies of scholarship related to how diverse young people make sense of each other and each other's worlds in an era of increasing diversity and educational inequality.

Before delving into a review of relevant scholarship, I will first introduce useful metaphors and ways of thinking about the university-community partnerships that I lean on throughout the dissertation. I deploy "contact zones" (Pratt, 1999) as a framing heuristic for making sense of the intersection of worlds that play out in the program space. By focusing on the spaces of contact, the conditions in which contact takes place, and what this contact looks like, I aim to bring into view the subterranean moments of tension, togetherness, and contestation that take place in the contact zone. These illuminated moments highlight the locked-in inequalities that characterize contact zones, but also how young people navigate and negotiate those spaces in complex ways.

Key Terms

Contact zone.

Anthropologist and linguistic scholar Mary Louise Pratt introduced the notion of a "contact zone" in a landmark essay in 1991. Her initial concept has given life to a full theory and practice, as applied to teaching. This term was inspired by the sociolinguistic concept of a "contact language" — a pidgin vernacular that speakers of varying linguistic tongues develop in order to communicate with each other. Leaning on the notion of "contact" between diverse bodies, languages, and sets of power relations, Pratt applies the metaphor of "contact zone" to modern-day classrooms that are rife with race, class, and power relations, as students might come from varied historical, cultural, and sociolinguistic standpoints. Pratt spoke out against multicultural notions of community that were en vogue in the 1990s and advocated for a stronger recognition of the diversity and even conflict in classrooms.

Mary Louise Pratt's term "contact zone" has resonated in writing and composition circles as many writing classrooms, especially basic writing courses, have become sites of contact between individuals of diverse backgrounds, languages, and cultural worlds. Pratt's use of the term referred specifically to literacy practices such as auto-ethnography, transculturation, critique, parody, and other mediums for self-expression and critique as the "arts of the contact zone." Her notion of contact zone is presented in contrast to utopian models of "community" that have become over-populated in education and language based conversations. According to Pratt, classrooms should move beyond empty politically correct platitudes where everyone is celebrated; instead, classrooms should cultivate "contact zones" that will allow for critique and engagement with each other's disparate cultural standpoints.

Composition scholar Joseph Harris (1995) however, finds fault with Pratt's plea for spaces of contact, dissent, and controversy in classrooms as he pushes for practicalities regarding how these spaces might be fostered and maintained. Harris challenges Pratt to account for how such distinctive and potentially dissimilar voices might intersect and inform each other if these contact zones are to flourish. Pratt offers no specific pedagogical tools for negotiating or managing the contact zone. Harris takes Pratt's term to task by pointing out that "contact" implies combat, drawing on imagery of war, but without any real explanation for how intersection or learning might come from such a collision of perspectives. Composition critic Victor Villaneuva (1997) employs the term "combat zones" versus contact zones, in fact, in order to link the history of colonialism and oppression to contemporary attempts to preserve literacy practices of communities of color in the U.S. A classroom as combat zone also signifies the colonizing affect of writing instruction and other educational practices that promote colorblind and multicultural rhetoric.

While critiques of Pratt and her vague pedagogical application of the term (with regard to classroom practices) resonate with me, I find the metaphor of a contact zone useful in my own study on university-community collaborations. Moving beyond the sanctioned space of the classroom, these partnerships promote pedagogical goals of intersection and reciprocal learning and yet the actual program contexts may reflect situations in which diverse individuals engage with each other in asymmetrical or uneven ways. The nature of many university-community collaborations reflects primarily one-directional journeying. In most programs, undergraduates or university partners voyage to the community sites, urban schools, or local community-based organizations (CBOs). Inherent in this paradigm is an un-reciprocal set of relations, which produce veritable contact zones. While the undergraduates move freely in and out of university spaces, and in and out of community sites, for the most part, community participants remain grounded in a particular locale. Also, many university-community partnerships incorporate curriculum for undergraduates in order to promote reflection and critique in response to their time "in the field," or engaged with the project. However, only under rare circumstances is comparable curriculum and support put in place for partnered schools, youth participants, or community representatives.

Further, I argue that partnerships embody contact zones as the asymmetrical set-up promotes a space for cultural differences and backgrounds to be highlighted in distinct ways. While I do not believe that collaborations reflect "combat zones" per se, the fundamental design and organization of many partnerships reflect politicized and racialized relations of power, and therefore differential experiences are likely to transpire. Nevertheless, it remains possible to witness Pratt's idealized version of the contact zone in action as well, as partnerships can become key sites of understanding and growth when differences are mobilized as opportunities for dialogue.

Thus, I find the metaphor of the contact zone useful, although not perfect, in terms of making sense of intersections of highly diverse young people. In addition to the contact zone as a lens, partnerships can also be understood using the framing heuristic of the "hyphen," as I will explain presently. The hyphen also became a methodological lens for how I conducted and analyzed this study which I will elaborate on in the next chapter.

Engaging the hyphen: University-community relations.

University-community programs are built on a premise of material and metaphoric divides between "university" and "community" contexts. The entire framework of a "university-

community" affiliation implies an understood dislocation between two sides that will be linked through said program, relationship, or development. If, historically, university spaces had flowed seamlessly into the surrounding neighborhood and residential community contexts, there would not be such a "need" for a suturing of spheres. However, such a need is felt and an oppositional framing is built into the foundation of these programs, symbolized by a hyphen. This hyphen reflects historical and present day ruptures that are mapped onto the physical and social space between university and community landscapes, differing of course, by locality, region, and specifics across time and space. Furthermore, the notion of "difference" is structured into the design of the programs, as is the aspiration for conscious alliance between two seemingly distanced populations and contexts. In order to understand real and metaphoric divides between participants in the university-community programs and what takes place between them, *at the hyphen*, initial preconceptions must be explored as they reveal deeper assumptions and larger ideological constructions about particular populations and particular places. Exploring constructs of difference as well as how they are employed sheds light on how social and cultural boundaries are maintained and contested. While many undergraduates speak of how "different" they assumed local youth and schools would be, as we will learn in the chapters that follow, we must interrogate where such presumed constructs of difference come from and how these perceived ruptures function in society at large.

Education scholars have long struggled with how to acknowledge difference and disparity without reifying deficit models as they attempt to take seriously the import of structural constraints related to geography, poverty, and racism. Scholars such as Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Jeannie Oakes, Luis Moll, Pedro Noguera, Angela Valenzuala, and many others use their research and writing to dispute the cultural blame at the root of what has come to be known as "deficit framing." Instead many scholars look to structural constraints and community strength in response to adversity. Deficit frames can perpetuate stereotypes about students of color, poor, and urban students, and rather than focusing only on the subtractive experiences of inner city youth with school, many theorists try to move beyond reductive culture of poverty-oriented research by exploring cultural strength, resilience, and "funds of knowledge" (Conchas, 2006; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Noguera, 2006a, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999).

Michelle Fine introduced the concept of "working the hyphen" (1994) in order to counter deficit framing and categorical reification in the name of research. Fine urges fellow qualitative researchers to reject categories that affirm false dichotomies and to work against reductive characterizations of particular people, places, and contexts by "working the hyphen." Fine calls attention to the artificial divide between "researcher" and "subject," or the "Self" and "Other," which signify unequal power relations and social inequalities, and rather than seeing each side of the hyphen in polarized terms, she implores fellow researchers to break down constructed divides.

This imperative to work the hyphen, to recognize without reifying, sets the stage for theorizing about the spaces of the contact zone in selected models. At various moments throughout the life course of partnerships, the programs may embody contact zones, as participants cross borders, inhabit the space between cultural worlds, and come into conflict or connection at the hyphen. As I shift into analyzing specific data in Chapters Three, Four, and Five, I will lean on the afore-mentioned framing metaphors in order to theorize about how participants negotiated constructs of race, class, education, inequality, opportunity, and identity in complex and layered ways.

Literature

The first major section of this literature review addresses the socio-political landscape of California in light of globalization. Secondly, I take up theories of place, space, and mobility. Thirdly, I trace constructions of the urban. Lastly, I address literature related to racial formation and colorblind ideology. This last section concentrates specifically on the ways that multicultural education in the U.S. has been infused with colorblind ideals and language practices. This section explores meaning-making as related to language, and how trends of multicultural education have shaped the way we speak about "others" in an increasingly diverse, yet colorblind world.

Socio-political landscape: Globalization, educational inequality, and the Californian context.

Although my research was grounded in a relatively small-scale area of a metropolitan region in Northern California, it is useful to broaden the scope to the global stage in order to make explicit the interconnection between global and local phenomena in the Californian context[4]. Urban, suburban, and rural regions of California have experienced rapid change due to globalization in the last few decades (Suarez-Orozoco & Suarez-Orozoco, 2001). In an era of post-industrial, neoliberal capitalism in which the world economy is restructuring rapidly, globalizing "flows" (Appadurai, 1996) of people, capital, ideas, and media have re-made the social and cultural landscapes in urban centers throughout the world (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Appadurai, 1996; Lipman, 2006; Scott, et al., 2001). Growth of transnational corporations has resulted in shifting labor relations and the movement of immigrant workers across borders. These global flows have re-drawn the world map, changing demographics at the local level in American cities as well (Abu-Lughod, 1999; Lipman, 2006), and specifically in the Californian context. In the United States, "racial formations" (Omi & Winant, 1986) have shifted with the influx of immigrants entering city centers where racial and residential segregation already marked the landscape.

Immigration has changed the landscape of California dramatically in the past thirty years, as the state has served as a key destination for many immigrants from the global South and East. The Latino population has more than doubled in the last twenty years, and as of 2010, a majority of students in California public schools are Hispanic (California Department of Education, 2010; Kane, 2010). Not surprisingly, anti-immigrant sentiment has grown in direct correlation with fast-moving flows of people looking for work or seeking a better life (Barlow, 2003; Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Sassen, 1998). In California in the 1990s, Prop 187, which ended bilingual education, and Prop 209, which ended affirmative action, sent strong messages about multilingualism, multiculturalism, and immigrant status. These propositions reflect a "colorblind" rhetoric and ideology, doing away with acknowledgement of "difference" at a time when difference was most acutely felt (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Pollock, 2004a). Mica Pollock, an anthropologist of education, has dubbed the term "color-mute" more fitting than colorblind as current policies, such as Prop. 209 in California, aim to erase race words from discourse in "an exceedingly race conscious way" (Pollock, 2004a, 2004b) despite increased racial inequalities. Some critics claim that the current climate reflects a "post-multicultural" (King, 2005) or "post-racial" moment, as if even calling attention to difference, especially racialized disparities might

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[4] Both of the studied high school sites were less than ten miles from the university, therefore the entirety of the research region was relatively small and localized.

be considered passé [5]. "We don't belong to simple race groups, but when it comes to inequality we do" (Pollock, 2004b). Political actions that obscure racial categories despite increasingly differentiated experiences along racial lines point to the ways that educational inequalities have become naturalized in the colorblind, neoliberal era.

Educational inequality.

It is therefore no surprise that corresponding with increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the U.S., levels of segregation in public schools are at an all-time high (Orfield, 2001, 2009). Never has educational inequality been so extreme despite integrationist policy and post-civil rights "progress" (Orfield, 2001, 2009). Educational critics Rick and Bill Ayers commented on the prevalence of the "savage inequalities" (Kozol, 1992) that characterize American schools in the 21st century in a recent article entitled, "Living in the Gutter: Conflict and Contradiction in the Neoliberal Classroom -- A Call to Action" (2011). They summarized the uneven nature of American schools as such:

> Our schools, here and now, show us exactly who we are beneath whatever fear or anxiety, lofty rhetoric, or self-congratulatory platitudes we might embrace. Look closely: One of the first things we notice is a strict social hierarchy with youngsters attending separate and unequal schools based on income and class background. Some American public schools are funded to the tune of $20,000 or more per student per year, while others scrape by on a piddling a fraction of that. In one place, an over-crowded, hundred year-old school building that looks like a medieval prison with a rotting roof and a busted furnace; down the road, a generously appointed campus containing well-maintained athletic fields and an Olympic-size pool, as well as a state-of-the-art physics lab in a building that looks like a palace for learning. Some kids kicked to the curb and left in the gutter, others lifted up, protected, and pushed forward.

The Ayers brothers shine a light on the vast inequalities that map onto schools, neighborhoods, and districts in conjunction with race, class, and ethnicity — more or less, they take to task the "geography of opportunity" (Briggs, 2005) in its educational manifestations. As they remind us, on the heels of many other scholars who have asserted it before, inequality defines K-12 public schooling in the U.S. in the current political moment (Anyon, 1997; Ayers & Ayers, 2011; Kozol, 1992; Noguera & Wing, 2001, 2006b; Oakes, 1985) as global forces have led to increasingly diverse yet increasingly vulnerable populations.

Likewise, an additional dimension of globalizing flows of capital, culture, and people plays out in higher education in the U.S., as increasing numbers of students are foreign-born, or have parents who were born elsewhere. Nowhere is this global trend more apparent than at Kirkland University, a large public university that attracts students, faculty, and researchers from across the globe due to its role as a leader in higher education and cutting-edge research. A recent study conducted by university researchers examines the demographics of the public education system of which Kirkland is a part. The study finds that a *majority* of Kirkland undergraduates either were born outside of the United States or have at least one parent who was

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[5]Barack Obama's candidacy, campaign, and presidency have been dubbed representative of a new "post-racial" era, as his ideals and politics "transcend race." Citing *The New Yorker*, *New York Times*, *The Economist*, and other sources that have introduced the term "post-racial" into the political lexicon, NPR commentator Daniel Schorr traces this recent rhetorical trend. See: http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=18489466

born outside of the U.S. [6] Clearly, rapid movement of people across borders is having a profound impact on both 2 and 4- year higher education institutions in California. Further, we might presume that globalizing trends are re-orienting the spatial and social terrain of public campuses across the country, especially on the coasts and the southern-border, where the largest and fastest-growing immigrant populations are re-locating[7]. This trend presents a unique opportunity to consider how university students are making sense of their own local and global geographies and life trajectories. It is possible that today's students are more globally oriented, but questions about how undergraduates engage with people from different backgrounds in *local* contexts beg to be considered. Even as electronic media and social networking make connecting and communicating with people more facile, an increasingly complex set of demographics in public universities and urban centers makes communication between people of different backgrounds more likely than ever before, and yet more fraught with possibilities for misunderstanding (Olsen, 1997). Further, there is no place more rife for contact and engagement across difference than in urban California, as this study brings to light.

Now that we have considered the Californian context in age of globalization, we must take a step back and further understand the import of pursuing space, place and specifically the urban site as the locus for study. It is also useful to consider place and geography, broadly conceived, in the process of shaping identities and experiences.

Space, place, and place-making.

This research builds on theories of place and place-making that presume that locations are not neutral, but are socially constructed and imbued with power. Much of the social science literature in the last few decades has taken a "spatial turn" (Soja, 1996), interrogating how spaces and places inform and are informed by social worlds and social practices. Places are increasingly seen as interconnected sites of practice, rather than static or bound geographies (Keith & Pile, 1993; Martin, 2000; Massey, 1994; Mitchell, 2002). Also, through dynamic processes of making and re-making social spaces, locations become laden with meaning. Exploring the intersection between place-making and identity-formation has been taken up by a variety of disciplines for divergent purposes.

As the politics of location increasingly garners attention, scholars from the realms of critical race studies (McKittrick & Woods, 2007), critical feminisms (Anzaldua, 1987; DeLeuze & Guattari, 1987; hooks, 1989), post-colonial studies (Mohanty, 1991), cultural geography (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997), and new literacy studies (Leander & Sheehy, 2004) have investigated how the shifting contours of spaces and places are shaped by interstices of race, class, geography, language, ethnicity, gender, and globalization. The process of thinking critically about place also implies a necessary paradigm-shift away from seeing "localities" and "communities" as holistic sites and entities, characterized by fixed-ness. Critical thinking about places requires a re-imagining of "community" as a dynamic, ever-fluid set of relationships and standpoints that shift and shape with curvatures of social life. In a now seminal work, *Place and the Politics of Identity* (1993), Keith and Pile examine how places and place-making are linked to meaningful practices and identity-construction for both individuals and communities in incomplete, but powerful ways. Central to Keith and Pile's work, as well as to my own, is the

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[6] Including the exact citation for this statistic would reveal the specifics of the university and therefore it has been omitted.
[7] See http://www.migrationinformation.org/DataHub/maps.cfm

idea that identity formation reflects ongoing, shifting processes that involve reconstruction of the self in relation to people, places, contexts, and culture. Understanding the interplay between the production of places and subjectivities requires unpacking *how* practices of place-making and negotiations of self transpire in relational, active, ongoing ways.

Because this research examines contact zones that are grounded in particular places, it is critical to further theorize the politics of place. The contact zones between youth and university students take place in geographic regions that have been created by institutional, structural, personal, political, and cultural intersections. As the individuals and communities from different backgrounds engage with each other, they often re-configure the space of the classroom or school context into a "thirdspace," where hybridized language practices take place across difference (Gutiérrez, et al., 1999). Participants may cross borders, physically and/or metaphorically, in order to engage with each other, and this journey often redraws the social and physical mapping of the programs. This concept of place-making, as seen through the university-community collaborations, builds on the premise that spaces are socially and politically constructed and that actors can play roles in re-orienting landscapes through "contact," critique, and shared practices. Gupta and Ferguson expound on this concept:

The ability of people to confound the established spatial orders, either through physical movement or through their own conceptual and political acts of re-imagination, means that space and place can never be "given" and that the process of their sociopolitical construction must be considered (1997, p. 47).

This research suggests that university-community collaborations change the nature of the university and the urban school sites through intersectional, inter-relational processes that take place in the contact zones between diverse people and places. The next section discusses distinctions between theories of space and place, as well as historicizes constructions of urbanity over time in the U.S. The discussion also encompasses considerations of mobility and immobility, tracing the ways that relations of power become mapped onto people and places in distinct ways.

The production of space.

The power to define, describe, or characterize place provides an example of the ways that social structures and institutions maintain certain forms of power, through discursive naming of places into categories and defining the terms on which they are engaged in the social and economic worlds.

-- Deborah Martin, 2000

Both *urban spaces* and *urban places* have been pathologized and, I argue, descriptors such as "urban" and "inner city" have come to over-determine assumptions about people, possibilities, and perspectives associated with particular geographies, as this dissertation demonstrates. My data show that assumptions about academic rigor, ambition, poverty, and privilege are mapped onto neighborhoods, schools, and communities at large. Ultimately, constructions of place (and people) are ever shifting, but initial impressions must be interrogated as they reveal commonplace discursive constructions. Deconstructing assumptions, however, requires some foundational discussions about what distinguishes "spaces" from "places" and what is meant by the "production of space." Seeing space not as a given, but as a set of practices imbued with power enables us to consider how locations are produced. Theorists who take up the "spatial turn" (Soja, 1996) are concerned with exposing how power shapes spaces and how

spaces shape power relations. There is a long and complex genealogy of spatial theorists, beginning with Henri Lefebvre (1974) who developed a Marxist analysis of the "production of space." Following Lefebvre, Edward Soja (1996) furthered analysis related to how economic structures shape spatialities. Later, Foucault (1997) added his own spin on spatiality, addressing how power relations, diffused in everyday micro moments and material processes, produce spaces and how those spaces reflect embedded ideologies and social constructions.

Space versus place: Defining the terrain.

"Space" refers broadly to macro relations of power that shape conceptual terrains into being; "place" as a term refers to the lived location, an actual site, constituted through re-iterative action and social practices. Seeing place as a fluid construct, one that is made and re-made daily, leans on Doreen Massey's understandings of place as espoused in her seminal text, *Space, Place, and Gender* (1994). Massey's groundbreaking work adds insight to conversations about the distinctions between space and place. Massey challenges geographic scholarship that theorizes places as bound with specific "essentialized" meaning and logic. She resists nationalist and localist understandings of place, which seek to endow places with particular identities; she argues instead to understand places as fluid and ever changing, based on social relations in flux. Massey sees space "as a process…an ongoing product of interconnections" (2005, p. 107); the *spatial* then can be seen as "constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations all across spatial scales…It is a way of thinking in terms of the ever-shifting geometry of social/power relations" (1994, p. 4). Accordingly, in Massey's work, places then refer to specific locations produced by spatial relations, but places are also fluid, relational, and in flux. Place is the raw material for identity- production; how and where identities are constructed in space.[8] Deborah Martin extends Massey's work, asserting "place is a set of feelings and attitudes, or sense of place. These many meanings of place capture both a setting for and intertwining in the operation of social and economic processes, yet it also provides a 'grounding' for everyday life and experience" (2000). While theories of both space and place are useful in thinking about the construction of urban contexts and identities, in this dissertation, I will be referring to *place*, rather than space. I take up Doreen Massey's conception of place in my own work, seeing places as dynamic geographies, while acknowledging the ways in which imaginations, and commonplace assumptions about places impose static and bounded identities *on* those places and the people who live there. The ways in which the inner city is imagined as "authentically" urban, as a site of fear, danger, and chaos reflects understandings of place as a timeless location (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007). Like Massey, I conceive of place as an unbounded, dynamic site, a lived location, constantly shifting due to ever-changing experiences and re-imaginations.

Tensions between mobility and immobility.

Building on discussions of globalization, Aiwha Ong's notion "flexible citizenship" (1999) is a useful heuristic when considering the university-community collaborations. Ong uses the term "flexible citizenship" to refer to the elastic parameters that some (the privileged few) are afforded in the global arena. She articulates new theories of transnationalism that move beyond understanding of globalization as seamless flows, as she looks to the stark disjuncture between those who maintain the power to move and those who do not. Doreen Massey calls this

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[8] Doreen Massey's work *Space, Place, and Gender* challenges scholars who worry about the time-space compression which threaten places' ability to maintain timelessness and static authenticity. She sees places as ever changing as well, due to social relations that reflect highly changing global dynamics.

phenomenon "power geometry" (1994) — and this may be applied to the university- community frameworks as well. After all, university students are the ones who travel to the nearby urban school sites, as part of mandatory fieldwork requirements for specific courses. They are the ones afforded *mobility* — literally and figuratively, as they have "made it" to an extremely competitive and rigorous university, and most likely will be granted mobility of other sorts throughout their lives due, in part, to the currency of their degree.[9] Research supports the fact that students, regardless of original class background, that graduate with a bachelor's degree or higher accrue more than *double* the median income of high school graduates[10]. Moreover, it is likely that undergraduates at top-notch universities are upwardly mobile, on the path to becoming the nation's leaders in a variety of fields. In addition, not only do undergraduates benefit from social mobility by virtue of their academic milieu, they are granted access or mobility into city schools, afterschool programs, and community organizations practically overnight once their course begins. The semester-long fieldwork experience reminds us of the artificial parameters constructed within the institution that reflect an uneven power geometry. Clearly, community needs do not disappear at the end of the semester, but those with flexible citizenship often do.

In terms of *immobility*, issues of physical and social stasis continue to thwart many marginalized communities in racially and socio-economically segregated sectors. Doreen Massey points out that even in an age of heightened flows in the global world (Massey, 1994), when democratizing technology and fast-speed communication are leveling the playing field, a distinct disjuncture between those with access and resources and those *without* access and resources remains intact, and even defines groups living in close quarters in urban centers. "Appreciating the tension between global mobility and local immobility is crucial for understanding our increasingly multicultural schools. Indeed, in the face of declining opportunities and dreams, many of our children and adolescents have voiced their sense of being stuck…." (Dmitriadis & Kamberelis, 1997). In urban centers, as high-density areas continue to grow and diversify, the gap between those with resources and those without continues to become quite pronounced even across relatively small geographies.

New research on how issues of immobility impact urban youth is beginning to emerge across disciplines, as evidenced by studies that focus on how youth navigate dangerous city streets (Gleason, 2008; Jones, 2004; Rios, 2006); how they manage surveillance (Fine, 2003); and how they negotiate economic constraints (Fine & Weis, 1998; Weis, 2007). But by and large, gaps in the literature on urban youth and socio-spatial mobility persist, despite the renaissance of spatial analyses as of late. Geographers and urban studies scholars have addressed issues of unequal "geographies of opportunity" (Briggs, 2005) that lead to restricted housing and neighborhood options (Briggs, 2005; Massey & Denton, 1993), disproportionate economic possibilities (Pew Reports on Economic Mobility, 2008; Wilson, 1987), and under-resourced educational contexts (Noguera, 2003, 2006b; Oakes, 1985). However, attending to *how* limited

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[9] It is important to note, nevertheless, that Kirkland University undergraduates reflect a heterogeneous demographic in terms of socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. Further, it is plausible that certain undergraduates at the university might feel more in common with their urban youth tutees than some of their peers at the university. However, it would be shortsighted to obscure the power and privilege granted to Kirkland students upon graduating from such a top-notch university with a bachelor's degree. No matter where they come from, by the nature of being students at Kirkland, they are afforded a mobility of sorts.

[10] National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), table 382. As quoted in Haveman and Smeeding (2002).

spatial mobility plays out on the hearts and minds of urban youth has yet to be thoroughly developed.

This research argues that broadening learning opportunities through dialogue around inequalities, and enabling exposure beyond a limited set of spaces and places facilitates critical thinking, growth, and development in critical ways. The physical and metaphoric journey experienced by the undergraduates as they leave campus and embark upon a new neighborhood and school context is central to the growth that they experience through their fieldwork. Nevertheless, while most university-community partnerships promote civic engagement and collaboration, program designs generally structure one-directional flow of university tutors, mentors, and support, rather than a multi-directional exchange. Most likely, such design limits are imposed by economic and social realities — real constraints at the funding level as well as constraints in terms of spatial and social mobility of working class urban populations.

Taking these realities seriously, this study extends beyond analysis of spatial restraints to interrogate the nature of learning that is bound up in movement between spaces and places for both populations. A key spatial element proves critical to processes of meaning-making, although multi-directional journeying might enable a more balanced set of experiences. I speculate that for reciprocity between university and community partners to occur, both populations must enjoy the privilege of traveling outside of their "home" contexts and into the academic and social landscapes of each other. Nevertheless, this project explores what happens *without* such reciprocal flows, in order to make sense of current spatial practices that characterize most partnerships. Central to discussions of mobility and immobility in the context of university-community partnerships is also a discussion of the multiple meanings and dimensions of the urban context. Moving beyond the people who populate particular sites, and considerations of who can move and who cannot move, we must further examine the literature on urbanity and constructions of the urban. Now that definitions related to space, place, mobility and immobility are understood, let's take a closer look at how cities in the U.S. have been framed and historicized over time as both of the focal partnerships, and many, if not *most*, of the university-community partnerships in local and national contexts, are situated in urban centers (Rodin, 2007).

Constructions of the urban: Historical footprints of urban blight.

The ghetto, once understood as a historical formation connected to the political economy, housing markets, schooling, and other structural forces (Anyon, 1997; Lewis, 1968; Massey & Denton, 1993; Wilson, 1987) has become a metaphoric space of racial confinement synonymous with "inner city" (Paperson, 2010). Discussions of the American "ghetto" and inner city blight gained traction in the 1960s, with the controversial release of the Moynihan Report, commissioned by Senator Daniel Moynihan.[11]

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[11] The Moynihan Report sent off alarm bells across the nation, about increasing urban "blight" in the U.S. Moynihan's concern for the deterioration of the "fabric of Negro society," was directly linked to the decline of the "Negro family" unit, as he rationalized it. The Moynihan Report ignited a firestorm of controversy and a national conversation about urban ills and the problems facing a rapidly changing urban America. Both outrage and support inspired by the report generated a new body of scholarship related to the causes and effects of the "culture of poverty," associated with inner city life. Moynihan spawned a generation of analysts actively committed to unraveling the "tangle of pathology," as he termed it, afflicting black populations, from dysfunctional family structures to welfare dependency to poverty, teen pregnancy, joblessness, and so forth. In response to the Moynihan report, a number of scholars, who came out of the Chicago School of Sociology, attempted to counter demonizing constructions of the urban "underclass." Scholars such as William Julius Wilson, Oscar Lewis, Kenneth Clark, and a

By the 1970s, urban blight was seen as a growing concern in the U.S. and many new studies and reports emerged as direct response to the Moynihan Report. Much of the emerging scholarship located the solution to urban problems not only in the individual and in the family unit, but in economic re-structuring. However, the ways in which some of the studies of this era re-configured "culture of poverty" analyses in different, but nonetheless significant ways, have left lasting impressions on the public imaginary. For example, even in developing counter-arguments to the Moynihan report, which implicated the Negro family as the "problem," Wilson's work *The Truly Disadvantaged* reproduces culture of poverty thinking, as he addresses "ghetto-specific cultural characteristics." Moreover, linking place with pathology has historical resonance and a place in our national memory.

Heart of darkness: Encountering the ghetto.

Social critic La Paperson (2010) builds on Leonardo and Hunter's analysis of urbanity (2007) and demonstrates how "the ghetto" as a distinctly authentic and degraded facet of urban life, has become something symbolic as well. He argues that ghetto means a moral "no-zone," devoid of banks, businesses, and breadwinners, representing an empty space, an excessive space; a poor, black, value-less space (Paperson, 2010). By black, Paperson does not mean that the ghetto is only comprised of African American populations, but it is a black space metaphorically, a racialized region that lives beyond the "white spatial imaginary" (Lipsitz, 2011). The author likens Oakland's "ghettos" to a no-man's land, with people of color as "out of place," a "photonegative" of pure white space. As Paperson says:

> In this hypothetical map, freeways, thoroughfares, museums, office parks, lofts,
> expensive monorail transit centers, haute ethnic cuisine and other 'playgrounds'
> for multicultural consumptions (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007), make a white
> lacework of hubs and transversals that leave behind a fractured inner-city black
> space (Paperson, 2010, p, 15).

Pointing out the level of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic isolation that characterizes many inner cities is critical for examining how identities then get imagined. Through mainstream media and hegemonic discourses, portrayals of crime and violence become mapped onto particular geographies and fear gets produced. I do not mean to minimize very real experiences of threat and danger that young people face in neighborhoods impacted by poverty, racial isolation, and residential segregation; however by looking to university-community programs as a locus, we can see how participants' first impressions and assumptions about local sites reveal the ways in which certain locations (and populations) are constructed as "bad"[12]. Students' persistent fear of the city streets and of the urban school is evidence of the ways in which violence becomes naturalized as taking place *in* certain spaces *by* certain bodies and fear gets produced. While levels of homicide and crime and drug-related injury are real, and many young people growing up in disadvantaged, urban communities have lost uncles, brothers and sisters, cousins, and other loved ones, forms of structural violence or white-collar crime rarely make the headlines with comparable alarmism (Males, 1999). Clearly no region is immune to pressures of

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host of others writing in the 1970s and 1980s attempted to nuance "culture of poverty" framings which blamed populations for systemic issues, related to economic segregation, racism, unemployment, and poverty.
[12] Glynda Hull has documented the ways in which young people grapple with growing up in what are commonly known as "bad" neighborhoods, and how conceptions of self play out in relation to ideas about place. See *Geographies of Hope* (Hull, 2005).

poverty and other social strains and accordingly, rural and suburban areas face significant rates of crime and violence as well. However, urban areas have been disproportionately associated with unhealthy influences (drugs, teen pregnancy, prostitution) and issues (unemployment, dysfunctional families, failing schools) such that the inner city has come to be seen as a "tangle of pathologies" (Moynihan, 1965).

I see my work as being in conversation with the work of Leonardo and Hunter, among others, who acknowledge the real levels of heightened vulnerability that urban youth experience, while focusing on the implications of mainstream pathologizing of "urban" youth, schools, neighborhoods, and so forth. Leonardo and Hunter eloquently state:

Certainly most urban areas deal with disproportionate amounts of violence, particularly among young men, and a drug economy that makes victims out of buyers, sellers, and everyone in between. Our task here is not to assess the veracity of this image, but to define the implications of this particular social imagination on the schooling experiences of young people in urban areas (2007).

Likewise, I shine a light on historical constructions of urbanity in order to contextualize how commonplace assumptions about places shape assumptions about the residents who live there. I will discuss this topic further in Chapter Four. I argue that as urbanity is *imagined* in the hearts and minds of individuals, impressions of places over-determine impressions of people.

Furthermore, scholars have noted how hegemonic constructions of places through images, print media, and the news have a long-lasting impact on how ideas about people and places are constructed[13]. In particular, the power of visual images to activate the imagination, painting vivid pictures in the mind's eye, has been shown to have persuasive influence in shaping how ideas about people and places are sustained (Messaris & Abraham, 2003). What captures media attention, continues to be images of certain bodies (brown) in certain spaces (inner city) existing as both dangerous and endangered (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007; Paperson, 2010; Tilton, 2010). Urbanity, then, becomes associated with extremes — heightened danger in particular places, fast- paced "flows" (Appadurai, 1996) of modernity in others.

In schools and in the city: Landscapes of colorblind discourse.

This research takes as self-evident the understanding that race and racialized ethnicity are organizing principles in social divisions and persistent inequality (Glenn, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1986, 1994). Omi and Winant developed a theory of racial formation that addresses how racial categories are "created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed…" They hold that "It is a process of historically situated projects in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized" (1994). Therefore, racial formation is inextricably linked to patterns of inequality. Race, as relational to class, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender, is significant as an organizing principle around which resources are distributed. Therefore, to merge cross-sections of people whose worlds are shaped by differential access,

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[13] A recent report entitled "Off Balance: Youth, Race and Crime in the News" completed by the Justice Policy Institute found that while violent crime has actually dropped dramatically in the last few decades, the news media reports on crime and homicide have grown by as much as 473% (between 1990 and 1998). The study determined that most people linked fear of violence, crime, and youth of color to news stories and images projected on the news. Additionally, the study points out that the media frames crime as a series of individual events, versus focusing on contexts or structural constraints. Finally, the report found that the news media connects race and crime and disproportionately emphasize suspects of color, particularly youth of color.

resources, and geographies, issues of race and socioeconomic class become all the more salient. This dissertation uses the "contact zone" as an analytic, paying attention to race and racialized meanings. Building on scholarship related to race and education, this study develops new ideas about how constructs of difference shape the ways that people communicate, clash, and collide with each other within university-community partnerships, specifically around racialized, ethnic, and classed identities.

Colorblind ideology, whiteness, and schools.

Many scholars have asserted that the ideological currents of colorblindness as the modus operandi in the United States have secured themselves in the past forty years in the post Civil Rights era of progress. Beginning in the late 1970s, the publication of the influential text, *The Declining Significance of Race* by William Julius Wilson (1978) signaled the forward motion of Americans who increasingly believed that racism is wrong, and that equality was a human right. In this post-Civil Rights upturn then, according to Wilson, race became something that *should not* be taken into account, as more and more people purportedly believed everyone *should* be treated fairly. Gradually then, through a subtle paradigm shift, racism became ugly — a problem of individual attitude, rather than systemic or structural entanglements (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Leonardo, 2009). As scholars have pointed out, the ethos of colorblind ideology presupposes that the Civil Rights era is over and that racism is a thing of the past — a residual dilemma of isolated ignorance, rather than an intertwined system of meanings. Colorblind ideology gradually has crept into contemporary discourse in a range of public sectors, including education. However, this is problematic according to many scholars who connect colorblind ideology with a new form of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Leonardo, 2009). As Leonardo points out,

> [D]efining racism as fundamentally a problem of attitude and prejudice fails to account for the material consequences of institutional racism, behaviors that produce unequal outcomes despite the transformation of racial attitudes, and the creation of policies, such as NCLB (No Child Left Behind), which refuse to acknowledge the causal link between academic achievement and the racial organization of society (2007).

Moreover, some believe that education reform in the U.S. in the recent past grew out of colorblind epistemology. President Bush's all-encompassing education policy commonly called No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has been critiqued as essentially a set of rewards for whiteness, as districts are forced to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to underperforming, "failing" schools that are disproportionately filled with students of color (Leonardo, 2007).

Other, less scathing critiques of NCLB still acknowledge the ways in which racial discourse has been muted out of educational policy in the U. S., a trend Mica Pollock calls "colormuting" (2004a), as mentioned earlier[14]. In schools, the ways in which racialized heritage is celebrated via multicultural curriculum, but then simultaneously side-lined via education policy present a conundrum. Under the Bush Administration, NCLB was implemented and this far-reaching set of education policies did little to acknowledge racial structures which lead to the failing schools. Linda Darling Hammond and others point out how NCLB operates on metrics of test scores in one-dimensional ways which only serve to harm the most disenfranchised students, particularly poor students of color. Darling Hammond famously stated, "The biggest problem

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[14] See more on Prop 209 in California and Mica Pollock's text *Colormute* for additional insight.

with the NCLB Act is that it mistakes measuring schools for fixing them" (2004). And in doing so, race is discretely acknowledged, but not addressed head-on, which reaffirms colorblind ideology.

Race, language, and education.

Looking beyond NCLB, many scholars have noted the historic interconnection between the discourse of schools and whiteness. Thinking of whiteness as a property informs the ways that education systems have been maintained and shaped by practices that support whites and preserve whiteness (Heath, 1983; Leonardo, 2009; Prendergast, 2003; Trainor, 2008). The ways that schools operate and circulate discourse in colorblind ways also reflect investments in whiteness, according to scholars (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leonardo, 2009; Trainor 2008). As such, several studies have found that despite multicultural and integrationist approaches in schools, many teachers and administrators perpetuate colorblind ideologies and discourses (Jervis, 1996; Pollock, 2004a; Schofield, 2001; Trainor, 2008) by de-emphasizing race, which sends the message that race is purely tangential, rather than socially constructed with material consequences.

Research on race and language in schooling contexts reveals the ways that certain discourses perpetuate racial hierarchies, despite multicultural curriculum that aims to work against such inequalities (Gallagher, 1994; Hytten & Warren, 2003; Marx, 2006; McIntyre, 1997; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Trainor, 2008). Jennifer Seibel Trainor conducted a study on the persuasive and emotional "logic" (Trainor, 2008) of racist discourse among white youth at an all-white high school. Their highly coded language patterns existed, as she explained, in "ambiguous places, somewhere between good intentions, naiveté, and racist belief" (2008). Trainor's ethnographic study revealed that many white students viewed calling attention to racialized inequities as "complaining," often believing that whites experience similar injustices, but that they "just don't complain about it" (p. 18). Trainor examines the ways that rhetorical devices and language styles support investments in whiteness, privilege, and colorblind racism. She exposes "racism in rhetorical and emotional terms" (p. 20) by showing how colorblind language and ideals of cheerfulness are deployed, thereby reifying racial dominance.

Similarly, in Hytten and Warren's study (2003) on how college students engaged topics of whiteness, they found that students engaged "discourses of niceness" (McIntyre, 1997) thereby avoiding confrontation in order to maintain "safe space." Such rhetorical maneuvers then enabled only surface-level interrogation of inequality and complacency around students' own investments in inequality. Both Trainor's and Hytten and Warren's studies build on scholarship on whiteness that examines how traditional multicultural efforts which promote learning about raced and classed "others" do little to actually effect change on whites' perspectives. In fact, many studies have shown how such multicultural efforts have backfired, leading to whites' defensiveness and re-investment in whiteness and privilege (Gallagher, 1994; Hytten & Warren, 2003; Leonardo, 2007, 2009; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Marx, 2006; McIntyre, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Trainor, 2008).

Race, language, and geography.

Moving beyond racialized discourse in schools and educational contexts, a legacy of scholarship examines racialization and language with regard to *places,* specifically, *urban places,* and the way that locations are talked about using colorblind language. Across disciplines,

scholars have connected the discursive effects with racialization and geography in a variety of ways, focusing on the "geography of opportunity" (Briggs, 2005), stratification by race and class and related stress (Massey, 2004); how racialized segregation plays out in schools (Lipman, 2008; Orfield, 2001), and more (Tilton, 2010). Anthropologist Setha Low implores scholars to interrogate how "urban fear, and its relationship to new forms of social ordering, needs to be better understood in the context of the entire metropolis" (2008, p. 57). Her examination of gated communities sheds light on how discourses of fear propel people to erect walls, gates, and enhanced "security" as a way to keep others out in order to mitigate against crime, violence, and other perceived symptoms of urban blight. Exploring "white flight," Low exposes commonplace assumptions about urban contexts as being ridden with violence, crime, racial-ethnic "others," and danger. "Residents talk about their fear of the poor, the workers, the 'Mexicans,' and the 'newcomers,' as well as their retreat behind walls where they think they will be safe. But there is fear even behind the walls" (2008, p. 55). Such confessions of fear reveal deep-seated ideological constructions of urbanity, perpetuated through everyday discourses and practices. The ways in which urban spaces are racialized inevitably impact how fear develops; when people talk about being afraid of the "inner city" or of the ghetto, deep-seated racial anxieties simmer below the surface.

But as Low and other scholars assert, talking about race is no longer seen as appropriate in the neoliberal era of colorblind-saturated political correctness. Racialized modifiers have been muted out, as pointed out by anthropologist Mica Pollock (2004a) who has termed this phenomenon, "colormuteness" because such actions "seek to erase race words from public discourse in an exceedingly race-conscious way." Talk about geographic distinctions using descriptors such as "urban" or "inner city" versus "suburban" are ways to assign meaning and *feeling* to places, I argue, and to call attention to difference, in non-racial ways. However, some scholars point out that such rhetorical devices serve to propel racism without seeming racist (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Trainor, 2008). Racially coded language and images reproduce ideas about "ghetto youth" that are built on ideas of "dangerous others;" black and brown youth as aberrant, academically disengaged, and culturally depraved. Patricia Hill Collins, Ann Ferguson, Ruth Gilmore, Stephen Gregory, Mike Males, and others have asserted that dominant discourses, including academic discourse, conflate race with class. As Hill Collins (1989) argues, mainstream constructions of African American populations often "use race to explain class disadvantage" (p. 882). Through this logic, race becomes causal for other deficits as well, such as academic apathy, moral deprivation, and poverty.

Other scholars have linked race with class and geography as a matrix from which conclusions about particular populations are drawn. Jennifer Tilton, an anthropologist who studied local school and city politics in Oakland, California wrote *Dangerous or Endangered: Race and the Politics of Youth in Urban America* (2010). Her work illustrates this phenomenon as well. In her book, Tilton analyzes how ideologies get mapped onto particular people and places. She explains, "Oakland's geography naturalized structures of inequality so that the flatlands became a moral category, like the underclass, that enabled white neighbors to avoid talking about race and class as 'culture'" (p. 137). As her data shows, using safe modifiers such as local geographic distinctions (Flats vs. Hills, in the Oakland context; East side vs. West side in other locations, for example), or more general place-oriented descriptors such as "inner city" or "urban," implies a set of racialized meanings using coded language. Such rhetorical and discursive patterns cloak racial meanings; this "sophisticated" color-blind racism is often associated with more progressive, urbane populations, as opposed to the more traditional racism

espoused in the "old days," or stereotypically in the rural recesses of the American Midwest (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007). Explicit and implicit racial logics, however, reveal deeply entrenched constructions of the urban and language patterns; on the one hand, the city can be cast as a progressive cosmopolitan site when pertaining to certain (white) bodies and spaces, while on the other hand, "urban" implies a morally bankrupt landscape, illustrated visually by the ghetto, or the "browning" (Rodriguez, 1998) underbelly of the inner city.

Interrogating frames related to urbanity and their discursive effects is critical to expose how the mechanics of racialized ideologies play out on a day-to-day basis. Deconstructing the ways in which contemporary ideas, images, and feelings associated with the ghetto and the urban experience have lodged into the public imagination is a necessarily layered and far-reaching project. For the purposes of this literature review, I will cease delving deep into the national memory vault, as this is another project unto itself; but suffice to say, constructions of the urban and the "ghetto" have long-lasting historical and linguistic footprints. As my dissertation proceeds, my data illustrates this phenomenon as I argue race combined with geographic descriptors over-determine assumptions about particular young people.

As a final note, this project aims to call attention to what shapes divergent degrees of comfort or familiarity within particular locales. Further, it explores how young people characterize places, rather than deeming certain places as *safe* or *unsafe, good* or *bad,* or any other dichotomized set of constructions. Certainly, many urban, as well as suburban and rural, geographies are not experienced as safe for the youth who reside in them. Elsewhere I have written about young people growing up in poverty and how, on a daily basis, they navigate spatial and physical constraints that impact mobility in their communities (Gleason, 2008). In this dissertation, by calling attention to degrees of familiarity or exposure to urban neighborhoods and urban contexts and to processes of racialization and language, I attempt to tease out what makes someone more or less comfortable in particular places. Spaces and places are differentially experienced at various times of day, when encountered alone versus in groups, and of course, gender, race, language, sexuality, ethnicity, and other variables shape how one inhabits a particular space.[15] As we will see in Chapters Four and Five, the ways in which individuals experience divergent terrains can be seen and felt. In Chapter Three, we will encounter a young woman named Caroline who experiences anxiety related to being visible and vulnerable as a white woman walking through the streets of Ashland. In Chapter Four, we witness the ways in which young men from one of the local high school sites internalized the visible racial politics on the university campus grounds during a field trip to the campus. These examples, as well as many more, demonstrate how language and literacy practices inter-relate with the body and emotions, and how those experiences are rooted in impressions of place that come to life in the imagination. Without characterizing the geographies themselves, this study probes what informs young people's embodied experiences in particular contexts and how discursive manifestations take shape. Embodied experiences intersect with the affective experience of border crossing and being physically *in* a particular place and these play out through language. My work fills a gap in literature on urban geographies and racialization by

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[15] As detailed in later chapters, this project leans on Doreen Massey's conceptions of spaces and places as fluid geographies, differentially experienced according to one's gender, racial, ethnic, geographic, and cultural positioning. Massey's work highlights the ways in which earlier space and place-related literatures generated polarized constructions of space, associating masculinity with exterior, public spaces, and femininity with interiority, private and domestic spaces. Her work disrupts such binaries and calls attention to the ways spaces and places are experienced in complex, multi-faceted ways.

looking at how impressions of places inform perceptions of people as well as their educational trajectories. The imagination plays a role in this discursive process.

Chapter Two: Methods and Research Questions

Increasingly, on university campuses across the country, in schools of education, public health, urban planning, social welfare, and anthropology, courses promoting "service learning," "fieldwork," "university-community partnerships," and "engaged scholarship" have become popular. These classes emphasize relationships with surrounding urban schools, organizations, and communities, and course syllabi explain how college students' experiences "out in the field" will be framed by content-specific curricula throughout the semester. Often, on the first day of these courses, professors project photographs onto a screen at the front of the lecture hall, capturing idyllic images of multi-racial, mixed age youth and undergraduates together, smiling, laughing, waving to the camera. Images portray students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds engaging with each other in a variety of scenarios: one-on-one tutoring sessions, fieldtrips to city or university sites, hands-on classroom activities, or after school programs that may feature film-making, hip-hop dance, urban design projects, or any number of other possibilities. These photographs set the stage for the semester, putting in place, ideas, hopes, and expectations for the kind of relationship building and border-crossing that a student might anticipate as she prepares to venture beyond the campus gates for the next 15 weeks as part of the class requirements.

My research moves beyond the polished veneer of the pictures described above in order to uncover the nuances and details, the tensions and points of connection and contradiction behind one-dimensional imagery of university-community collaborations. The ethnographic methodology I utilized in this project allowed me to fill in the blanks and to get at the more fine-grained detail behind such seemingly idyllic and flattened visions of diversity portrayed in such typical pictures. This methodology enabled me to get behind-the-scenes on both sides of the partnerships, and to step into the lives of individual high school students, parents, teachers, and undergraduates, as well as into the daily rhythms and practices of the partnerships. Admittedly, I gathered far more data from the university side of things, due to the nature of the access I had and my positionality within the university, as I will explain. Nevertheless, this project presents an up-close examination of the intersection of worlds between high-achieving university students and low-income urban youth, examining specifically if and how university-community partnerships are impacting participants in divergent and complex ways.

Background

Since arriving at Kirkland University in 2004, I have been privileged to work with undergraduate courses that send students "out into the field" to work with inner-city schools, after school programs serving urban youth, and community-based organizations. Two courses were chosen as the sites selected for this study. Curiosity about how undergraduates at a prestigious university[16] make sense of the social, cultural, ethnic, economic, and physical landscapes of nearby inner cities and communities pushed my thinking about how, and in what ways, meaning- making occurs between diverse populations. Before my study began, I played a variety of roles in classes that required fieldwork in local urban communities, on both sides of

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[16] Kirkland University was originally envisioned with urban roots in 1868, proposed as a "City of Learning." Today, Kirkland is touted as the "world's premier public university" according to the university's website with more nationally ranked graduate programs than anywhere in the country. Despite its focus on academic excellence as a top-tier research institution, Kirkland University is also reputed for its public nature, which aims to contribute to the economic and social well-being of surrounding communities.

the partnerships. I had been a teaching assistant or instructor of undergraduate courses for approximately seven semesters; I ran an afterschool program at the high school site as well as assisted with program support in a variety of ways; and I conducted participatory research with urban high school students, and conducted more traditional research on language and literacy practices for the sponsoring university. Playing such diverse roles in the context of university-community partnerships provided me with a sense of perspective for both the operational and theoretical aspects. And yet, what continued to drive my curiosity, and subsequently the development of this project, were questions about how young people from different backgrounds and cultures engaged with each other in "contact zones" (Pratt, 1999) that are magnified through such collaborations. Moreover, navigation across university-community contexts, across racial, classed, and spatial borders ultimately inspired this dissertation research.

While my intrigue soared while observing the undergraduates, I was equally as curious about high school students who took part in these community-based efforts, in particular because I heard their voices less frequently along the way. From both undergraduates and high school students, I observed a range of responses to programmatic participation and I was curious about how participants from diverse backgrounds experienced each other and came to understand new people and places. From both undergraduates and high school students, I observed bias and apathy, as well as sincere engagement and growth as a result of sustained interaction with each other over time. After four and a half years of working on both sides of the university-community "hyphen," I was anxious to construct a more nuanced understanding of meaning-making around positionality, politics of place, pedagogy, and understandings of opportunities and inequalities.

My involvement in both sides of this university-community relationship put me in a position to be able to work the hyphen — relying here on my own interpretation of Fine's metaphor of the hyphen (1994). I utilize this concept as a methodological lens for my dissertation. My work engages the metaphoric hyphen between university-community populations, spheres, and communities by showing how divides have been constructed and perpetuated, and also how they might be broken down. The relationships that develop between undergraduates and local high school students articulate the university-community hyphen in distinct ways. Focusing on the hyphen, or the space between people and places animates the uneven power relations as well as the ways that both dislocations and connections take place between the populations. The hyphen also points to the ways that polarized identities beyond university- community, such as Self-Other, researcher-researched, white-black, and any number of other potential binary positions, map onto the university-community paradigm.

This dissertation, moreover, engages the hyphen in attempts to bridge worlds and shrink the distance between people and places. As researcher, I work the hyphen by thinking critically about my own subject position in the research. My own positionality informs my study, as I believe that the distance between researcher and subject is less pronounced than academics who believe in scientific neutrality would have us believe. I will further elaborate on my own positionality later in this chapter. The hyphen then becomes a literal metaphor for the space between geographies and communities, but also a methodological lens for how I bring to life the intersections between realms by highlighting both connections and conflicts between participants and institutions. My research aims to build on a growing body of social science research that works against othering by transparently acknowledging power relations, the fallibility of academic research as a whole, my own positionality, and my own role in the historically colonial

enterprise of academic scholarship[17]. Despite the risks, I hope this project counters dichotomous framings by adding complexity and texture to our understandings of intersections across difference.

Research Questions

I constructed my research questions after years of being immersed in university-community partnerships, negotiating both sides of the university-community hyphen. I wanted to investigate the personal and political dimensions of the experience from both sets of perspectives. This desire meant that I needed to gain a larger, more macroscopic view of the selected university courses and programs, the partnered schools, and the political and social geographies in which the partnerships were situated. Incorporating questions related to both the macro and micro world of the university-community collaborations required a deeper understanding of the institutional, programmatic, and individual levels at play in the partnerships. My research questions therefore attend to the varying scales that the partnerships operated on, as well as how individual undergraduate and youth participants negotiated the engagement in multi-dimensional ways. As noted in Chapter One, this research is guided by five central questions:

1. How do relations of power shape university-community partnerships and how do programs impact youth participants and university participants in various ways?
2. What do encounters across race, class, geography, ethnicity, and educational contexts look like and how do participants from both sides of the partnership negotiate "contact zones" that emerge in and around the program space?
3. How do participants make sense of constructs of difference, "otherness," and inequality in response to program participation over time?
4. How do participants understand their relationships to the local urban landscape, and in what ways do notions of "place" shift over time?
5. Finally, do partnerships affect change at different levels or scales, and if so, what are the implications for those changes?

Research Design

The design of this research is specifically geared to capture the nuanced processes of negotiation and identity work that take place between disparate groups of undergraduates and urban high school students. The study is designed with the intention of capturing the engagement between groups and individuals, specifically, the discursive, gestural, spatial, technological, and behavioral expressions that occur between individuals and groups. In order to get an understanding of how disparate groups of urban high school students and university students negotiate each other and each other's spaces, I selected two cases of university-community

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[17] Many scholars, Michelle Fine included, have documented the colonial roots of the academy, a subject I take up further in Chapter Four. The anthropological "encounter" of researchers and their "subjects" has been critiqued as being a relationship akin to the oppressor/oppressed dynamic (Asad, 1973; Fine, 1994; Giroux, 2005; Ladner, 1971). Scholars in traditionally marginalized disciplines, such as Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies have pointed out the white, patriarchal, hetero-normative legacies of the academy and the ways in which academic scholarship perpetuates hegemonic relations of power. Through the years, however, critical theorists have urged fellow academics to re-frame research paradigms to acknowledge the raced, classed, and gendered positions that researchers occupy and their own potential participation in systems of domination as they "write" others into the world.

programs that engage these populations through sustained programming over the course of academic semesters. Both university-community programs were carefully selected based on their reputations as thoughtful and sound models, their pedagogical strengths, their theoretical frameworks, and their disciplinary differences. These case studies exist as "fieldwork nodes," or windows into larger phenomena about how multi-age, multicultural populations on different trajectories toward class privilege came to understand each other and each other's "places in the world." I define "places in the world" as both physical and metaphoric locations, including each other's schools and neighborhoods, as well as their socio-political statuses, related to opportunities and resources. Hence, looking at the relationship between populations and places — and how perceptions change over time — lends itself to an inter-relational analysis. Specifically, these two case studies shine light on the broader phenomena of how people from different local worlds make sense of each other, themselves, and constructs of power. You can see a graphical representation of my design in Table 1.

Geographer and urban scholar Ananya Roy introduced the idea of "fieldwork nodes" (2003) in her study of squatter women in Calcutta, India as a way to hone in on larger interstices of poverty, urbanization, gender, and spatialization. She selected several "nodes" of study — specifically squatter settlements, which she comes to know as networks of people, places, and phenomena, reflecting a geo-politics of poverty. Leaning on Doreen Massey's understanding of "articulated moments" (1994) of social relations, Roy describes a fieldwork node as "an intersection of practices and exchanges that stretched across multiple institutional and physical spaces" (2003, p. 35). Selecting two university-community collaborations as fieldwork nodes is a way to hone in on larger processes of educational stratification, reproduction of racialized and classed inequalities, and ideological formation. Looking at each university-community collaboration as a nexus in itself is possible, but it is also possible to spin outward from the sites, to trace the pathways of entangled people, places, and ideas brought together through such a relationship. Spinning outwards from the immediate context of a particular undergraduate or high school student, such as Vijay, or Jose, entailed a transnational narrative that is complex, non-linear, and rich with meaning, as we will learn. Hence, learning about the people and places connected to participants in each fieldwork node illuminated educational sorting, racialization, geographies of opportunity and inequality, how borders are maintained and disrupted, and other larger socio-cultural phenomena in our ever-diversifying urban centers.

I selected two cases, or nodes, as a way to shed light on larger phenomena of physical and metaphoric border-crossing that takes place in our current urban centers, particularly in and around university paces. These two cases existed within the larger constellations of shifting demographics that are re-shaping cities and universities in the United States and beyond. I chose two sites, rather than one, as a way to illuminate the diversity of experiences, backgrounds, narratives, and processes that radiate outward from university-community contact zones. This study is inter-relational rather than comparative, in that I used the fieldwork nodes as two examples that conversed with each other, despite their differences. Looking at more than one site allowed me to extend beyond the particular program and case, to theorize about how dynamic processes of meaning-making about self, other, and place were understood.

Seeing the local public school as a nexus for an intermingling of people and perspectives is key in my research. The project sites remained in and around public schools, although not during the regular school day. Even, and especially in, the after school space, tensions between mobility and immobility were applicable as tutors, program specialists, university students, and other "outsiders" often descended upon the local school in droves and then vacated the premises

as darkness fell. While many urban high school students also traveled to job sites or home after school or after programming, mobility beyond stratified neighborhoods, regions, and communities remains limited.

Table 1: Research Design		
Case Studies	**Education Course (ED180)**	**City and Regional Planning Course (CYP 150/Y-MAP)**
Data Collection Sites	1. Lecture and Discussion Section 2. Haven High	1. Academic Seminar 2. Washington High
Student Populations	1. ED180 cohort 2. Haven High students	1. Y-MAP cohort 2. Washington High students

Sites

The selected university-community collaborations, situated in different disciplines, promote multi-faceted yet divergent goals through similar pedagogical structures. The first course, Education 180 is a long-standing course which began in 2000. This course is offered three times a year, and generally sends about 200 students a year out into the field. The second case is situated in the City and Regional Planning Department, CRP150. This course brings both undergraduate and graduates students together to take part in a collaborative that serves as a model for youth engagement in urban redevelopment. This course and program began in 1999, and is offered once a year, serving just 15 – 25 students. Both courses combine theory and practice, with a focus on how the respective disciplines (education and literacy and urban planning) play out on the lives of urban youth in the surrounding regions. See Table 2 for additional distinctions between the two courses and partnership models.

Table 2: Distinctions between Fieldwork Models		
	Education	**City and Regional Planning**
Pedagogy	Informal tutor-student/Flexible structure	Traditional classroom paradigm/ Direct instruction
Content	Tutoring/Homework Help	Urban Planning/ Development of authentic project
Field Trip Focus	College Tour	Project-Oriented Site Visits
Program Time	After school/Extended day	Weekly 90-minute classes
School Site	Haven High: Small, Charter Continuation School	Washington High: Large Comprehensive High School

A glance at ED180

According to evolving syllabi over the years, Education 180 combines theory and practice in the study of literacy and development, with a focus on socio-cultural theory. Every fall and spring, 80 – 100 students enroll in the course and generally each semester a teeming waitlist develops with those hopeful that enrolled students will drop once they learn of the hefty field requirement. In addition to the required 45 service hours, course material challenges students to broaden definitions of literacy — to see literacy not as a neutral skill, but as highly contextual and cultural, depending on intersections of race, socioeconomics, ethnicity, access, and geography. The course marries theory and practice, with an eye on how language, literacy, and education are inherently political, contested, and multi-dimensional. From its inception, a foundational tenet of the course has included fieldwork in afterschool literacy programs that serve primarily low-income youth of color in surrounding under-resourced, urban

neighborhoods. The programs are inspired by both a desire to link undergraduate students with young people, and a goal to create engaging and fun literacy enrichment in the out-of-school space. The literacy components of the afterschool programs have developed substantially over the years. In the beginning, youth were involved in making music and digital stories on worn computers in the basement of a community center in Ashland. Today, program offerings range from video production to dance to global social networking to beats and rhymes production and more, in a variety of elementary, middle, and high school after school sites throughout the region. Several hundred youth are served through these collaborations each year, and, each semester, approximately one hundred undergraduates enroll in the course and participate in on-site program activities. Each semester program offerings differ slightly, but persistent goals to decrease the digital divide, engage youth in dynamic learning and language practices, and build bridges between the university and disadvantaged urban schools remain constant. Almost all of the literacy programs are routinely situated in Ashland, a large port city in Northern California.

Undergraduate student population.

University students who enroll in ED180 and CRP150 represent a cross-section of the student body at this large, public, Tier-1 university. Undergraduate populations can be broken down as follows: Asian American students, 43%; Caucasian, 32%; Hispanic American, 13%; African American, 4%; International Student, 4%; and Native American, <1%[18]. According to a self-reported social class survey of this university's student population, 39% of undergraduates associate themselves with middle class backgrounds; 26% reflect upper middle class backgrounds; 22% declare working class backgrounds, 11% associate with poor, and 2% are wealthy[19]. Both courses that served as cases for this research reflect these racial and socioeconomic demographic breakdowns.

Case study 1: Education 180 and Haven High School.

The selected school site for the first case study was one of five main sites that undergraduates selected from for their education fieldwork requirements. The particular site was chosen on the basis that the school's student body, faculty, and vision provide a particularly interesting opportunity to witness the "contact zone" in action. Haven High[20] was a relatively new alternative school (began in 2004) as a direct response to the epidemic of students dropping out of Ashland public high schools. Although various calculations are reported each year, dropout rates in Ashland are estimated to range somewhere between 38 to 50%[21] of all students. Those who drop out are disproportionately students of color from low-income backgrounds. According to a study conducted in 2004 by Harvard University and the Urban Institute, fewer than one-half of freshmen who enter Ashland public high schools will graduate.[22] Gary Orfield, one of the authors of this report, describes districts who graduate less than 60% of their students, such as Ashland Unified, as "dropout factories" (2004). Haven High emerged as a direct response to this phenomena, striving to create an alternative space for students who had either

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[18] Demographics retrieved from the university's Office of Planning and Analysis. To include the exact source would reveal the specifics of the university, and therefore I have omitted the reference.
[19] 2008_dem_selfreportedsocialclass.pdf

[21] Statistics for Ashland Unified's graduation and dropout rates are contested, however, reports routinely declare the dropout rate to lie somewhere between 37% of all students, and as high as 52%.
[22] http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/news/pressreleases/dropout05.php

considered dropping out, or those who had, in fact, dropped out of the large comprehensive high schools. Haven's student body, which currently comprised one hundred and eighty students, reflected the most marginalized segments of the public system; almost all report having been labeled "failures" in traditional schools. More than 90% were students of color, with approximately 45% Latino students, 40% African American students, 3% Asian American, and less than 2% White or Other. Almost 90% of the student body were eligible for free or reduced lunch, and 40% speak English as a second language. According to one teacher, most of the students' family members have not gone to college, and it's likely that students may not know anyone in their community who has attended or currently attends college either.

Haven's school vision centered around pedagogies and practices designed to re-frame students as "at promise" individuals, rather than "at risk." The school aimed to provide a close, supportive environment that would foster academic rigor and success for students, in school, and in real-world experiences beyond the classroom. Haven complied with charter school standards and academic requirements while also emphasizing social justice-based curriculum, non-traditional project-based learning, internship opportunities, and community partnerships that enabled students to get out of the classroom and into real-world learning environments. According to the school's charter, dedicated faculty collaborated through a flexible schedule and made strategic decisions about setting students up for success, treating them with respect, high expectations, and a personalized approach to learning. Finally, the school aspired to create a sense of fun and dynamic engagement, so that students could discover their joy for learning and feel empowered to pursue a future that might include college, job training, or other fulfilling work possibilities[23].

Choosing Haven as a site was deliberate in many respects. First of all, it was an example of a high-functioning school at the time (renewed charter, consistent growth in exit exam passing rates and standardized test scores, satisfaction of API criteria, and steady growth of student population and students achieving at a proficient or above level). Also, Haven was an example of school whose student body was markedly different from Kirkland University's student body, in terms of academic "achievement" by traditional standards. While many public schools in Ashland might have qualified as comprising a different student body in terms of access to

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[23] Despite the relative successes of Haven High, due to a variety of reasons at the end of the school year in 2009, Haven's 5th year in operation, the school district decided not to re-new Haven's charter. The decision was highly controversial among the school board, faculty, staff, students, and parents. The Haven High community responded with collective action to protest this decision by the district. After an extended period of discussion, debate, and student activism, at the district level it was decided that the school would shut down. Teachers lost their jobs; students were re-located to different schools. Many were deeply affected by the closure of the school. My study was written after Haven closed, however, the study's key findings speak more to the phenomena at work related to how diverse participants encounter each other, and navigate structures of power; therefore, the school's closure did *not* dramatically alter the nature of study. Nevertheless, the fact that Haven High was shut down speaks volumes about the vulnerable status of urban public schools, particularly charter schools and other public schools that serve the most disenfranchised, "at risk" populations. This unilateral decision at the district level exemplifies a theme that threads throughout this dissertation; namely, that issues of power and inequality characterize the landscape of urban public school contexts, including university-school partnerships situated therein. University-school partnerships' entire existences are, thus, in the hands of powerful entities often far-removed from the participants themselves. On the university side of things, the lifespan of partnerships depends on a range of funding sources, including grants, departmental support, or university budgetary allocations which shift each year. At any give time, the university higher-ups could extinguish the partnership for any number of reasons, just as the school board did in the case of Haven High. Moreover, university-community programs linking public institutions of learning might be considered vulnerable and thus at risk in the current historical moment.

resources and higher education, Haven was a particularly interesting site in terms of its conscious vision to create a space for some of the most vulnerable populations. The cross-section of undergraduates and students from Haven High, furthermore, presented a unique opportunity to study commonplace assumptions about achievement, education, and opportunity as the lowest and highest achieving students engaged with each other[24]. Also, the faculty's willingness to have undergraduates work with students in a variety of formal and informal classroom settings demonstrated flexibility as well as a commitment to introduce college as a realistic possibility for Haven students.

Moreover I selected Haven strategically, as I anticipated that the contact zones between undergraduates and youth would be ripe with information about meaning-making around geographies, goals, schooling experiences, and understandings of structural constraints. In the crudest terms, the university students represented academic "successes," according to certain standards, while the Haven students had been framed as academic "failures" by society at large. Understanding that this dichotomy is entirely problematic, I believed, nonetheless, that this convergence of students, who had disparate experiences with schooling among other things, would highlight the ways in which institutional structures shaped young people in asymmetrical ways. I imagined that this intersection of worlds might speak to larger phenomena related to how working class youth and upwardly mobile university students made sense of structures of power, differential access to resources, and their own trajectories.

Case study 2: City and Regional Planning 150 and Washington High School.

The second case involved a collaboration that links a City and Regional Planning course and high school students at Washington High School, a large comprehensive high school in Harbor Bay, a mid-sized industrial city in the region. The Kirkland University course brings undergraduate and graduate students together to take part in a collaborative that is a model for youth engagement in urban redevelopment. Now in its 12th year, the class is an award-winning initiative that aims to use city spaces slated for redevelopment as a channel for community revitalization and education reform. Through CRP150, high school students are engaged as "genuine stakeholders and participants"[25] in local planning projects, as they work with Kirkland University "mentors" (both undergraduate and graduate students) on issues central to urban design, planning, and community development. In addition to high school and university students, multiple stakeholders such as government agencies, private interests, and community-based organizations partner to collaborate on each re-development project. Clients such as the park service, city housing authorities, and city councils in metropolitan centers of the region have enlisted with specific projects. Through curriculum that blurs education and city planning, youth engage in learning "real-world application of urban design." Each semester culminates with the high school youth and their mentors presenting their proposals before the clients in a public, city forum.

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[24] The terms "lowest" and "highest" achieving are clearly relative and subjective terms, and based on traditional standards of achievement. These traditional standards reflect scores on standardized tests, grades, and an ability to conform into to the academic system — a system that privileges white, middle class norms and practices. Analyzing students in terms of "achievement" is not my intent; rather, looking at students who have been marked as different allows for a unique opportunity to get at notions of achievement, success, failure, and educational inequality in multi-dimensional ways.

[25] All phrases and terms marked by quotes in this section were taken from the CRP150 syllabus and course materials.

CRP150 aims to be both a pedagogical approach as well as a real-world urban planning studio. The design of the collaboration is necessarily multi-layered and participatory, according to the founder, who I call Dina McMillan. At the university, undergraduates and graduates are presented with curriculum that critically examines the intersection of city planning and education. Also, the weekly seminar includes a time for university students to collaboratively plan lessons about urban planning, design, and community action, which they will then present to the high school students each week as well. With university students teaching high school students, both populations are mutually engaged in critical examination of the built environment as well as unique project planning. As McMillan explains, the CRP150 course and program helps both mentors and local students revision particular urban neighborhoods from sites of violence and decay to places of dignity and historic importance. CRP150 projects have included redesigning areas of urban blight, such as drug-infested properties, into vibrant community spaces, such as a mini-park and a restored historic train station, both in Ashland. Projects have included redesigning areas of urban blight (such as drug-infested properties) into vibrant community spaces, such as a mini-park and a restored historic train station, both in Ashland. Finally, in addition to emphasizing how places are imagined and might be re-imagined, CRP150 strives to forge critical relationships between youth, city representatives, community organizations, government agencies, and the university through collaborative urban re-vitalization efforts.

This collaboration was a natural selection for my dissertation, as it unites a spectrum of young people and in-situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), or learning that takes place through context-based, social participation. Through these projects, learning occurs between individuals from diverse backgrounds through interaction and engagement around the shared context of the particular planning project. McMillan employs Lave and Wenger's term "community of practice" (1991) to describe the engagement that occurs between a multi-age, multi-ethnic, multicultural group, as participants connect around a shared set of goals, activities, and contexts. Like ED180, CRP150 employs problem-posing pedagogy as a way to fuse diverse populations, and, therefore, observing a contact zone between high school youth and university students is highly probable.

The case study took place at Washington High School located in a mid-sized, industrial city called Harbor Bay. Although the collaboration was implemented at four urban school sites in the region (with four separate public sector clients), I selected the Washington High School site for my second case. The partnership had had a few years of history at this particular school, and the school administration continued to support the partnership, despite changes in staff and school organization over the years. Washington was a large comprehensive urban high school situated in a low-income neighborhood of the city. The school had a precarious standing over the course of the last few years as declining numbers of students threatened the school's sustainability. The school community, including students, faculty, and staff, were engaged in trying to elicit district support around keeping the school open. However, with a radically diminished student body (from around 1,400 to 850 students), the school's standing remained in question. The Harbor Bay district was threatening to close the school and re-locate students even though most of the schools in the district are at capacity. Since 2009, CRP150 has continued to be engaged with the school's students and teachers, even as questions of legitimacy, location, and community investment in urban planning have re-surfaced time and time again.

The demographics at Washington High School were largely African American and Latino (41% and 44% respectively). White students made up about 4% of the student body,

while Asian, Filipino, and Pacific Islander communities comprised about 11% of all students. English language learners made up about 33% of the population, and 67% of the student body were considered socio-economically disadvantaged. Washington High School boasted a mobile school-based health center, a variety of sports and recreation opportunities, a school newspaper and website, as well as a host of academic services. During the time of the study, the school community was immersed in the project of trying to keep the school open and thriving in its original location.

Methodology

Critical ethnography is conventional ethnography with a political purpose.

-- Jim Thomas, 1993

This dissertation follows the lead of critical ethnography scholars, such as Michael Burawoy and others who take a "global" approach to ethnography — or an attempt to understand the macro through the lens of the micro. I attempted to forge new understandings about cross-cultural learning in a pluralistic society by capturing a micro-level window into how learning about place, space, subjectivity, and others actually takes place. This study utilized ethnographic methods in order to animate diverse perspectives of subjects who were engaged in university-community initiatives. The undergraduates left the comforts of the university bubble and commuted to urban school sites where programming occurs; whereas the high school students stayed at their school, in the city neighborhoods where they spend much of their time. My fieldwork tracked both the undergraduates and high school students over time (from January to June, 2009), and this informed my understanding of their relationships to people and places as well as to future trajectories and identities, broadly conceived.

In order to present the perspectives of individuals whose lives were bridged directly and indirectly through university-community collaborations, I looked to the macro level contexts, including historical, social, economic, racial, and cultural backdrops, which set the stage for individual perspectives to exist I chose ethnographic methods for this study that reveal how large social forces and structures play out on the lives and bodies of young people engaging in daily practices related to place-making, identity-construction, and education. Also, as noted, despite the proliferation of university-community partnerships in existence today, studies of the impact of university-community alliances are sporadic, and have rarely been studied ethnographically.

My approach employs methods inspired by ethnographers before me who have worked closely with youth, examining both individual and collective perceptions of others, and subsequently integrated youth voices into their research. (See Bettie, 2003; Cushman, 1998; Thorne 1993; Ferguson, 2000; Noguera, 2008; Noguera et al., 2006a; Olsen, 1997; Pinderhughes, 1997; Fine,1991, 2003; Fine and Weis, 1998; Hull, 2005). I relied heavily on participant observation to understand the more nuanced, informal interactions between students from diverse backgrounds, as they occurred through formal programming. Leaning on feminist research methodologies, I approached this study with the understanding that my ethnographic voice will be just one voice among many, "a partial truth" (Clifford, 1986) of sorts. And, reflecting on the dynamic processes that spring to life between people from diverse backgrounds, I recognize that my own standpoint (Haraway, 1991) shapes and shifts the way the stories unfold. Nevertheless, understanding my limits and my own positionality, I proposed a study that hones in on the liminal space between participants, focusing on the processes of negotiation that take place between individuals and groups in subtle and not-so-subtle ways.

Researching how youth from diverse groups understand themselves and each other required careful observation, listening, and time. Heeding the suggestion of a wise advisor, however, I formally collected data on the university-community programs for only as long as the participants engaged: one full semester. From January 2009 to June 2009, I attended meetings, made site visits, observed the university seminars, drove with university students to the sites, attended school functions, ate lunch with high school students after class, met with teachers, advisors, and even some parents. In general, I tried to immerse myself holistically in the life and times of each collaborative as well as in the lives of participants, and I collected data as the programs were happening in real-time. In June, July, and August of 2009, I followed up with participants from both the university and the school sites, and conducted formal, one-on-one interviews. The interviews captured another kind of data, of course, as interviews allow for a distinct performance of self. These performative events elicited different kinds of information from what I observed in the natural context of the program.

I organized this study around the ethnographic observations and I relied on interviews for supplemental information to fill in the blanks, so to speak. I wanted the study to move beyond formal interviews in order to get at the "informal logic of actual life" (Geertz, 1973), or the dynamic messiness of human interaction that often comes alive through silences, glances, and gestures, as well as oral and written communication between individuals. Learning how young people from both sides of the partnership engaged across boundaries involved listening closely to questions that the individuals (between groups and within groups) asked each other, as well as to the off-the-cuff conversations about music, sports, and other extracurricular activities. Many have noted that the portal into identity talk in the U.S. is through multiculturalism (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001) and through racial classification and celebration, even as institutions and policies promote "post-racial" rhetoric. I turned to Mica Pollock's study (2004a) on race "talk" among youth for methodological insight into how to structure a study on processes that take place between diverse individuals about complex and un-definable aspects of identities. Pollock's study attends to how youth employ neat racial categories at certain moments, while also shattering such rigid rubrics of racial classification at other times. The contradictory language practices of the youth in Pollock's study reminds me of the importance of attending to both the simple representation of selves that occurs through initial chit chat and ice breakers, as well as interviews, for example, but also to lean in and listen closely for the more complex and nuanced engagement that occurs between and within groups over time.

My Role as R/researcher

I emphasize the fluidity between upper and lower-case R/r in "researcher" to call attention to the power dynamics that accompany such a role when "Researcher" is capitalized. As a Researcher, the role is bestowed with a sense of power and authority, however I would like to interrogate these dynamics through the project of my research itself. I conducted research in informal ways, and I sought to learn with and from my participants alongside them in the classroom, in the loud high school hallways, and in the car rides to the site. So, while I acknowledge my own positionality and power dynamics, I tried not to let them get in the way of organic engagement with the participants.

Furthermore, my research reflects my perspective and can be considered a "partial truth" (Clifford, 1986), as the programs engage primarily African American and Latino teens, primarily Asian American and white undergraduates, and a white researcher/facilitator. I report on the lives of both sets of young people with the understanding that my own "politics of location"

(hooks, 1989) reflect my background and biases, and that ultimately as a middle-class white woman, I was situated outside of both the high school and university students' communities. Inevitably, there is much that I must have missed as I immersed myself in the project. Racial, class, ethnic, age, linguistic, and other differences between myself and the youth and myself and the undergraduates complicated interactions with both groups, possibly allowing for more and less access to conversations and practices at different moments in time. As a white woman, considerably older than the high school students, my position inevitably factored into dialogues and interviews that took place between the youth and myself. On the other hand, as a youthful-looking researcher, familiar with the local urban contexts and working with similar populations, I believe that I was able to integrate somewhat fluidly.

In terms of the engagement with undergraduates, of course, my social and cultural location factored in as well. With half of the undergraduates, I was one of their instructors (although not necessarily grading them), and this role inevitably shaped the kind of data I collected. Racial, ethnic, geographic, age, and cultural differences between myself and the undergraduates added layers of complexity to the research, just as those kinds of differences marked me from the youth. Fortunately, my observations of youth and university students took place during group activity time, and this allowed me to attempt to slip into the inter-group discussions and activities without causing too much of a stir, especially as the young people became more used to my presence. Moreover, my own positionality inevitably was woven into the project design, the data collection processes, the analysis, and writing process, just as it is for every other qualitative researcher. As questions of authenticity swirl and the "crisis of ethnography" simmers in the background of my brain, I wove my own experience as an outsider/educator/researcher into the fold. To do otherwise would be like trying to force the edges of a contact zone into a neat and tidy box, which would, of course, distort the integrity of the shape altogether.

Finally, my dissertation is de-coupled from the university-community partnerships in that I am not evaluating the particular programs, per se. Rather, I used the collaborations as a springboard to ask larger questions about how undergraduates at a prestigious university and urban youth negotiate processes of identity-formation and relationship to place, as well as to interrogate understandings of power in potentially divergent and illuminating ways through their engagement with each other.

Procedures

My methodology and data collection process encompassed a variety of qualitative approaches that shifted with the dynamics of my study. While the bulk of my data is qualitative in nature, I also reference quantitative data as a means to frame the individual lives of my participants within large-scale social contexts. In general, from January 2009 to August 2009, I collected data related to meaning-making around identities, geography, and representation, as pertains to both undergraduates and urban youth. I selected January 2009 as a starting time because this is the beginning of fieldwork for undergraduates in both spring semester courses (ED180 and CRP150). Although spring semester classes began in mid-January, university students did not begin on-site work with high school students until early February. My data collection end point (August 2009) allowed me the summer to conduct interviews as needed throughout the summer. I collected program-related data on site at Haven High, Washington High, and in the two course seminars over the course of the spring. In May and June, I conducted additional interviews and did participant observation with youth through the end of the public

school year (the end of June.) Over the course of the summer of 2009, I completed follow-up interviews, site visits, and additional engagement with both the undergraduates and the high school students. See the chart below that outlines the timeline and sources for data collected.

Procedures: Haven High School.

At Haven High School, undergraduates engaged with high school students four days a week. Two days a week, four to five Kirkland undergraduates from the education course engaged with students after school in a loose, unstructured, but mandatory, homework help/advisory time called "E-block". Two days a week, undergrads participated during the school day in classrooms with students who needed particular attention or assistance. One of the classes was a Life Skills class in which Haven students learned about job skills, work and college opportunities, application processes, financial aid, and so forth. The other class in which undergraduates assisted was English. Students engaged with students needing one-on-one reading guidance (There were several 11th and 12th grade students who are reading at a 1st or 2nd grade level, and teachers identified these students as needing extra support). I observed contact zones between students from divergent worlds[26] over the course of the entire semester, in both the unstructured as well as more formal classroom settings. I did not, however, observe the interactions between students and undergraduates at any of the other four ED180 school sites. Therefore, this study will not make broad generalizations about all urban youth, all undergraduates in Education 180, or the intersection of worlds, at large.

I attended Haven High on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons (four to five undergraduates are present on each day), as well as occasionally on some Friday mornings (when three to four undergraduates were present). I wrote field notes after each site visit, paying attention to conversations between tutors and youth, the distance between groups, how the groups negotiated each other and themselves, as well as other behaviors, gestures, and social dynamics. I recorded observations about Haven and its fluid atmosphere, how the students filtered in and out of classrooms and interacted with teachers, as well as how the undergrads tried to fit into high school again. Because I was one of the undergraduates' instructors in the education course, I recognize that what I observed and recorded might have been colored by my role as an authority, despite my efforts to disassociate myself from my role as teacher when I was observing. Even though I did not grade most of the students I observed, I must acknowledge that possibility that my presence altered the nature, at least in some way, of the interaction between the undergrads and youth. But the presence of an outsider in any capacity has the potential to alter dynamics. Therefore, my role was no different than any other ethnographer trying to capture the most natural contexts, with the understanding that true objectivity does not exist.

Procedures: Washington High School.

Although the City and Regional Planning course engaged with four different cities, school districts, and high schools, I focused on only one of the course's sites, namely

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[26] Race, class, ethnic, linguistic, and age differences may or may not have been significant between individuals at all times. Also, undergraduate and high school populations were heterogeneous within themselves. Moreover contact zones emerged within *and* across cohorts of undergraduates and high school students in unpredictable ways. This is critical to remind readers of in order to counter dichotomous framings of university *vs.* community entities. Both populations across the university-community hyphen represented a range of ethnic, class, religious, and linguistic backgrounds, however, the university students were on a trajectory towards mobility and class privilege, while the youth were not.

Washington High School in the port city of Harbor Bay. This school was one of the original sites; the partnership there has endured for twelve years years. Students in CRP150 attended Washington High School twice a week, during a 90-minute regularly scheduled History class period. The Wednesday group of undergrads team-taught during a "lively, high-energy" 4th period U.S. History class, according to the teacher. Mr. Carlos explained that the class was large, over-crowded, and especially high-energy, as it meets right before lunch. A group of five university students (three undergraduate and two graduate students) led the 4th period class in interactive activities around community mapping and urban planning each week. I observed this class weekly. I also spent time with the Washington High school students during the students' lunch hour which followed the class. I observed the high school-ers in a more natural school setting beyond the class (i.e. lunch) in order to gain a fuller picture of the youth beyond their engagement with the university students. I wrote detailed field notes following each site visit.

Procedures: At the university.

In addition to fieldwork at both Haven High and Washington High, I observed the coursework that guides and supports the university students. Although I was a graduate student instructor for the education course, I did not grade any of my focal students, so as to avoid a conflict of interest. My experience with the education course over the years led to a significant body of knowledge about how the curriculum and fieldwork operate, in theory and practice. However, I carefully constructed this project so as to avoid drawing on my "insider" status within the course. Haven High was a new site for me, as were all the students (undergraduate and high school). In terms of the City and Regional Planning class, I took part in the class for the first time, in an observational manner as well. Curriculum for both classes was incorporated into my analysis, as the course material introduced students to theoretical frameworks and literature that contextualize experiences in the field. Both of the professors of the courses consented to this research and were in full support of the ethnographic project. I wrote field notes after select classes that were particularly enlightening with regard to students' perspectives on fieldwork or theorizations about identities, class, race, literacy, power, and so forth.

Data Collection Instruments

Interviews.

I made audio recordings of interviews with subjects (4 – 6 undergraduates, 4 – 6 youth participating in program per case study, 4 school/ program staff). Before recording all interviews, I obtained permission for their participation in my study. I interviewed students, teachers, and undergraduates over the course of three months once the programs were completed. Each interview lasted about sixty to seventy-five minutes and generally, the interview addressed the program experience for the individual as well as his/her perceptions of university-community engagement. The interviews generally took place in a public café or restaurant. All of the interviews addressed issues of conflict and tension as well as learning and growth between the two populations of undergraduates and high school students. The interviews proved to be an opportunity for the participant to reflect on his/her personal experience, as well as to reconcile his/her feelings on how such a program did and/or did not work to build bridges between worlds. I transcribed each of the interviews and organized them according to the individual's status/position (college student, high school student, teacher).

Undergraduates:

My interviews centered around perceptions of urban youth, urban neighborhoods, reflection on one's own background, educational contexts in general, understandings of inequities, and constructs of power. Questions related to the university-community collaborative were asked.

High school students:

My interviews centered around perceptions of university students and university opportunities, urban neighborhoods, reflection on one's own background and educational contexts, understandings of inequities, and constructs of power. Questions related to the university-community collaborative were asked.

School/program staff:

My interviews focused on expectations for university-community programs, observations of program (methods and outcomes), and conceptions of how such a program fit into larger constructs/discourses of power, inequity, and opportunity.

Written artifacts.

My field notes:

Throughout the data collection phase, I wrote and recorded field notes religiously after every program activity, undergraduate class, or site visit. My field notes were modeled after Bogdan and Biklen's suggested approach in terms of incorporating a descriptive as a well as reflective component to the note (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The descriptive facet of the field note reflected the events of the day, including colorful details of the visit or the class, dialogue that took place, chronology of events, and so forth. The reflective portion of the field notes enabled me to think critically about what I had observed on site, as well as to begin making connections analytically. The reflection section housed my own personal responses to the day, and it was in this part that I could admit being shocked, surprised, or disappointed, or impressed, if need be. Much of the reflection pieces of my field notes addressed issues that came up for me around racism, stereotypes, and assumptions about urban spaces and schools that were projected by the undergraduates onto the youth. Therefore the reflective section of the field notes allowed me to make sense of my own disillusionment and shock at such commentary, as well as allowed me the space to vent so that I would avoid being evaluative in the analysis and writing.

Field notes by undergraduates in ED180 and CRP150:

Students wrote extensive field notes weekly, chronicling the events that took place at the site with additional reflection/analysis. Field notes were written to fulfill seminar assignments. I removed or changed personal identifiers such as names so that the identity of the subject was concealed. I will further elaborate on the nature of field notes and the kinds of data I gathered from them a bit later.

This study relies heavily on a blend of participant observation, as well as narrative accounts of observations via undergraduates student participants in the initiative. In both of the focal university-community programs, the college students were instructed to construct analytic field notes to document their fieldwork. These relatively free-form ethnographic notes, replete with observations on activities, curriculum, conversations, and so forth were required of the university students as part of their program experience. The field note assignments served as a significant portion of the written work for both classes, and were emphasized as very critical learning tools. In CRP150, youth participants were also asked to contribute written reflection from time to time; however, the assignments generally reflected specific prompts related to the urban design curriculum. At Haven High, because the partnership centered around one-on-one

tutoring rather than specific content, no written reflection assignments were required of the high school students at all.

Notably, disproportionate amounts of curriculum encouraging critical reflection were in place for the high school students in both university-community programs. More field notes were collected from the education class than from the city planning class, due to the curricular focus and field notes that were assigned in each course. In ED180, in addition to field of literacy, curriculum introduced ethnographic research methods and students were supported in the process of designing and executing a small case study. The course assigned Bogdan and Biklen on ethnographic methods and students were instructed to construct detailed field notes which captured observation, analysis, and reflection.

In CRP150 the field notes were more perfunctory, rather than the lengthy field notes of ED180, and there was very little focus on research methods. CRP150 students focused on lesson-planning around the urban planning project, and wrote basic field notes which documented the events of the day; less analysis was expected. Therefore, the bulk of the written data reflects the ED180 class.

In ED180, field notes reflected an honest, somewhat rambling record of students' experiences each week working with youth. Field notes ranged in length from one single-spaced page per site visit to almost 10 pages, depending on the amount of activity, analysis, and of the style of the writer. Invariably, field notes spoke to undergraduates' memories of their own educational experiences and their assumptions about deep-seeded issues such as race, class, education, social change, opportunity and inequality, and "others." Certain topics such as school design and structure, academic rigor, teachers' pedagogy, social and cultural milieu, and aspirations, as well as resources and opportunities occupied much of the attention of the university students as they reflected on their own educational experiences in comparison to those of the high school students with whom they were working.

While the field note material provides insight into students' experiences and raw responses, they are of course shaped by the fact that the notes were written to satisfy an assignment, ultimately to be evaluated by an instructor for a grade. This variable is important as it speaks to the layers of intention and meaning that are incorporated into students' writings. Moreover, field notes cannot be read as subjective "truth;" rather, they must be read with the understanding that they represent relatively candid reflections — in that the genre encourages such subjectivity and honest exploration — but of course they were also crafted with awareness of an instructor's eye. As this research explores a range of topics, and relies heavily on data from written artifacts primarily, understanding the way written and verbal discourse is performative must be acknowledged. By the same token, interviews elicit a performance of sorts, and to some degree informal interviews do as well. As such, I utilized a blend of qualitative methods and a range of data sources so as to achieve the most thorough and multifaceted ethnographic study on university-community partnerships.

Analytic memos:

After a concentrated period of observation, transcription, or coding, I wrote analytic memos designed to "talk through" some larger thread of analysis that related to what I was observing. Analytic memos provided an opportunity to begin putting the pieces of analysis and findings together. I used these written reflective tools to try out lines of thinking and to begin to develop arguments.

Newspaper and online articles:

I consulted various pieces of current information about the specific cities and neighborhoods where the programs were based as well as media related to the university and outreach. I utilized online sources to stay abreast of current events, and local politics/community issues and university politics.

Participant observation.

I conducted participant observation of selected fieldwork sites for both ED180 and CRP150 over the course of the semester, with an eye on the intersection of university students and high school students. I also observed the more natural settings, outside of the contact zones, when both populations were in their own classrooms/school environment, at Kirkland and the respective high schools.

Once I received approval from the Institutional Review Board, I utilized ethnographic field methods to capture interactions amongst undergraduates and youth participants, as well as to document associated university-community events. I employed Participant Observation techniques, grounded in respect for subjects and subjects' perspectives and contexts, while understanding my own positionality as an outsider. My own participant observation added layers of texture to the participant observation that the students themselves were doing.

The total number of subjects in the study was 15 – 25 participants. This included around 6 – 8 university students per case study site and 4 – 6 youth being served by each of the university-community collaborations. This study purposely aimed to reflect a relatively balanced number of participants from both sides of the partnership; however, due to my own situated-ness within the university side of things, I ended up gathering far less data from the youth. I will elaborate on this further throughout the study.

Quantitative data (public information).

Census and school data for both university and high school sites:
I used this data to frame individual lives within large-scale social contexts.

Methods of Analysis

Data analysis entailed a multi-staged process over the course of many months, in which I sifted through my archive of materials, coded, organized, read academic literature, wrote introductory memos, and developed preliminary theories. Because I had a massive amount of written material to wade through, I needed a strategy. I had 10 field notes from each of the 15 or so undergraduates that took part in the study. As mentioned, each field note ranged in length, and some were quite copious. For weeks, I sat and immersed myself in my data — my own notes on observations in the field, as well as the students. I also read through the interview transcriptions. As I read and re-read, I began to develop preliminary codes based on themes that surfaced. I coded for themes such as difference/likeness, academic expectations, assumptions of the urban, discussions of race and class, emotions and bodily experiences, and theorizations for why and how inequality existed, among others. I created about twenty codes on my first round of analysis, and then organized the data thematically into large categories.

For example, one overarching code related to how individuals spoke about the *other* population, namely the Haven or Washington students, or the college students. I paid attention to the kind of language used to describe, especially regarding the ways that new people and places were described at the onset of programs. I noticed immediately that highly coded language frequently characterized undergraduates' language about local youth and urban sites and often

continued throughout the tenure of the program. Furthermore, I broke this code down into multiple parts. I noticed time after time that both youth and undergraduates categorized each other as *different*, especially at the beginning of the program. Accordingly, I generated codes related to the ways in which difference and/or likeness were noted. As I developed this theme and followed this thread, I noticed that students of both populations arrived at distinct moments of reckoning when they realized that the other was "just like us" or just like me." From here, I wrote analytic memos on this subject, and developed lines of thinking around what likeness or difference signified in a variety of ways.

As I proceeded, I began to write up my findings, learning that analysis and writing were necessarily layered, iterative processes. Finally, as I analyzed data, I returned to the curriculum, pedagogy, and central vision of the courses/programs themselves for additional guidance. After all, the ways in which participants developed theories on the worlds around them could be traced to multiple sources, including the courses which framed their experiences out in the field.

Engaging the Curriculum

The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy.

-- bell hooks, 1994

As the theme of difference appeared and re-appeared in my data, it became a critical theme in the study. However, it must be noted that constructions of difference about both the youth themselves and the sites may have been unintentionally developed, at least in part, through imagery and narratives that were projected in the Education and City and Regional Planning classes on the first day when the fieldwork was introduced. Inevitably, the ways that the professors, graduate instructors, and school representatives described the local school environments and local students, displayed certain images of youth and school sites (while omitting others), and characterized the programs themselves served to frame the student bodies and the schools in a certain light, leaving much to the imagination. Learning about the schools' performance scores, student demographics, and graduation rates also inevitably informed students' preconceptions about the "kind" of student with whom they would be engaging, as well as about the kind of places where the schools were situated. The "urban imagination" (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007), which will be explicated more fully in the next chapter, was inevitably engaged through these preliminary class sessions. However, the ways in which the courses encouraged students to reflect on their own assumptions and societal messaging through curricular connections proved significant, as my data show. To varying degrees, the ways that students were able to *re-imagine* both the people and places in a new way through engagement with course curriculum looked different in each case, depending on the individual student and the program context. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

Moreover, although we cannot ascertain *exactly* how constructions of the "urban" or of the "university" emerged through diffuse processes, it is nonetheless important to examine how the youth and schools were framed in university classrooms via course and programming material as well as by professors, graduate teaching teams, and program staff. The ways in which contexts were introduced inevitably inform perceptions of people and places and should be analyzed. What does the curriculum look like in classrooms that boast university-community programs in local urban contexts? Is understanding the "urban" experience part of course content, and how do courses theorize about what takes place in the local site? Both syllabi have been included in the Appendix of the study.

ED180 is billed as a literacy course which satisfies the university's multicultural core class requirement, meaning that it focuses on race, ethnicity, and culture in the U.S., in this case, in relation to the study of language and literacy. The course overview explains that the class will introduce students to socio-cultural education theory and research, focused on literacy teaching and learning, and the literature will be examined "in practice through participation in literacy-based afterschool programs." The course promises to "position students to analyze how race and ethnicity intersect with the acquisition and use of literacy." The syllabus goes on to explain an underlying goal of the course: "We will develop a view of literacy, not as a neutral skill, but as embedded within culture and as depending for its meaning and its practice upon social institutions and conditions." The course historicizes the ways in which literacy has served as "one important fulcrum" in enacting racist and classist practices of exclusion, based on relations of power. While the curricular material traces the import of literacy historically as an institutional gatekeeper, the course also contextualizes the ways in which literacy and language learning intersect with the realm of homes, schools, communities, and cultures. Thinking about individuals and their subjectivities amidst particular socio-cultural contexts is key to the course's design and intention.

The study of language and literacy practices reflects relations of power and the course offers a particular perspective with regard to the political possibilities of literacy and language practices. The course syllabus outlines additional course themes and intentions in detailed language and then introduces how literacy learning will be "experienced" in practice. The following section of the syllabus introduces the fieldwork at local schools.

The course will ask students to consider the groups and themes in relation to their experiences as tutors and guides in an afterschool program. Through our affiliation with several afterschool programs, Education students will work with children and youth in Ashland. These programs serve mostly low-income families from diverse backgrounds, primarily African American, Chicano/Latino, and Asian American children and youth. ED students will collaborate with and observe young people as they do homework, prepare for achievement tests, take part in arts-based activities, and use technology for play, learning, and creative expression. In these contexts, then, ED students can become aware of similarities and differences in languages, dialects, and interactional styles of students from different cultural groups, and the way these form the background for literacy learning and play. Through writing field notes, class discussions, and writing assignments, we will evaluate the usefulness of the theoretical approaches offered in the readings, especially on the basis of their experiences with children and youth in the afterschool programs.

In terms of the city planning course, issues of race and class were not explicitly addressed from the on-set; rather, introductory curriculum focused on the field of urban planning and how it has traditionally operated in linear ways with city agencies and corporations exerting influence in the planning process. As outlined on the course syllabus (see Appendix), the distinct methodology is outlined via course readings. This literature addresses how the course aims to do something different by enlisting youth who have traditionally been marginalized from planning projects. Hence, curricular focus is less on the nature of urbanity and more on the rationale for including youth in participatory planning initiatives at the city level. Participatory planning emerges as the central thrust, with attention given to how youth should be seen as stakeholders, decision makers, and collaborators in authentic ways in urban planning projects. Yet, despite the lack of overt attention to the dynamics of race, class, socioeconomics, and structural inequalities as part of the fabric of urbanity, the ways that urban sites and urban schools themselves were

framed in the course spoke loudly about race, class, and ethnicity, although in somewhat coded language. This theme of colorblind language will be developed further throughout this research.

On the second session of the CRP150 course, a guidance counselor from Washington High set the stage for the university mentors who were to be part of the semester's program. His tone of urgency may have contributed a sense of heightened tension and vulnerability at the local high school. The counselor started off by introducing the backdrop of the high school. He explained, "At Washington, there's a positive school climate even amidst a tense, poor, highly-impacted urban community." Another administrator, named Gus, who began as a teacher at the school years ago, contextualized recent events at the school. He explained that Washington has been "on the chopping block" as of late, and the kids haven't known about the outcome of whether or not the school would be shut down by the district. He continued:

> It's been a rough time. Kids are anxious about it all. Since September, FIVE high school students have been shot and killed. September's killings included a freshman girl and a sophomore boy, and all the kids who were shot were really well known, popular kids. That is the thing about Washington, it's not so big, and most everyone knows each other in the grades, etc. So, you'll notice when you come, there's some makeshift shrines for Marcos and Anthony and students pics around the school. It's been a rough time. But students feel safe at school (FN, EG, February 9, 2009).

The next section is an excerpted portion of my own field note in response to Gus' entire presentation to the university students about Washington High on that second day of class. I include this field note in this chapter because I believe it shows the ways in which the intentions of the program play a role in shaping the kind of engagement that will take place. Considering how sites are set-up is key to the ways that identities of particular people and places are constructed, as my analysis demonstrates. Also, the ways that school sites — as well as the partnerships themselves — are framed speaks to the ways that university-community programs are imagined, possibly beyond the realm of what an initiative might accomplish realistically. The following selection demonstrates how central actors involved in the CRP150 course circulated hopeful ideas about the kind of impact a university-community initiative might have on local high school students.

Field note, EG February 9, 2009

Subject: On Gus' words to CRP150 college class, the future mentors at Washington High.

Gus re-iterated the importance of the mentor's role in the lives of youth. He stated emphatically, "This might be **their one chance to rub elbows with college students**. We want them to think that that the possibility might be there for them too."

What are the assumptions that underlie this statement? Is it better to encourage college aspirations and the myth of meritocracy or to be frank about social positioning, structural realities, and the racial order? **We want students to think the possibility might be there for them too**. This seems benign enough, but is it unfair for educators to blindly encourage college as a route without also addressing the institutional racism, structural poverty, and other social variables

that unfairly impact low-income youth of color and their chances at higher education? How should educators address barriers that low-income urban youth must face, and is it unfair to help students think that possibilities are endless for them? How might educators strike a balance between nurturing ambition, aspiration, and promoting high expectations while also being real about social and structural barriers to success for many low-income youth of color who are under-represented in the college track?

I was surprised to hear Gus so candidly implying that the chance for the high school kids to even be among college-going students could be profound for them. He made it seem that the Kirkland University students were another breed …. "This is their (Washington high students') **one chance to rub elbows with college students**", he repeated several times. This seems to support the discourse that surrounds education programs like these, namely, that these programs can be potentially transformative or life-altering. His comments highlight to me the discourse of opportunity that opens up when the Kirkland students are part of the picture. How are others in the community thinking about these programs? Projected on to the partnerships is the idea that a program such as CRP150 could make significant change, or lift kids out of lives of poverty, violence, or other social constraints, etc. (EG, February, 2009).

This raw field note begins to peel away the layers related to how university-community partnerships are framed and how they reflect the politics of our current historical moment, seeped in a meritocratic ethos that espouses, "Work hard and you will succeed." This study will further analyze issues entangled in university-community partnerships related to identity-construction in a variety of arenas, and therefore, it is important to consider how the programs were framed before delving deep into analysis. Both programs were, in both overt and covert ways, framed as useful interventions in a landscape of socio-historical inequality. Nonetheless, this study does not aim to evaluate the programs. Rather, this research shines a light on the larger phenomena that such partnerships illuminate; namely educational inequality, colorblind ideology, geographies of opportunity, and meaning-making across "difference."

A Final Note

As ED180 provides the bulk of the data for this study, CRP150 as a case serves to supplement the stories that unfold. The issues that surfaced through CRP150 intersected and conversed with the kind of issues that ED180 generated, and therefore, the use of the secondary case strengthens the arguments, discussions, and analysis. Almost all of the focal students whose narratives we learn along the way are from the Education collaborative, and accordingly, examples from CRP150 bolster the central narrative that the ED180 partnership brings to the forefront.

Chapter Three: The Places People Become: The Role of Imagination, Language, and Bodies in Constructing Difference

Caroline, a middle class, white, first year undergraduate from southern California, explained that she always felt that she "stuck out like a sore thumb" while walking from the public transit stop in downtown Ashland to her Education class' fieldwork site, Haven High School, located in the downtown region of Ashland, California. She confessed that she felt worried as she walked in broad daylight through the Ashland city streets. She continued, "There are instances where guys would shout things out of their car window as I'm walking three blocks to Haven and that would make me power-walk a little bit faster. And I was always looking around, you know, trying to look alert …". Caroline admitted that her visceral uneasiness did not abate even as the "urban" surroundings became more familiar to her over the course of the semester. Through the tensing of her muscles and the quickening of her step, Caroline's experienced the distance between the college campus and Haven High in an embodied way. She acknowledged that Kirkland might be considered urban by some definitions, however, as she understood it, "it's not *really* (urban)… You just have to be careful here (around Kirkland's campus and town), whereas *there* (in Ashland) you had to be all the time on high alert." She explained that being white and female made her feel on edge in Ashland and at Haven[27]. Caroline's discomfort directly relates to her associations with the city streets as a male space, and specifically, a black/brown male space.

Caroline's assessment reflects a racialized construction of urbanity. On the Kirkland University campus, where Asian American and white populations predominate, she feels physically more relaxed as if she is in a protected enclave. She equates the city of Kirkland with the campus of the university, deeming it safe and, therefore, not urban. In Ashland, however, Caroline's physical and emotional anxiety stems from her imaginings of what Ashland represents as an authentically urban place where she *feels* her role as a racial minority and as a woman with heightened vulnerability. Urbanity is, therefore, a relational category in this context; a set of spaces experienced viscerally, not to mention racially, ethnically, culturally, and emotionally, which differs according to one's background and comfort zone. We can see how bodily experiences relate to language of difference as Caroline repeatedly imagines considerable distance between her own background and that of the high school students. Caroline's presumed sense of difference and distance came to life through her linguistic and bodily expressions, both of which were informed by *imaginings* of the *urban.*

Other undergraduate students experienced city contexts in different ways. Some students expressed feeling equally as comfortable — or perhaps more comfortable — in local urban school sites as on the manicured urban college campus. Specifically, for undergraduate students who grew up in racially diverse and/or in city environments, heading to Haven was often a relief in some ways. One student named Tess mocked the ways in which some undergraduates felt

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[27] As Doreen Massey (1994) illustrated, one's gendered subjectivity shapes the ways one experiences spaces and places, just as spaces and places shape the construction of gendered subjects. Massey's seminal text *Space, Place, and Gender* contributes key advances to the corpus of literature on space and place, as Massey shows how space and place are imbued with power related to ever-changing social dynamics. Her work challenges ground-breaking theories of space and place forwarded by the fathers of the "spatial turn" by adding a critical gendered analysis which had been previously overlooked. She discusses how spaces and places are highly gendered, in addition to raced and classed.

afraid venturing to Haven High. Tess, also white like Caroline, was at home at Haven, despite having grown up in "suburban" locales. As she explained, she was raised by a single mom in a squarely middle class environment in the suburbs of D.C. until the age of ten. At the age of ten she was taken out of her home and placed in group homes where she was a racial minority. She moved around the country thereafter, bouncing in and out foster care, and in and out of the juvenile justice system, until she ran away at age 16 and lived on the streets. Her classmates' fear of the urban context seemed outrageous to her. She explained:

> Yeah…. I mean, I was reading some of the field notes[28] (from students in the Education class), talking about "passing this dangerous part of town" and I'm like, "This is *downtown* Ashland! This is the business district!" I mean, "Grow up!" And most of the students I talked to (in the Education class) were always like, "It's in this *bad* neighborhood" — lots of emphasis on Ashland, the 'hood, the chaos of the 'hood. This is a part of my social world though… like, I live in Ashland, I have a lot of friends who come from high schools like that… But I also have friends now who don't leave Kirkland who won't even *come* to my house. I mean, "It's Ashand — it's beautiful! And I pay half what you do. Come on!".... I have learned to shut up about it though, because I have a lot of friends who are like that. It annoys me, but at the same time, I feel bad for people whose perspectives are clouded in that way 'cause I don't think they got what they could have from the experience (at Haven). And I don't think the kids (Haven High students) did either. Having already had that illusion stripped away from me, I feel I had an advantage 'cause I was able to stop looking at the "'hood" and the "ghetto" and trash, and actually look at what the fuck was going on (Interview, July 15, 2009).

In this quote, Tess explains how comfortable she feels inhabiting Ashland and how this is a deliberate (and joyful) choice she has made. Her ease in Ashland produces a critical stance towards some of her peers' visceral fear and uncertainty of the area based on their "urban imaginations". She finds their anxiety ridiculous and laughable. Tess explains that her comfort in city contexts and in communities of color enables her to think critically about the structural constraints that shape the physical, socioeconomic, and cultural landscape and to imagine local youth being *like* herself, rather than different. Rather than "imagining" Ashland and Ashland youth from a deficit framework, honing in on real and metaphoric disadvantage and disrepair, she feels she is able to "keep it real," as she explained to me later, to critique institutionalized structures of inequality that shape Kirkland and Ashland into such unequal geographies, to imagine *likeness*, rather than *difference,* and to feel physically and emotionally comfortable at Haven.

In this chapter, I explore how impressions of a particular place shape impressions about the people who live there. I argue that notions of the "urban experience" come alive in the imagination and facilitate assumptions about particular people and possibilities associated with them. These impressions play out through language and through bodily expressions. For many of the undergraduates taking part in university-community programs, urban imaginings were

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[28] In the Education course undergraduates generally did not read each other's field notes. In this quote, Tess was referring to a one-time writing workshop held in discussion section in which students worked in small groups and shared field notes for the purposes of developing final paper topics. In CRP 150, however, college students read each other's field notes each week in an online forum.

predicated on *difference.* Through everyday discursive practices and images, commonplace constructions of the "inner city" as dangerous and chaotic shaped ideas about local regions; these place-impressions then imposed ideas about the people who live there. My data show that a blurring of people and place informed many undergraduates' initial assumptions about local youth as different and, therefore, "other." "Urban," then, becomes a proxy for race, levels of privilege, and academic difference. More insidious than this reductive framing, however, are the ways that fear about people and places get produced and then reproduced. In this chapter, I offer ways that we can see the conflation of people and place: through language and through the body. Both linguistic and embodied expressions reflect through a racial logic about people and places, activated by the imagination.

Chapter Map: Understanding Differences, Real and Imagined

> *It is easier to retreat to the safety of difference behind racial, cultural, and class borders. Because our awareness of the Other as object often swamps our awareness of ourselves as subjects.*

> *-- Gloria Anzaldua, 1990*

At the root of inquiry into constructions of difference is a discussion about commonplace assumptions regarding what it means to talk about the "urban experience". To answer questions related to how impressions of urban contexts develop, this chapter first reviews the literature on the role of emotions in relation to meaning-making about people and places. Next, I discuss constructions of urbanity that have lodged themselves in the social imagination. This brief literature review explores urban landscapes vis à vis theories of *space* and *place* in scholarship and, more generally, in the American imagination over time. Following a theoretical conversation, I shift focus to examine a cross-section of undergraduates' initial experiences in the field at urban high school sites, as well as their preconceived assumptions of "otherness." Their assumptions played out through language and literacy practices as well as through the body. Looking to language usage, specifically the mediums of speech and then writing, reveals widespread ideological constructions about people and places.

This chapter examines how language practices connect to embodiment, and how language and bodies are mutually engaged in the process of meaning-making about "others." Fear, excitement, heightened awareness of one's positionality, and other affective experiences often accompanied the physical experience of entering a new environment; I call attention to the way certain places are not only racialized, but also how they are laden with particular meanings and feelings. I tease out various dimensions of the physical, as well as sensory and emotional experiences encountered by participants in university-community programs. Complex processes of identification as well as distancing characterized the engagement between young people on each side of the university-community partnership, as participants encountered new people and places — and as they *imagined* each other's worlds.

In this chapter, I share narrative from several students as windows to explore a range of characterizations of urban youth, schools, and neighborhoods at the onset of the programs. Participants' on both sides of the "university-community" hyphen expressed assumptions about particular geographies and populations, as this chapter demonstrates. These preconceptions were not born of one's *individual* imagination, however; they reflect historically and socio-culturally produced framings. Furthermore, I do not mean to castigate individual university students for the range of deficit-based assumptions about urban youth and schools in circulation; nor do I mean

to hone in on individual urban youth's stereotypes about the racially and socio-economically exclusive nature of the university and the college student body. Rather, I aim to call attention to how these *assumptions of difference* have been produced and perpetuated as commonplace truths, and how language practices and bodies are intimately connected to the co-construction of people/places. Finally, this chapter touches on how youth from the partnered high school sites perceive the university students at the beginning of the semester and how difference is mapped onto the university space through language, feelings, and bodies. Both linguistic and embodied expressions reflect a racial logic about people and places, activated by the imagination.

Structure of feelings: The self and other.

Emotional power wields force in the shaping of notions of the self and the other in the human imaginary. Often such processes take place in separate spaces when engagement between groups is limited. Constructed differences based on racial and geographic positionality often come to life through the realm of emotion, and scholars recently have looked to the import of "technologies of emotion"(Gross, 2006) and how "emotions are central to how we process our political beliefs and formulate rational understandings of our social worlds"(Trainor, 2008). Raymond Williams, a cultural critic who published his generative work *The Long Revolution* in 1961, argued that the "shape and organization of ideas and sentiments" reflect a "structure of feeling" that correlates with a particular moment in time. This concept is particularly apropos for my work, as it asserts that there is a logic to the ways in which an individual develops impressions, responds, and reacts in relation to socio-cultural phenomena. The "structure of feeling" refers to the ways in which cultural frameworks reflect systematic ways of thinking and feeling which, although not universal, do reveal a set of rules. The logics of emotion may be vaguely understood, according to Williams, but they reflect larger structures, discourses, and ideologies. The structure of feeling is "as firm and definite as structure suggests, yet it operates in the most delicate and least tangible parts of our activities" (189). According to Williams, feelings are not universal, but they are historically situated. This chapter builds on the belief that the power of feelings, although elusive, reflects broader socio-cultural ideas, ideals, and institutionalized machinations that can be seen through language practices and embodied experiences. Following Williams' lead, this chapter explores the connection between emotions, lived experiences, and commonplace constructions, pertaining to how places and people are imagined. Seeing emotion as the "tight braid of affect and judgment, socially and historically constructed and bodily lived, through which the symbolic takes hold of and binds the individual to the social order" (Worsham, 1998, p. 216), this chapter explores how emotions shape experiences, and how they play out in the body and in language.

Framing the urban site.

While theories of both space and place are useful in thinking about the construction of urban contexts and identities, in this chapter I will be referring to *place*, rather than space. I take up Doreen Massey's conception of place (1994) in my work, seeing places as dynamic geographies, while acknowledging the ways in which imaginations and commonplace assumptions about places impose static and bounded identities *on* those places and the people who live there. The ways in which the inner city is imagined as "authentically" urban, as a site of fear, danger, and chaos reflects understandings of place as a timeless location. Like Massey, I conceive of place as an unbounded, dynamic site, a lived location, constantly shifting due to ever-changing experiences and re-imaginations.

In cities across the U.S., not far away from so-called "rough" parts of town, nouveau wine bars, gourmet grocers, high-end salons and boutiques flourish in gentrified pockets of the city. "Upscale urban" meets "inner city" head-on in many metropolitan centers, with the changeable nature of cities reflected in block-by-block composition as in the Kirkland/Ashland context. Even though borders between neighborhoods are frequently in flux, maps rarely capture the ever-shifting nature of urban places. Symbolic borders between city neighborhoods are often stringently maintained reflecting veritable "contact zones" in close quarters. My data show this border maintenance as participants from both the college and the high schools experience feeling "out of place" in either the university or community context.

Moreover, as we know, the contours of cities are dynamic, mapped by historical racial formations and changing demographics due to globalization, patterns of gentrification, and displacement, migration and flight, and other localized political and cultural tides (Roy, 2003; Wilson, 1987). But, as scholars have noted, American "inner cities" have been widely perpetually pathologized, projected as landscapes of decadence and decay, demarcated by race (i.e., metaphoric blackness), residential segregation (Massey & Denton, 1993), and a "culture of poverty" (Anderson, 1999; Moynihan, 1965; Paperson, 2010; Wilson, 1987). Stereotypes about inner cities paint pictures of crumbling infrastructure and "blight," metal detectors in schools (Anyon, 1997; Kozol, 1991), gangs on every corner, and rampant drive-by shootings. According to Leonardo and Hunter, "the urban" then represents both a material and a metaphoric place. That is, the urban is "socially and discursively constructed as a place, which is part of the dialectical creation of the urban as both a real and imagined space" (p. 769). Urbanity comes alive as an image and in discourse, morphing into a "ghetto" in certain zones, while just mere miles (or blocks) away the city sparkles in the *urbane* milieu of the sophisticate (à la Sex in the City) and haute cuisine. Thus, cities have been simultaneously cast in polarized frames, at one moment (and time and place) hailed as "urban chic," "bougie,"[29] or "cosmopolitan"; at another moment (and time and place) seen as "out of pocket" or "ghetto poor."

As Leonardo and Hunter (2007) point out, the word "urban" connotes double-edged meanings. As such, "in light of power relations, urban may signify the hallmark of civilization and the advances it offers, or a burden and problem of progress" (p. 769). Urbanity then is alive and reproduced daily through what they call the "urban imagination." It is not a given, but a material and *imagined* site, mediated through language and discourse, imagery, and ideology (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007). Thus, "inner city" and the "ghetto" are socially constructed, historically produced, and collectively imagined. Imaginations of the urban become entangled with expectations, impressions, and assumptions about the kinds of public school students and the city places they inhabit. I take up the idea of the *urban imagination* in this chapter, arguing that many undergraduates' imaginings about places served to inform their impressions of the people who live there.

This next section focuses on language usage by looking at a sampling of undergraduates' first impressions of the local program site, as they talked about the experiences in class and in interviews, and wrote weekly ethnographic field notes. These literacy practices, seen through both spoken and written communication, expose assumptions about the youth at Haven High and the nature of low-income, inner city schools and neighborhoods as well as how perceptions of

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[29] "Bougie" is a slang term referring to upscale. This term is short for "bourgeois" which relates to old European classifications for middle or upper class goods and/or values. See the Urban Dictionary for more extensive definition and examples. http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=bougie

people and *places* are co-constructed. This sampling reflects some extreme positions, such as Caroline's, as well as more typical undergraduate responses.

Animating "Difference" through Spoken Words

> *A story is always situated; it has both a teller and an audience. Its perspective is partial (in both senses of the word), and its telling motivated.*

> *--Lila Abu-Lughod, 1993*

In the current socio-political moment, vocalizing about particular people and places invites deployment of careful wording and colorblind language — a discourse of difference that most undergraduates were well versed in as members of the academic elite. Having grown up in an era defined by hyper-vigilance about "others," in a nation tense with the never-ending "war on terror," immigration debates, and sharpening educational inequality (Noguera & Wing, 2006; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Rothstein, 2004) many undergraduates may have learned the language of othering from public discourse. A culture of fear related to race, class, ethnicity, nationhood, and belonging has seeped into the bloodstream of the American imagination, as the voices of conservative commentators have become more audible and threatening, warning about dangerous others. Against this noisy backdrop, most of the university students grew up amidst a multicultural moment in American schooling (Banks, 1993). The majority of upwardly mobile young people have been introduced to the grammar of diversity via curricula that not only teaches to the test, but also educates about pluralism. Many American students have therefore learned the lexicon, having internalized colorblind "politically correct" language practices as part of their modus operandi (Pollock, 2004a; Rubin & Veheul, 2009; Trainor, 2008). As a result, careful, coded language practices with regard to race, class, ethnicity, geography, and difference have become normalized (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Pollock, 2004a).

In this section, we can see the ways in which the spoken word performs a distinct function in the conflation of places/people, showing how constructs of difference are deployed linguistically through the spoken word to explain and make sense of inequality. Caroline, the white, first-year, political science major from southern California who we met at the beginning of the chapter verbally admitted many preconceptions about the place of the urban school site, and how those ideas mapped onto imaginings about the people who lived there. She confessed in an interview:

> Caroline: I was kind-of scared to go there ... Every time I went, it kind of scared me. I mean, my mom raised me to be really paranoid of low-income areas because of guns and violence and stuff. That was a really big part of my upbringing…. And Haven wasn't a …I don't want to say… a "real" school, but … it wasn't the "best" school ….. It's hard 'cause I know that these kids don't have the resources, and the schools don't have the resources either to help them … But, what was great for me to find was that they (students) *did* have all these ambitions. Like on the first day, I met this kid Isaac. We talked with him about maybe going to Kirkland and there was this girl who wanted to open up her own business. Stuff like that was so impressive, and it really excited me cause I didn't think that these people would ….I thought that they would be throwing themselves a pity party, like, "Oh man, I'm at a continuation high school in Ashland…."

> EG: You didn't think that they would have as many ambitions?

Caroline: Yeah! Exactly! Which probably sounds bad, but it's what I felt. But then it worried me at the same time, because the reality of them achieving those ambitions at their current — like you know, they need to get out of Haven and do something and get the higher grade (Interview, September 4, 2009).

In this interview excerpt, Caroline's commentary sheds light on preconceptions about the kind of academics and the kinds of possibilities associated with inner city, and in this case, continuation schools. Her candid confessions reveal assumptions that youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods and schools would be devoid of motivation and disconnected from academic and career pursuits. Her statements speak to a kind of paternalism associated with the way urban education is framed in society at large. While Caroline's confessions may seem disquieting and blatantly biased, in fact, these perceptions reflect a common place idea about urban youth, schools, and places. More than half of the United States' fifty million public school students attend urban schools, however, these schools have come to represent an intersection of stereotypes.

"Urban" schools have become a euphemism for schools with exclusively or predominantly poor student of color populations (especially Black and Latino) and connote schools that are characterized by under-funding, racial and economic segregation, inefficient administration, poor infrastructure, demoralized teaching faculty, poor equipment, resources, and facilities, overcrowded classes, outmoded and largely ineffective pedagogical approaches, student on student on teacher violence, chronic classroom management problems, dilapidated and/or dangerous neighborhoods, uninvolved and uncaring parents….(Wright & Alenuma, 2007, p. 212).

Such deficit framings about urban education circulate in academic circles (Anyon, 1997; Ferguson, 2001; Kozol, 1991; MacLeod, 1995; Noguera, 1999, 2003; Noguera & Wing, 2006; Oakes, 1985) and in the mainstream media as well. Caroline attributes her assumptions about urban youth and urban schools to what she "hears" on the news, as well as how "people" talk about the inner city and urban schools. She admits, "I see how different it is and that what people say on the news is true, whereas before I was kind of skeptical. Like before I was like, it can't be that bad, but I feel like it really is!" It is unclear what "it" is in Caroline's assessment of what exactly is "*that* bad", and it's also unclear about who "the people" are who are talking about urban youth in the public forum. However, it is quite clear that through a complex process of theory construction, Caroline has distinct ideas about the urban context and what it signifies for the people who inhabit it as well. As referenced earlier, she conflates "low-income areas" with "guns and violence and stuff," associating urban poverty with violence. She blurs associations with the city with suppositions about urban schools, and then maps those conflations onto the students who attend. As opposed to other students who may not admit fear or preconceptions so openly, Caroline freely confesses that a "big part of her upbringing" revolved around developing a healthy "paranoia" around even setting foot in urban areas[30]. In sync with a set of stereotypes

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[30] Caroline acknowledged that although she grew up quite close to Los Angeles, she and her family never really visited. She explained that her mom reinforced beliefs that crime, violence, and danger characterized the urban context. Delving into her experience in urban contexts in an interview, Caroline remembered that she had, for a brief moment, considered applying to USC in Los Angeles. But, she admitted that after they visited the campus, both she

about urban schools, in Caroline's assessment, the only hopeful possibility that she can imagine for Haven High students is to "get out of Haven and do something…". The underlying assumption here is that the urban school represents a no-man's land, a non-destination, a departure from the route to progress.

Most of the university students talked about the high school students in cautious terms, using language of difference and noting what felt unfamiliar or out of the ordinary from their everyday realities. Generally, students did not speak as frankly as Caroline did. Caroline's language reveals, on the one hand, sincere honesty about her own assumptions, but also cautious, colorblind language choices which reveal an evasion of more explicit race and class-based linguistic distinctions which might be taken as racism. She was careful to avoid naming students as other, but a racial logic marked by language of difference threaded through her discourse. Throughout my interview with Caroline, she consistently leaned in closer to me and whispered the words "African American" every time she spoke about her engagement with many of the local youth, as if even naming race might somehow implicate her. Her vigilant attention to the language of difference revealed an anxiety about place, race, and language choices as she sought to avoid openly calling attention to specifics, although she was clearly uneasy about racism, privilege, and the inequality she witnessed.

In hushed tones throughout the interview, Caroline scooted closer to me and clarified which of the students were of "the black race," and which were of another race. She shared her discomfort with being from such a "different" social world. She explained, "Everyone I know (at Kirkland) is white. My niche is in the Greek community". She felt that the Haven students just did not understand her as she admitted being "really fortunate." She summed it up as such: "We are *too* different. We have NO common ground. We're different races; we're different classes; we're different in terms of education…". Although Caroline worried that the students could not understand where she was coming from, by contrast, she felt she was quite able to imagine their life circumstances. For example, Caroline explained that there was one young woman at Haven that she really admired because she showed a lot of motivation, which she, admittedly, did not associate with the urban school, or with Ashland. Caroline explained:

> She (the student) was inspiring… she wanted to get out of there. She knew that
> there was more out there. In that case, I really respected her…but she had kind of
> a skewed perception of the world — or of my world, at least. That's the
> difference. My world is just so different from her world (Interview, September 4,
> 2009).

In this selection, it is unclear what Caroline means by "there" when she stipulates that the young woman wanted to "get out of *there,*" however, she did find the desire admirable. Possibly, the student wanted to get out of Haven, or Ashland, but again, using carefully-selected, ambiguous language, Caroline's understanding of the urban context as a dead-end reverberates through her speech. Also, in this example, we see how Caroline wedges a sense of distance between herself and the young people at Haven, as seen through the language of difference that she relies on to characterize the gulf between their worlds.

Similarly, using his own reality as a barometer, another Education student named Curtis summed up the chasm between his world and that of the youth at Haven High as he saw it. He

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and her mom were very "wary" of going there again as it was in such a "crime-ridden" area. While she recognizes that the city that Kirkland is in can be considered urban too she felt relieved that it's not "*really* urban."

explained to me: "My normal group and my normal neighborhood aren't anything like them (the high school students)…These kids have lived more difficult lives…They have lived through a lot" (Interview, July 8, 2009). In this quote, Curtis verbally articulates the considerable difference that he observes between his social milieu and the high school students'. He sees his group and world as "normal" and the local youth as dramatically different due to the level of hardness of their lives, and the *place* they come from (their "neighborhood"). In this example, we can see how a blurring between people and place takes shape through the lens of difference and how these conflations become deployed through spoken language. Likewise, the next selection is a dialogue that occurred in the CRP150 course seminar at Kirkland. This reflects a verbatim exchange between one City and Regional Planning student and the course instructor before the whole class, as the student attempted to put into words the kind of discrepancy that she identified between urban youth and herself.

Speaking in code: Language of difference.

I'm not used to dealing with…. those kinds of students. I'm not used to dealing with that— I've never had to deal with that.

Professor X: Adrienne, what's "that"?

Adrienne: Their behaviors — I'm not used to dealing with their backgrounds, experiences, etc. Like my kind of a bad day might be I get stuck in traffic and theirs …..is…totally different.

-- EG, FN_CRP 150, May 19, 2009

In this interchange, we can see how this young woman, Adrienne, grasped for an appropriate lexicon to lean on to characterize the youth with whom she was engaging at a high school nearby. Her statements are awash with colorblind language as she relies on empty descriptors that evade specificity, but serve to categorize the youth as holistically "different." Employing terms like "this" and "that," her description cloaks unspoken layers of meaning, as she alludes to the disarray their "behaviors" and "backgrounds" represent in her mind. Wading through her ambiguity, we are left to our imaginations to make sense of her coded meanings. When the instructor interrogates Adrienne's slippery language, encouraging her to ground her statements in specificity rather than vague phrasing, she then relies on a description of individual behaviors, distinguishing between her own frame of reference — in which a bad day equals getting stuck in traffic — and the kind of turmoil she imagines the youth encounter. In these examples, we can see how, through the medium of orality, university students engaged in the process of sense-making about their experiences, but through somewhat coded, careful speech. The act of voicing things *out loud* revealed students' reliance on elusive language of difference. University students tried to avoid sounding discriminatory by eschewing precise characterizations about the nature of urban schools or urban youth. Couched in vague language, speaking about others led to sweeping statements and characterizations with a focus on individual behaviors rather than complex structural intersections and socio-cultural contexts. Ambiguous descriptors such as "this" and "that" or "normal" and "different" were employed to verbally categorize people and places. These coded terms uttered aloud cloaked a deeper and more insidious racial logic.

Field Notes: Imagining and Writing about Others in the Urban Landscape

> *They may not have the vocabulary of high school kids in higher economic strata, but their life skills seemed through the roof. They had a wildness to them, a refusal to submit to any sort of institution, and their actions, even the rebellious ones, emanated a confidence that is rarely seen in students of any school.*

> *-- Leslie, FN 1, March 5, 2009*

At the beginning of the semester, field notes are frequently steeped with sensationalized written descriptions of the high school students, such as this one. In this example Leslie frames the youth en masse as a rowdy crew, whose abundance of life literacy makes up for academic inadequacy. Although Leslie may be identifying realistic attributes of some, or a few, of the high school students, her polarized, black-and-white framing of Haven students as holistically rebellious and anti-establishment with limited verbal aptitude perpetuates deeply ingrained imagery of the hardened, "ghettoized" youth from the inner city. Through the medium of ethnographic writing, as per course instruction, university students sought to construct ideas about what they were seeing, experiencing, and observing related to fieldwork with local youth[31]. In this field note, Leslie seems to get carried away with the process of writing, crafting each sentence eloquently. Although Leslie may have been trying to highlight the youth's funds of knowledge and "life skills," and to generously portray the young people, her words almost hearken the voice of colonial writers documenting the "savage other" as she describes a "wildness" that she contends was "rarely seen in students of any school." Here, we can see how the process of writing about fieldwork may have invigorated an imaginative process of ethnographic reflection. Leslie's observations blurred with fantasy through the act of writing, resulting in exoticizing, albeit beautifully crafted, prose. This student self-identified as a creative writer and it is possible that her written narratives revealed more of an embellished portrayal of the youth than she might have spoken out loud.

Beyond Leslie the writer, however, language of difference threaded through many of the field notes and reflections composed by the undergraduates in both of the university-community partnerships that I studied, especially at the onset of fieldwork. While undergraduates were generally well-intentioned as they tried to generously characterize the youth and schools, the genre of ethnographic field notes can teeter towards objectification, as noted by many feminist scholars in particular who have interrogated the ethics of research methodology (Fine, 1994; Hill Collins, 1990; Stacey, 1998). Accordingly, through processes of recording their experiences on site and describing the days' activities and dialogues, many of the undergraduates revealed deep-seeded assumptions about the places they were visiting, about the young people with whom they were interacting, and about themselves based on notions of difference. This next section hones in

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[31] In general, writing ethnographically runs the risk of objectification of subjects; such is the nature of the genre, as people and places are written *about*, in response to close observation. Furthermore, *all* ethnographic writing can potentially lean toward sensationalism as subjects are called up in the mind's eye, prose is constructed from memory, and people and places are finessed into being through written language. In both the university-community programs, at the beginning of the semester, ethnographic methods were introduced briefly. As the semester progressed, the genre of ethnographic writing was honed further leading to the development of a case study in the case of the Education course, and a final paper in CRP150. In the education course, each week, instructors gave feedback on field notes, replete with advice on how to avoid sensationalism, interrogate assumptions, connect to theory, etc. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the semester, many college students from both programs relied on inflated language, highlighting multiple axes of difference.

on field notes as an analytic tool that illustrate how undergraduates came to make sense of fieldwork experiences through the written word. First I introduce a young woman named Sue, a student in the Education class. Sue's field notes, are representative of many undergraduate field notes at the beginning of the semester; they are written in clear, albeit somewhat coded language, revealing a particular lexicon and set of linguistic tools employed to characterize and make sense of experiences on site.

Sue is a Chinese American, pre-Business graduating senior. In Sue's course assignments, she shared personal reflections on her identity, which were shaped by her educational experience as an ethnic minority in a primarily white suburb of a nearby California city. She explained how she went through middle and high school ostracized for being so smart. Also, speaking Chinese made her seem particularly "uncool" in a mainly white school. She explained:

> In my academic career I watched the SoYoungs, MinYoos, and LiHuas either being tortured by others, or looked down upon by the teacher as inadequate. My name, Sue, represented that I was more "American" than the other Chinese kids, and that I would be able to adapt and retain more that was taught in the classroom. Having a familiar name meant that it would be easier for the teacher to relate to, rather than a complicated name that the teacher would immediately assume was given to someone in their native country (Sue, Literacy Autobiography, March, 13, 2009).

In attempts to fit in, Sue rejected her ethnicity and family's culture, lost motivation for school, and ultimately battled severe depression. She admitted that she lost her way, trying so hard to be "cool." "But even with my efforts, I never fit in with the Caucasian students at school. I was still the 'Asian' friend." This painful peek into Sue's past sheds light on her perspective on social and cultural pressures of schooling in white America.

Fortunately, Sue shared that she re-gained her "self" by locking into academics and fitting in as best she could. Essentially, however, she learned to assimilate to whiteness, to play the game, to look and sound as white as possible throughout her high school years. By college, Sue acknowledged that she had "mastered the 'codes of power'" (Delpit, 1995, p. 25). "I knew which way to spin things to get my way in the classroom" (Sue, Literacy Autobiography, March 13, 2009). Sue disclosed that she only took the Education class to satisfy a requirement in her last year on campus; however, in the end she felt very "inspired" by the students and the teachers at Haven High.

In Sue's first field note, she expounded quite candidly about her assumptions of the youth with whom she would be working at the urban alternative high school. Sue admitted, "When I first chose my site, I was under the impression that the students I would be tutoring would be very different from when I was in high school. My first thoughts were that these kids were underprivileged and their goals would be very different from those of my own" (Sue, FN 1, February 7, 2009). In this confessional introduction to her first reflective field note on her fieldwork, Sue acknowledges her own assumptions about the differences that she presumed she would note between the Haven High students and students from her former high school. This statement is rife with meaning about commonplace beliefs about inner city schools, alternative education, and urban youth. She admits that she assumed that the youth were "underprivileged" and therefore that they were fundamentally "different" from young people of her own ilk and era. Interestingly, however, she points to the age/time difference as related to constructs of difference. Sue implies that their experiences may be differentially marked by the lapsing of

time, as she was in high school at least four years ago. However, the subtext to her statement is that she also presumed that students would be very different because of *where* they were in high school and due to their level of privilege. Her assumptions are rooted in notions of place and space. The site of an inner city alternative high school clearly conjured up imagery and ideas for Sue about the nature of the educational environment and the kind of students who would attend such a school. She associates low-income and poverty with particular value systems and beliefs about schooling, which she compares unfavorably with her own normative standard of an academically rigorous middle class high school experience in a primarily white community. As we can see, before Sue even set foot at Haven, she was saddled with notions of otherness that separated her from the youth with whom she would be engaging. Based on her experiences, Sue developed theories about the marked difference in academic goals and academic achievement that she would certainly witness at Haven.

As readers, we are led to think that Sue mentioned her introductory assumptions of the youth as a way to potentially highlight how she later realized how unfounded those first impressions were. However, in this first field note, Sue continues by writing:

> As I stepped into the site, I quickly realized that my first few conceptions were true. The kids there were rowdy, misbehaving, and did not seem to care about school very much. To me it felt like they wanted to get the day over with as quickly as possible, without taking in any of the information taught to them (Sue, FN 1, February 7, 2009).

Interestingly, Sue believes that her assumptions were somehow "true" based on her first few moments walking around Haven. It is notable that she sought to conclude the "truth" about the students and school within mere moments of arrival. This black and white framing correlates with her developing theories about who is like her and who is different. Talking about ideas that are true implies that there is one basic framework that organizes and structures behavior and achievement—one way for thinking about the way things are. Sue's belief that the youth are "rowdy" and "misbehaving" most likely reflects her familiarity with her own high school background, where students may have internalized the bureaucratic culture of school that privileges rules, order, bell schedules, and teachers as authorities, students as receptacles. Her description of students' apathy toward academics is clearly connected to their mobility around the school. Sue explains that she had a significant amount of time to observe and therefore she feels she was able to draw conclusions about students' academic rigor.

> I arrived to Haven with two other students from the Education class. Our fieldwork was not going to start until 30 minutes later, so we got the chance to really observe our surroundings before starting our shifts. Students were everywhere, even during class time they were out and about wandering around by not being in their assigned classrooms (Sue, FN 1, February 7, 2009).

According to Sue, the way students milled around conveyed a sense of looseness and structure-less-ness which correlated with academic indifference. Their activity and movement demonstrated to Sue that Haven students "did not care about school very much" (Sue, FN 1, February 7, 2009).

However, Sue was pleasantly surprised to learn that when she offered up academic assistance and attention to schoolwork, students were eager to use her help. She admits, "They were excited that I was there for them." Toward the end of her first field note, Sue theorizes that

because the students were eager to work with her rather than with their teacher, and because they spoke to their teacher in an animated, conversational tone, they must have little respect for their own teacher. She notes, "I got the impression that the students had very little respect for the teacher by either talking back or interrupting the teacher on various occasions." While it is clearly impossible to ascertain the level of respect the students felt individually and collectively for this particular teacher, it is interesting to note that it is the way the students spoke in an interactive way that seemed to convey disrespect to Sue. It is possible that Sue was not accustomed to seeing students engage fluidly in a back-and-forth and informal manner with their teacher. Such fast, flowing and emotional discourse with the teacher and with each other may reflect cultural practices that were unfamiliar to Sue. Clearly, determining the origin of Sue's assumption that the students disrespected the teacher is a futile exercise, but it may be useful to consider how Sue's own expectations of teacher-student engagement informed her developing theories about student and teacher dynamics as well as academic commitment at Haven High School. Variables of noise, conversational patterning, and mobility served to disorient Sue and to shape her assumptions of the students as disrespectful and disengaged. I will further discuss embodied and emotional responses, such as Sue's, later in the chapter.

In another scenario, a high school student dismissed a tutor's casual offer to help in a knee-jerk manner. The following is an account of the conversation that took place between Vijay, a South Asian graduating senior from Kirkland University whom we will get to know more intimately in the next chapter, and Liliana, a young woman from Haven High, a senior in high school. This brief conversation was included in Vijay's field note; therefore the following reflects his written account of how the interchange unfolded.

"Do you need any help with anything?" I asked.

"Do I need any help? Do *you* need any help?" She (Liliana) said sarcastically with a little attitude.

"I have a 4.0" She continued (Vijay, FN 9, April 14, 2009).

After this quick brush-off, however, the young woman paused and her curiosity about college got the better of her. Once a conversation took place between Vijay and Liliana, the two forged a connection. The following transcript of the conversation represents what Vijay recorded in his note, including his "Reflection" of the experience. Apparently, after rejecting Vijay's offer to provide academic assistance, Liliana looked at Vijay and decided to pursue conversation. He recorded the subsequent dialogue as such:

"So you go to Kirkland?" She asked.

"What are you studying?" She asked after I had nodded my head.

"Sociology."

"Oh. That's what I want to study." She said enthusiastically. "I got into UCLA!"

"Oh nice. It is really hard to get in. Congratulations." I replied.

"Where else did you get in?" I asked.

"San Francisco State. I didn't get into Douglas or Kirkland though."

"So what do you learn in sociology?" She asked. I replied by saying that it's very broad and you have a wide variety of courses to choose but there is some theory involved.

"Oh I love Marx and Lenin. I am reading Marx right now." Liliana said.

"Oh wow. You guys read that here?" I asked because it is complicated readings.

"Yea. One of my teachers has it and I do the readings on my own. I also teach a class here." She said proudly.

"What high school did you go to before?" I asked.

"I been to SEVEN different high schools. I even dropped out for 2 years. I'm back on track now though" (Vijay, FN 9, April 14, 2009).

Vijay admitted in his written reflection portion of his field notes that he was "surprised and impressed" by Liliana getting into UCLA and San Francisco State. He wrote:

I wasn't sure if she was joking at first (about getting into those schools), but when she mentioned Marx and Lenin, I realized that this girl was very smart because those theorists are very difficult to comprehend and most people aren't familiar with them until college. Not only that, she was really into that material and was surprised I wasn't — which also amazed me mainly because she is at a school where I didn't think I would meet a student like this (Vijay, FN 9, April 14, 2009).

Vijay's confession that he did not expect to meet a student "like this" calls into question what he means by "this" and what, in fact, he did expect to encounter at Haven. This statement opens a space for further analysis of what conceptual frameworks and assumptions he brought to the table about what he expected to witness at the school and what he expected regarding the caliber of curriculum, material, and "kind" of student. His quick confession highlights how he anticipated being able to categorize the youth as of a certain ilk, as if they might be summarily classified into typologies and academic levels. The process of collecting "data" and putting observations into writing through reflective ethnographic field notes may have, to some extent, reinforced reductive ideas about complex phenomenon, especially at the beginning of the semester before substantial feedback on field notes from instructors could be internalized and on-site experiences could be digested alongside curricular support. As mentioned, the genre of ethnography and the craft of constructing ethnographic field notes sets the author up, to some extent, to write about subjects in a highly subjective, potentially exploitative way, despite one's best intentions. Students' written characterizations, however, are not born of their *individual* imagination; rather, they are historically and socio-culturally produced framings. The act of writing, in particular, the act of *ethnographic* writing, may serve to advance theories about people and places. Fortunately, written composition may also serve to disrupt taken-for-granted assumptions and help university students ground their understandings of inequalities in theory and curricular support, as I will address in Chapter Five.

Moreover, the series of data thus far in this chapter tell a story not only about the ways undergraduates wrote and spoke about their fieldwork, but also about the ways in which the imagination activated anticipations about the *kind* of student and the caliber of academics within the inner city locale. Through language, both written and verbal accounts served to concretize

constructions of people and places, and the specific conflation of place and people therefore happened discursively through both the spoken and written word. Many of the university students admitted that they had ideas about what the school and academic environment would be like before they began their fieldwork experiences and even after their first few visits. Stereotypes ranged from imagining the high school students as uninterested in academic pursuits, undisciplined, and "rowdy"; likewise, preconceptions of the city matched commonplace ideas about the "ghetto" as rife with danger, violence, and severe economic trouble, and of course, communities of color. The spoken and written word activated different logics as seen through undergraduates' divergent ways of depicting people and places through orality and prose[32]. *Speaking* about inner city youth and schools lent itself to ambiguity and carefully guarded language of difference, whereas *writing* invited the craft of shape-shifting and theory-construction. Therefore, as seen through the spoken and written word, students came in equipped with a common language; a lexicon from which to draw as they described, characterized, and narrated experiences in the field. Their characterizations were not out of the ordinary, for the most part, rather they mirrored the particular tropes and rhetorical tools circulated in American discourse about the urban youth and urban schools.

Assumptions played out not only through language and literacy practices, as we have seen thus far through the written and spoken word, but also experiences of difference were experienced *bodily*. This next quote spotlights the palpable, sensory experience that was experienced through the body as undergraduates attended the city classrooms. One undergraduate wrote after her first day at the school site,

> This visit really brought home what a different atmosphere we will be working in. This was not like the classrooms of my own high school experience — it was much rowdier, less focused, more full of camaraderie and joking, much more informal, and with a whole different rhythm, style, and way of learning/teaching. This was both invigorating, and somewhat intimidating (Allison, FN 1, February 11, 2009).

Sensorial description such as this one, capture the visceral difference from the academic and largely middle class norm that many of the undergraduates represented or aspired to represent. These differences were thus experienced in a sensory-oriented way, through the body.

"Rowdy By Nature"?: Unpacking the Racialization of Noise

Noise level and degree of orderliness reappeared as themes for many students taking part in the university-community programs that I studied for this research. Frequently, students described what the classrooms and school spaces felt like based on the sounds and noises that they heard. Sue described her engagement with the students as part of the "chaos" in the classroom. Sue was not alone in describing Haven using this particular image of melee, noise, and disarray. Many of the undergraduates in both university-community programs depicted scenes of loud voices, cruising bodies moving in and out of classrooms, doors opening and shutting, and a sense of disorder, especially at the beginning of their fieldwork experience. When undergraduates cited the noise level, they often also remarked on their "rowdy" nature. Noise level was frequently associated with a sense of "structure-less-ness" and chaos, although as noted

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[32] While I do not wish to enter the polarized "Great Debate" around orality vs. literacy, per se, I do wish to call attention to the different ways that the written word and oral modes of speech function to inform the constructions of difference about places and people.

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in the above quote, it was experienced as invigorating at times as well. I argue that this gut-level awareness of a classroom and school-based din reflects white, middle class sensibilities and cultural expectations. In many mainstream school environments, and in the middle class world of school bureaucracy, teacher education, and reform, a focus on efficiency, order, and systematic organization of bodies undergirds normative practices promoted for school management (Bowles & Gintes, 1976). When undergraduates reflected on the level of noise and disarray, they were often also speaking volumes about the school environments from which they came. Assumptions that the high school students were rowdy and out of control because of their noise level reflected class-bias and a racializing process that exists beyond the individuals themselves, coming from mainstream society at large. As noted by many scholars, black and brown youth have been frequently labeled "rowdy" or "wild," although constructions of race, gender, and urbanity converge differently for particular youth subjects with regard to noisiness[33]. Disruptiveness and disorder are also mapped onto places occupied by particular bodies.

Despite the loud classroom atmosphere, Sue was able to have a focused one-on-one session. She wrote in her field note, "But through the chaos, there were students who were eager to learn and requested help from me. One student I worked closely with needed help with her Algebra homework. She was in twelfth grade and was excited at the prospect of graduation." In this example, Sue associates silence with order and rigor and noisiness with academic indifference; however she was pleasantly surprised when she found students who can and do focus in a noisier environment than Sue was accustomed to.

By contrast, Tess who grew up in alternative schools like Haven was not bothered by the degree of noise or commotion that she encountered at Haven. She explained,

> I went to alternatives high schools and schools most of my life, so it was *very* familiar — the small setting, the way they regiment things with passes, you know, they have a lot of checks and balances that I am familiar with. But the form of chaos that they also have in alternative schools is also familiar with me…I felt pretty instantly at home there…. (Interview, March 19, 2011).

Additionally, Tess explained that she was accustomed to students' disinterest, but knew that it reflected teen performances of posturing and feigned apathy. Tess related with this immediately and recognized it as a survival technique to counter high changeable and pressured landscapes of home, community, and school that many poor and marginalized youth face. Students acted too cool for school, but were often genuinely curious. She asserted, "I knew that the way they *seemed*, their level of interest was not indicative of their actual level of interest. I saw through that" (Interview, March 19, 2011). Tess recognized that the "trick" was to get the high school students interested in developing curiosity about something — *anything* as a way to inspire imagination, inquiry, and a desire to learn. She probed conversation with students about

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[33] Scholars such as Signithia Fordham, Joy Lei, and Anne Ferguson have addressed how processes of racialization and gender construction blur with stereotypes about noisiness in particular ways for youth of color. Signithia Fordham links the ways in which black young women adopt a "loud" persona as a way to claim space, in response to the systematic and symbolic silencing that Black women have experienced historically. Joy Lei examines how black young women and Asian American young men negotiate racialized and gendered identities constructed "for them and by them" with regard to noise level and audibility in very different ways; Asian boys become quiet, black girls become loud. Anne Ferguson looks at how the making of black masculinities intersects with assumptions of rowdiness, disruptiveness, and violence for this population in her ethnography *Bad Boys*. These scholars and others have noted how constructions of unruly, loud behavior have been projected *onto* particular populations of youth of color, noting the ways in which youth participate and resist those constructions in complex ways.

video games, music, boyfriends, philosophy — whatever it took to find a way into students' worlds[34]. Thus, Tess did not interpret local youth's seemingly apathetic ways as such; rather she believed that their behaviors were symptomatic of a matrix of variables such as low teacher expectations, under-resourced schools, spatial constraints, poverty, racism, and a whole host of other possible socio-cultural and institutional hurdles. However, Tess said that she recognized that many of the university students took the youth's affect and disinterest at face value, hearing their repeated refrains of "No Homework" as laziness and academic failure. She explained that she *"knew"* that high school students' slouching shoulders and averted eyes often reflected a front, an embodied performance of sorts. Also, she asserted that classroom noise and mayhem did not necessarily speak volumes about the students themselves as unruly, but rather it reflected the constrained contexts in place for marginalized youth. Nonetheless, Tess said that she worried that other undergraduates would infer students' resistant behavior and general classroom din as signs of disrespect and disorder, parroting the pathologizing common discourse about urban youth and schools.

Colored by Place, Places of Color

Just as urban schools are stereotyped as disorganized, ineffective "dropout factories"[35] comprised of poor youth of color, the university is also thought to be a particular kind of place, comprised of particular demographics. The classic American university has been framed as a different space from the urban school context, and accordingly a set of expectations about the kind of academic, racial, and cultural milieu of the university prevails. Despite the reality that over 50% of universities in this country are located in urban regions (Elliot, 1994; Rodin, 2007) and universities reflect a broad range of two and four-year educational institutions serving diverse populations[36], historical imagery of the university as a pure intellectual enclave serving primarily the elite still holds sway in popular culture. The roots of "knowledge production" in the institutional space can be traced to European, pre-modern centers of capital and power. This Eurocentric lineage has long-lasting legacy in the social imaginary, as many people still designate colleges and universities as exclusive, especially the most "prestigious" academic institutions, which largely reflect upper echelons of racial and economic privilege. In my study, the historical resonance of universities as an arena of white privilege came to life, becoming *embodied* in a sense, as several local youth of color admitted that they felt out of place at Kirkland, and that they could not imagine Kirkland University as a "home" place. In Chapter

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[34] I will discuss mentoring and the ways that individual relationships evolved over time in Chapter Five.

[35] The term "dropout factory", coined by a John Hopkins University researcher John Balfanz, refers to a high school where no more than 60% of students who started as 9th graders finish as 12th graders. These schools are characterized by low graduation rates and high drop out rates. According to studies, this term applies to 1 out of 10 public high schools in the U.S., with a large proportion of those schools located in cities. There are about 1,700 schools that fit this description in the country; almost all of them are comprised of minority students. While many of these designated schools are in urban areas, just as many are in rural areas; however, I argue urban schools receive disproportional stereotyping related to where they are located. The frequent usage of terms such as "dropout factory" as well as other deficit-oriented descriptors for public schools works to construct a set of images and ideas about public high schools that serve minority students, especially those located in urban areas, as sites of failure.

[36] According to a recent study completed by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, in 2008, 39.6% of 18-24 year old Americans attended a degree-granting program of some kind, either a 2-year, 4-year, or graduate program. Of those nearly forty percent of Americans attending higher education, 63.3% were white, 13.9 % black; 12.9% Hispanic; 6.8% Asian/Pacific Islander; 1.1% American Indian, and 2.2% nonresident alien. See study for further details and explanation. http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010015.pdf

Four I will pursue this theme more explicitly, showing how feelings of belonging and exclusion were experienced bodily as local youth of color walked around the grounds of the university. This next section discusses the import of racial identification with like populations, as well as the ways in which difference is mapped onto the university space and onto university students' bodies for local urban youth. Markers of race, class, and geography were written onto bodies as evidenced by the fact that both college and high school students expressed feeling more or less physically comfortable in certain places and more or less socially comfortable with certain people.

Eye-ing the difference: Racial politics at the onset of program activities.

This section traces participants' emotional and physical experiences, exploring how feelings related to race, class, and ethnic identities, are mapped onto particular places and how they are enacted bodily. The ways that places become racialized and places get imbued with feeling takes place through sensory experiences such at things seen or heard. Once racialized, places are mapped with particular feelings. I employ the term "race feelings" to discuss the heightened awareness of race and ethnicity, as well as emotions associated with particular places. These race feelings, derived in part from sensory experiences, shape the impression of the particular place and of the people who inhabit that place. For youth participants, race feelings were sometimes engendered at the onset of the programs, as high school students observed what might have seemed like a nameless herd of college students roaming their school's hallways and classrooms. Skin color and age were easily visible markers of differences, not to mention the mobility discrepancies related to each group's power differentials. The racial politic became embodied and visible as the high school students (generally brown and black) were required to be seated in their classroom, while the undergraduates (generally white and Asian American) were free to roam, stand, or float around the school space offering assistance, like a teacher might. Such visible racial differences evoked emotional race feelings from the outset. High school students may have felt resentful, curious, excited, jaded, or all of the above. At one of the program sites, upon seeing a pack of nervous university students standing at the edge of the classroom on their first site visit, one high school student burst out loudly, "What are we, a tourist attraction?" (EG, FN_CRP150, February 23, 2009). This emotional response set a tone for some of the university students and high school students as the student highlighted the voyeuristic role of the outsiders at the onset of the program and drew a sharp line of difference between the two groups. Furthermore, for participants in university-community programs, grappling with notions of difference and newness engendered various individual and interpersonal responses, creating an emotional terrain. In Chapter Five, I will discuss what enabled this emotional terrain to shift over time, highlighting how relationships developed as impressions of people and places grew more nuanced.

For some youth, a lack of familiarity with the university students led not only to an emotional terrain, but sensationalized assumptions about college students from the prestigious nearby institution. Simply the notion of having college tutors in their regular academic classrooms may have rubbed some youth the wrong way, at least initially, and some resisted what felt like charity work from the local intelligentsia. Inevitably, the racial politic of outside "help" which, by and large, represented a white and Asian American student body, may have also cultivated feelings of resentment. Racial power dynamics were immediately visible and noted as the predominantly white and Asian American college students (who were nearly the same age as the high school students) were positioned as tutors and mentors, free to migrate

around the classroom and school, offering up academic assistance or even leading a class. This racialized power geometry may have invoked hostility at first, especially in classrooms where racialization and structures of inequity were interrogated or challenged. In one context through the CRP150 program, a high school student named Bianca bristled immediately as Jake, a white university mentor, tried to launch an activity at the head of the class. According to Jake's field notes, at the start of the session, this young woman, "normally a bit loud but polite, turned to me and went as far as to say, 'I don't like people with blue eyes. Why are you looking at me?'"(Jake, FN 3, March 15, 2009). Jake admitted that Bianca's rebuff caught him off guard. He startled a bit, eyes widening, and confessed that he never quite regained his footing in front of the class. In this scenario, we can see how racial difference and presumed power differentials wielded through the gaze ("Why are you *looking* at me?") get mapped onto the bodies of university students due to their associated place of residence — and in the world. College is read here as white, colonial, and imposing. Although this particular relationship between Bianca and Jake may have shifted over time, the way that Bianca immediately *imagined* Jake as Other, due to his Aryan look and his university affiliation which positioned him in a seat of power, shows the ways that race feelings exerted power, and differences were mapped onto places as well as the bodies of individuals represented by those sites.

This kind of visible racial and cultural divide, while unavoidable, was instantly apparent and uncomfortable to some students on both sides of the partnership at the onset of the programs[37]. Despite the high school participants' affiliation with Kirkland University through the university-community program at their school, as well as their relative proximity to the institution, several high school students who participated in this study perceived considerable distance not only from the university students, but from the institution as a whole. A cultural and emotional distance was therefore mapped onto the geography of the region, as high school students attending school within ten miles of the prestigious public university still were not able to imagine themselves as potential students there. This disconnect could be due to a variety of factors, however, it is worth unpacking the range of associations with rigorous higher education institutions, even those that are public, and supposedly representing "the people" of California.

Race and the college campus: "We want to feel like we're home when we go to school."

My data show that although many high school students articulated loose plans to attend college, they demonstrated considerable disconnect from knowing how to actually get to college, including what the requirements might be. While many of the high school students in my study stated that they wanted to attend college, most lacked the required courses, test scores, or sufficient information for how to apply, locate financial resources, and actually attend. Aside from logistical constraints, however, several students from both Haven and Washington High expressed mutual dismissal of Kirkland University as a future alma mater for them, following a specific racialized rationale. The following selection is taken directly from a field note that I wrote after an afternoon spent at Washington High. Every Wednesday during my fieldwork, I traveled in the car with Kirkland University students to the local site, then attended the weekly 90-minute team-teaching CRP150 session. Following class, I would spend the lunch hour in the school courtyard with a few of the high school participants that I had come to know quite well.

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[37] In addition to some high school students, several undergraduates also expressed awareness and discomfort at first with this visible, embodied racial politic.

They sat at the same picnic table every day, positioned at the edge of the courtyard. As they ate, they would narrate all the subtle social dynamics that took place around the courtyard — the bustling inner workings of a complex social system, crackling with high school energy. This field note excerpt spotlights a conversation I had with a junior named Alida who took part in the CRP150 program. During a lull in the banter about the comings-and-goings of the spectacle of the courtyard, Alida and I talked about future plans beyond high school. The subject of college briefly came up. I asked Alida if she had considered applying to Kirkland University.

> Alida: "No! I don't want to go to Kirkland…." (She said this quickly and confidently.)
>
> EG: "Why?"
>
> Alida: "It's too *busy*."
>
> EG: "Is that really it? .... What do you mean?"
>
> Alida: "Too much white people", she explained without missing a beat, and continued eating her French fries, while her eyes roamed around the courtyard.
>
> EG: "Really…?"
>
> Alida: "Yeah, there's no one there darker than me….I feel like I'm in the suburbs there" (at Kirkland). Turning to face me, Alida looked at me and continued, "We want to feel like we're *home* when we go to school" (EG, FN_CRP150, May 29, 2009).

In this conversation, Alida spoke for a collective "we" the identity of whom we are left to imagine. Presumably, she spoke for youth of color or for urban youth, or for both, as she addressed me specifically, as a white woman representing the university. She claimed a collective voice, asserting clearly and confidently that Kirkland was not a place for her, as if the notion was beyond the realm of her imagination. In this conversation, Alida expressed distinct race feelings, as she shared a desire to be "like" others racially and culturally in the college setting, as opposed to floating amidst a sea of whiteness as she imagined Kirkland to be. Using racial and cultural logic, Alida demonstrated powerful feelings of distance and disconnect from the local university in her midst. Although in actuality, Kirkland University reflects a racially heterogeneous student body, she expressed assumptions of the institution as being a white place for white bodies. Her own dark skin is highlighted then in contrast to the canvas of whiteness that in her view radiated from the Kirkland campus. She articulated an association between whiteness, the suburbs, and the university; this triangulation then positioned her own body as other amidst such a landscape. While Kirkland University is located in a city in a greater metropolitan region, like Caroline, who asserted that Kirkland is not "*really* urban," Alida concurred, reading Kirkland as a white, suburban bubble. Following this logic, suburban landscapes are then white; urban landscapes, brown. Amidst brown skin is where she belongs, according to Alida. "There's no one there darker than me" can be read as a desire to be surrounded by equally brown and browner skin, revealing how, according to Alida, racial identity can be charted on a continuum. At white "suburban" Kirkland, she feared she would be out of place, the darkest on the continuum, which is not an optimal place to be in her mind. Thus, in this quick conversation, Alida performs a distinct racial analysis of the university as an elite, white space. Multiple layers of meaning are folded into this exchange, and we can see how race

feelings get embodied as well as mapped onto particular geographies.

While Alida's impression of the university as a bastion of whiteness may be just that — an impression animated in the imagination, rather than rooted in "fact,"[38] she is not alone in this assumption. While Alida is Samoan American and relatively light skinned compared to many of her peers at Washington High, local high school students of other ethnicities maintained the same impression of the university as an exclusive white place, unfriendly to ethnic minorities. Another young woman from Haven expressed a very similar sentiment to Alida when I probed her interest in Kirkland after a recent field trip to the campus. The following conversation is taken from my field note after spending the afternoon with Bianca in her study hall at Haven.

> I asked her (Bianca) if she went on the field trip to Kirkland, and she said yes. I asked what she thought of the field trip. She replied that she had fun. I asked her if she'd been to Kirkland before.
>
> Bianca: "Nahh…. There's no reason for me to go to Kirkland. I never thought I'd want to go over there."
>
> EG: "Why?"
>
> Bianca: "Well, there are no Mexicans there it seems."
>
> EG: "It's true that there are fewer Latinos than other ethnic groups at Kirkland, but there is still a Raza organization, presence, and a lot of support for Latino students."
>
> Bianca: "Yeah, well, I just never thought of going to Kirkland University. I have no reason to go over there to Kirkland... I live in the East so it's just far…"
>
> EG: "Cause Kirkland seemed too ….?"
>
> Bianca: "I don't know… pricey, and I'm cheap so…"
>
> EG: "Oh, it seemed rich or something?"
>
> Bianca: "Yeah, I guess, or …"
>
> EG: "Just too expensive?"
>
> Bianca: "Yeah!" (EG, FN_Haven, May 21, 2009)

In this example, Bianca, like Alida, expressed a desire to be in a community that feels comfortable and familiar to her, namely the Latino community. Her rationale relates more to culture and ethnicity than race, per se, but the point remains the same: Kirkland University is not a place for her, based on emotional and embodied associations with the college campus. She asserted that, at Kirkland, it "*seems*" that "there are no Mexicans there," which signified that the university is for others, not her. In her mental mapping of the university, she imagined it as a non-Mexican landscape, a place defined by absence. This is different than Alida's assessment that the university represents a sea of whiteness; by contrast, Bianca's impression of the university is defined by its distinct lack of a Latino presence — a haunting of sorts. While she did not clarify her impression of who does attend Kirkland University, she disavowed her own

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[38] Phillip Brian Harper writes about the questionable nature of empirical "facts," introducing what he calls "critical speculative knowledge." This term refers to the ways in which intuition and emotion serve as forms of knowledge.

belonging in such a non-Mexican cultural milieu. The absence of Mexican bodies prompted her to write off the entire locale and college campus as not where she belonged. When I played the educator-advocate role with Bianca and tried to inform her about the Latino presence and support at the university, she employed a different rationale for her dismissal of the school. She contended that she lives in the "East," which refers to both a geographic location, namely East Ashland, but also to a socio-economic, cultural, ethnic landscape marked by visible and invisible difference from the campus.

Bianca conflated the city of Kirkland with the university student body, and equated both with a higher class, reading Kirkland as "pricey" whereas she positioned herself as "cheap." Following Bianca's logic, we can see how she presumed that the university, although public and designed to serve California's populace, is a middle class, or perhaps upper middle class landscape and therefore too "far." Coming from a working class background with a mother who cleans houses "up in the hills," as she explained, she felt compelled to stay in Ashland and to attend a (more) local community college that she could get to by bus. She planned to attend Munroe College. She explained, "Yeah, it (Munroe) is way up in the cuts, but as long as I can get there by bus, it's fine with me." Taking the bus all the way "up in the cuts" did somehow not seem "far" to Bianca, as there were presumably like racialized and classed bodies populating the campus of Merritt, which she imagined Kirkland University did not offer. Interestingly, the thought of taking the bus to Kirkland, which would be just a few miles farther on a direct bus line, did not seem feasible or desirable. Moreover, Bianca experienced vast emotional and cultural distance between Kirkland University and East Ashland, as she *felt* the absence of Mexican people in visceral terms, and imagined herself out of place amidst an elite landscape. The mere four or five miles that stretched between many local urban high schools and the university, therefore, belied significant socio-cultural and physical differences mapped onto the separate geographies. Thus, we can see how both the university *and* community contexts became a site through which the imagination shaped impressions of the particular places and people who live there.

Conclusion

In summary, the places people *became* could be seen repeatedly through this chapter as both university and community participants imagined each other, applying complex logics of difference to geographies and communities altogether. As we saw, assumptions of difference characterized university students' ideas about the kind of student they would encounter in urban schools, and also the kind of atmospheres in urban schools and city. Many undergraduates, therefore, imagined urban youth and the schools they attended as unlike themselves and the places they came from. Unpacking what "different" really meant, however, we can see how this frame thinly veils a logic related to race, class, geography, and deficit-thinking. Not "expecting" students to be academic or driven, painting pictures of rowdiness, rebelliousness, and rancor reveals deep-seated constructions of the urban that rely on deficit framings. This chapter has demonstrated how notions of the urban come alive in the imagination and play out linguistically, emotionally, and bodily as people and places are co-constructed. Likewise, urban high school students imagined racialized and classed constructions of difference pertaining to the site of the university as well as the students who attended, following similar logics. Furthermore, linguistic, affective, and embodied expressions of difference were mapped onto particular people and places from the youth's perspectives as well, illustrating the role of the imagination in maintaining borders. Fortunately, conceptions of people and places are constantly being re-

imagined through an iterative process; borders can be broken down, assumptions disrupted. I will take up these topics and more in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four: Encounters Across Difference: Negotiating Contact Zones in University-Community Partnerships

This chapter illuminates how university-community partnerships represent sites in which conflict and unequal power relations might characterize the relations between the university representatives (undergraduates) and community partners (youth). I employ "contact zones"(Pratt, 1999) as a heuristic for making sense of the intersection of worlds that play out in the program space, and I argue that university-community partnerships generate racialized and classed contact zones. While contact zones can be rich sites for meaning-making, cross-cultural understanding, and development in educational contexts, contact zones can also be fraught with tension, marked by differentiated experiences, assumptions about the world, access, and mobility. In this chapter, I expound on a particular incident between undergraduates and urban youth that reflects multiple layers of the contact zones, as participants struggled to make meaning with each other as well as address conflict and (mis)understandings about race, power, language, and identity. Finally, this chapter analyzes the constellation of issues that emerge from this one incident, and examines how university-community partnerships represent contact zones as diverse individuals engage with each other around inequalities, the racial order, and "geographies of opportunity."

Unpacking the Contact Zone

Differences in perspective among participants characterize the nature of university-community partnerships. In an ideal world, thoughtful conversations about belonging, race, and inequality would take place between undergraduate participants and urban youth, within and across groups. Needless to say, even *with* structured conversations about "differences" as part of the program pedagogy, varying perspectives may hang heavy between participants or erupt into conflict. And yet in many university-community programs, dialogues around such pointed topics as race, class, and assumptions about each other never take place — awareness of "otherness" lingers in the background. This chapter discusses a situation which represented a constellation of issues related to race, misunderstanding, dialogue, and difference, as participants waded through various contact zones. Conflict around race, education, opportunity, and belonging bubbled to the surface between one undergraduate participant and four high school students. This incident illuminated the ways in which class, race, and racialized meanings shape the dynamics between the university and community participants and therefore *must* be addressed consciously in partnership pedagogy. This example demonstrates how adding a racial and class lens to contact zone theory serves to enhance this heuristic in critical ways.

I offer theoretical analysis of this incident as one potential way of reading the *heteroglossia* and the *heteroglossic potential* of the contact zone. Using heteroglossia as part of my conceptualization of the incident, I lean on Mikhail Bakhtin's groundbreaking work on discourse and the ideological underpinnings of language and language practices (1981). Bakhtin coined the term "heteroglossia" to capture the multi-vocal, hybrid nature of language that is constantly shifting and being populated with individuals' intentions, perspectives, and ideologies. The contact zone becomes a site through which the heteroglossia of language comes to life and exposes the ways in which multiple codes or meanings exist at any given time. These clashing or colliding interpretations of language reveal tensions related to power, identities, and the socio-political landscape.

I share my perspective on this incident and contribute analysis that demonstrates how partnerships reflect racialized and classed contact zones. My role in the following situation is important to mention as I was not an innocent bystander; rather I played a central role in both the university and community spheres, and therefore, my positionality reflects the interstitial location from where I sat. I served as one of the graduate student instructors for the education class, and I was also conducting participant observation at the program site observing my undergraduates engaging with the high school youth. My subjectivity is inevitably influential in how I theorize, and my perspective may have shaped the outcome of the incident, due to my position in both the university and community contexts. As instructor and researcher, I tuned into the multiple and conflicting voices, or the heteroglossic nature of the contact zone, in particular ways. I share my perspective as one way of reading how the contact zone becomes constituted in racialized and class-related terms; however, other ways of seeing are welcome and could enhance this emerging theory.

The fieldtrip.

The distinct university-community contact zone came to life during the end-of-semester fieldtrip to the university for the Haven High students. In the education class each semester, undergraduates are encouraged by the professor and instructors to help organize a fieldtrip for the youth at the partnered sites in order to promote reciprocity, exchange, and to expose younger students to the campus. Generally, this fieldtrip takes place at the end of the semester as a culmination of sorts. Many urban youth, despite living close by in surrounding neighborhoods or cities, have never journeyed to the university or been exposed to opportunities on campus. The undergraduates who worked at Haven High wanted to expose the teens they were working with to resources at the university, as well as to demystify the college experience for them. The tutors also strongly wanted to inform the youth about the attainable possibility of attending community college first and then transferring to a four-year institution such as their own.

The fieldtrip was optional for both the education undergraduates and the Haven students. The undergraduates escorted the high school students from Haven High to the university campus via public transportation on the morning of the trip. I met the cohorts of undergraduate and high school students on the campus that morning with one of the other graduate student instructors. The other instructor and I were there to oversee and support, but the undergraduates led the tours and the organized activities. First, the undergraduates took the Haven High students on a tour of the Student Learning and Transfer Center. Haven students gathered information, met counselors, and witnessed the bustling student resource center in action. After the Student Learning and Transfer Center visit, tutors led students on a casual walk around campus to a central green, where the group hung out, played Frisbee, and enjoyed a pizza lunch. The lunch break lasted about 45 minutes.

After lunch, the undergraduates took the Haven students to an education lecture in the nearby lecture hall. The professor had prepared for the high school students' presence; therefore, much of the session involved engaging the Haven students and undergraduates in dialogue around perceptions of the university, college life, and educational opportunities. After the hour and a half long class, small teams of tutors divided up the Haven students and led the groups on individual tours around campus, based on interest. Some high school students wanted to see the libraries, some wanted to see key landmarks, others wanted to learn about sports, parties, and social life on campus. The groups re-convened at the train station at the end of the afternoon to travel back to Haven's campus.

The racial encounter.

As the high school students walked around the campus grounds, questions about race and representation arose. The youth noticed that the majority of the undergraduates looked very different from them [39]. As noted earlier, the student body from this particular high school reflected primarily Black and Latino populations from low-income and poor backgrounds. As the teens meandered through the main plaza and central lawns, many noted the visibly white and Asian American majority on campus.

The following interchange took place between an undergraduate enrolled in the education course who had been tutoring at Haven High for the semester and four high school students. This interchange was later relayed to me in various forms (over the phone, in student field notes, in an email, in an interview), however I was not privy to the conversation firsthand. The incident concerned an undergraduate who was a South Asian male, a graduating senior who had grown up in a nearby city that is very similar to the city where the partnered school was situated. He tutored in math for the semester and felt very comfortable at the high school from the beginning, as opposed to some of the other undergraduates who struggled with feeling out-of-place the entire semester. This undergraduate, named Vijay, felt he could relate with the youth because of his background growing up in communities of color and in low-income neighborhoods, and attending an urban school. However, as we will see, he was marked as very different from the youth, due to his ethnic background, age, and positionality as a student at a prestigious university. In general, as class and social origins are less embodied and less easily mapped onto the body, the more visible markers of difference such as age, race, and institutional affiliation became especially salient.

Luis, Juan, Cesar, and Diego, the four high school students, were all Latino of Mexican descent, and were in various grades from 9th through 11th grade. They were relatively close friends, despite their varying ages and grades. As the tutor and the four young men were walking around, a quick conversation took place. This brief interchange and the ripple effects from this conversation reflect a multi-dimensional contact zone.

While walking through one of the busy campus corridors, one of the young men turned to Vijay and asked earnestly, "Where are all the Mexican people here at Kirkland?" The undergraduate didn't miss a beat. He responded quickly with a nodding gesture across the way and quipped, "Oh- they're over there, mowing the lawn." The young men tittered a bit at this comment and kept walking. Vijay laughed. The comment was dropped, and the fieldtrip proceeded "smoothly" according to many for the remainder of the day. In this interchange, as I will discuss, tensions around space, belonging, and race shot to the surface in a single moment, and the racial order was re-inscribed. Much of the time, racialized and classed structures such as the ones the young men pointed out are naturalized so that we may not even see or feel the ways our lives reflect larger social forces. Race and class are always organizing our realities in important ways; however, contact zones make these dynamics visible and name-able.

This exchange gathered momentum as the fieldtrip ended and the youth returned home to their school environment. At 6:00 pm, just a few hours after the fieldtrip concluded, one of the graduate student instructors received several emails that were copied to the entire faculty and staff at Haven as well as to the university teaching team regarding this interchange between

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[39] The demographics of undergraduates at this university reflect an Asian American and white student body, for the most part, with Latino *and* Black populations together totaling just 12 – 15% of university students.

Vijay and the Haven students[40]. The first email was written by Mr. Rodriguez, a Humanities teacher at Haven who participated in the university-community partnership. The email messages read as follows:

Hello to all,

First of all, let me begin by saying that i welcome any outside help to our school. But, if people dont know what time it is then maybe they should not be here "helping" our students. Right now i am angry, disgusted, deppressed, and saddened by what my students told me about their experience at the "prestigious" Kirkland University. Luis, Juan, and Cesar informed me that some of the tutors said racist shit about Mexicanos and Blacks that were "jokes", apparently, to the tutors. One of the stereotypes that was blurted from tutors mouths was made in regards to an armored truck that happen to cross the students.the remark was something to the effect of "dont try and steal that truck now". I can not begin to express my disgust at this bullshit. At another point, when Luis asked "where are all the Mexicans" they replied "somewhere cutting the grass". Let me just say that if you laughed when you just read these last 2 sentences you shouldnt be at Haven. Plain and simple. This is color-blind racism that is disguised as "jokes". When we get offended, WE are made to look as if we are thin skinned and this tactic is used to turn the tables around to make the victims irrelevant. Let me end this by saying that it is NOT enough to simply say "I'm not racist" because all this means that certain people dont say certain shit around "others". WE have to move to being ANTI-RACIST where we dont put up with ANY racist bullshit. This means that we have to stop reiterating and perpetuating racist stereotypes. I demand an apology from these so-called "educators",who are obviously misguided, to my students and myself. Like i said before i am feeling a lot; however, i am motivated to come serve our students, communities, and families harder than before cuz i know there are fools like this who are making our communities worse.

Mr. Rodriguez

And from another teacher later that night:

Mr. Rodriguez, Im glad you put this out to everyone. And these tutors should definitly be called out for their racism. Working in inner city school demonstrates how racial and class inequality reproduces itself. What has shocked me is how many educators in this area claim to be for social justice, but when it comes to doing concrete actions in challenging racism or inequality, there out to lunch. But when the opportunity arises to exploit this identity of social justice for attention or careerism, the orange is squeezed to the max. Being ANTI-RACIST does not just mean the right words but actual deeds, thus creating a material force that society cannot be ignored. And when Ashland youth get political and organized, which Im very confident will happen, many educators contradictions will be exposed, and these other paternalist racist types will be swept aside.

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[40] The email messages here reflect the exact written composition, in terms of grammar and spelling, of their original form. No changes were made to the messages with exception of replacing the school's name and student names with pseudonyms to protect the students and the anonymity of the site.

"They're over there, mowing the lawn": College Campus as Contact Zone

There are multiple reasons why I have selected this incident as an entry point into analyzing the university-community partnerships as contact zones. This scenario brings to the surface the fact that undergraduates and youth come from divergent geographic and socio-cultural places, with significant variation within each group, and that their comfort zones reflect spatial, racial, and class-based realities. Many undergraduates may not see themselves as part of an intellectual elite and may feel emotionally distanced from their current context of privilege. This is happening at the same time that the high school students are being pulled from their context and put into contact with new people and environments. In this tense situation, Vijay's comment spoke to a racial order on campus, and rather than opening up conversation about spaces that are available for Latino youth on campus, he shut that conversation down with a quip and a laugh. The contact zone reflects the ways in which the youth and the undergraduate spoke from different vantage points and carried differential assumptions about each other, which led them to bump up against each other in multiple ways. Considerable amounts of mismatch between Vijay and the youth took place, as they may have read and mis-read each other in particular — and divergent — ways related to skin color, age, ethnicity, and educational trajectory.

In this situation, a mere "joke" served to re-assert cultural divides and unequal relations of power. Constructs of difference that are enacted spatially were confirmed as the youth were *reminded* that they did not belong on campus except as hired help on the periphery. In this instance, the campus became a contact zone between the youth and Vijay, reflecting the power dynamics between them and those of the location. Additionally, Vijay's "joke" amplified the racialization of working-class male bodies. The assumption that the manual laborers were Latino men is a sub-text of this comment, as if they are the older versions of Luis, Juan, Diego, and Cesar. Here race, class, and gender are relational to each other, meaning that they are constituted as culturally entrenched variables of power. Race and class are signified here through manual labor and the unspoken message is that the laborers are male.

Evelyn Nakano Glenn (1999) theorizes about the inter-related nature of race, class, and gender in matrices of power, and she argues that we must view race-class-gender categories as relational and co-constructed. She explains that racialization and engendering take place at:

> …multiple levels, including representation, or the deployment of symbols, language, and images to express and convey race/gender meanings; micro-interaction, or the application of race/gender norms, etiquette and spatial rules to orchestrate interaction within and across race/gender boundaries; and social structure, or the allocation of power and material resources along race/gender lines (Glenn, 9).

In this incident, the racializing and gendering of bodies, as well as the coding of class, took place through multiple means: representationally, through the image of brown-skinned men on lawn mowers; interactionally, between Vijay and the young men, through language and spatial metaphors; and structurally, as the comment points to the stark realities of how few Latino male students and faculty there are in elite academic worlds, such as at Kirkland University. This comment sent loud messages about the space and place that Latino males do occupy, which is *working on the grounds* of the university, rather than in the lecture halls.

So close, but still so far: Physical and metaphoric border-crossing.

For many of the high school students, issues of spatial mobility and access came to life as they traveled out of their neighborhoods and comfort zones and to the campus. As noted, many undergraduates may also have traveled across class and racialized lines, as well as across immigrant/non-immigrant borders, in order to "arrive" as a university student. However, despite varying degrees of metaphoric, physical, and emotional journeying that may have taken place for undergraduates related to socio-cultural backgrounds, the partnerships were generally set up with the undergraduates as spatially mobile and more privileged, and the youth as grounded in their economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and schools. The undergrads were the ones who traveled each week to their respective sites. They exited the bubble of the university, piled into cars, hopped on buses and subways, and made their way to the relatively close, but seemingly far-away, city schools. Access and mobility was therefore unequally set up through the structure of the partnerships as uni-directional journeying. However, in this fieldtrip the situation was reversed, with the high school students (accompanied by several teachers and undergraduate mentors) traveling out of their "home" spaces to the campus, in a one-time, day-long experience. This fieldtrip afforded the opportunity for the youth to observe the atmosphere and culture of the campus as they walked around, as well as to take note of the racial and ethnic composition of the undergraduates.

Beyond this single example, the campus exists as a network of entangled contact zones unto itself. Intricate class, ethnic, and race divisions mark the university landscape in physical and metaphoric ways. Every day, fast-paced flows of students, faculty, and staff from diverse vantage points traverse the campus at different times, inhabiting the space in different ways. In any twenty-four hour period, thousands and thousands of bodies move in and out of classrooms, auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias, laboratories, libraries, and fields, using various kinds of equipment, vehicles, and tools to perform the functions of the institution. Labor and service workers manage these daily operations, which enable a large campus such as Kirkland University to run smoothly. Much of the daily grind, so to speak, is hidden from view however, as colleges and universities tend to privilege intellectual thought, progress, and academic discovery, rather than the utilitarian underbelly which enables this idea-production to take place. Staff members tasked with custodial and janitorial work, ground maintenance, food service, transportation, and secretarial or administrative work perform the dirty work needed for such an institution to function smoothly. These laborers frequently represent a different class and race demographic than those performing the "mental" labor on campus.

Photojournalist and sociologist Greg Halpern documented some of the imagery and stories of minimum wage workers who work on the grounds, in the dishrooms, the dorms, the dining halls, the basements, and other spaces of Harvard University. This text, *Harvard Works Because We Do,* highlights how contact zones[41] between workers, students, student-workers, faculty, and others reflect a time-based dimension as well. At Harvard and at many other institutions, contact zones on campus are made and re-made at various times of the day, dependent on the flow of students, staff, and faculty. For example, buildings and grounds workers often begin their rounds of cleaning and repair work at night, as the classrooms empty and students file out. This crucial work of maintenance and repair is therefore done almost

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[41] Halpern does not employ the term "contact zone" in *Harvard Works Because We Do,* however this term is appropriate as his text juxtaposes imagery and vignettes related to employees' work conditions and lived realities against the pristine backdrop of the elite university.

invisibly to students and faculty members as they rarely come into contact with custodial and service staff. In this situation, a contact zone exists between students exiting classrooms and custodial staff who hover in the wings, waiting for the building to vacate as evening falls. However, in this context, the contact zone may not be truly engaged as people from divergent backgrounds pass each other without significant interaction.

Nevertheless, Vijay's comment about the location of the hypothetical Latino men mowing the lawn speaks to a contact zone that was already in place, reflecting hierarchies of class, race, and ethnicity, and positionality on campus, as well as dimensions of time and space. Thus, it took one contact zone to illuminate another. Furthermore, Luis, Jose, Diego, and Cesar were informed about institutionalized arrangements of race and class as they noted a distinct absence of Latino students on campus. This absence of Latino male students and the presence of Latino male grounds crew shed light on some of the entrenched racial politics and labor structures on campus.

Of course, many other examples of campus contact zones were in place before the high school youth stepped foot on the tree-lined paths and manicured quads of the university. One other contact zone that is key to consider before delving deeper into analysis of the fieldtrip reflects the public nature of the state institution. Although prestigious and touted for its research pre-eminence globally, this university also boasts that it strives to be truly a "people's university," serving the public and representing the people of California. The university, in fact, does represent a far more socio-economically, ethnically, linguistically, and racially diverse student body than certainly most private institutions, and many public institutions as well. In fact, a recent study revealed that almost one out of three undergraduates at this university are first-generation college students, and the scales have tipped so that it is now officially a "majority minority" campus. Most of the "minority" students represent a diversity of backgrounds primarily constituting Asian ethnic identities, with Chinese students making up the largest cohort of Asian students. In a recent survey which documented student backgrounds and experiences at Kirkland, one third of the student demographic self-identified as coming from working class or poor backgrounds. Twenty-one percent of the student body is foreign born and forty percent of the student population has at least one parent born outside of the U.S. Additionally, 35% of the students were non-Native English speakers.

Furthermore, the student body represents a broad range of socio-cultural, linguistic, geographic, and economic backgrounds. The study body across all ten campuses and at this one particular institution by no means represents a predominantly class or race-privileged student body; instead, the demographics reflect a highly diverse student population, many of whom come from immigrant families. This is important as it highlights another example of potential contact zones within undergraduate populations in courses such as the education course. Many undergraduates who do not come from privileged backgrounds may cross geographic, racial, ethnic, and class lines when they arrive at the university. Although they may not associate themselves with advantage, the fact that they have "made it" to a premier institution imbued with power and privilege means that they too have entered into a new class and cultural milieu. It is also notable to mention the racial and socioeconomic diversity of the undergraduate population as it underscores the ways in which university-community partnerships generate contact zones in multiple ways. In this fieldtrip example, however, it took the young men's perceptive question to illuminate power relations across a number of different contexts.

On knowing.

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own.

-- Mikhail Bakhtin, 1981

The interchange between the young men from Haven High School and from Kirkland University raises the question, "What does it mean to 'know' someone?" How do discursive practices inform how we read the world, and the ways that we know? Based on his background growing up in a low-income, primarily black and Latino, urban community, Vijay felt that he was allied with the youth, and therefore allowed to make such commentary. He may not have seen himself as part of a structure of power in which he is privileged, especially if, previous to college, he sat outside of the university bubble, on the other side of class and racial borders, just as the high school students did. Vijay's family remained working class, on the edge economically and perhaps ethnically as Southeast Asians in a primarily black and Latino community, and therefore he may have *felt* more like the youth than perhaps many of his undergraduate peers. It is possible that Vijay experienced discomfort with the power and privilege that comes with his space at the university, and that he still saw himself as just like the high school students. The young men did not see him that way, however. While Vijay believed he was close to the young men and they *knew* him, the high school students expressed a very different story. In fact, Cesar admitted that he did not even know Vijay's name. He referred to Vijay as the "Indian dude from Kirkland." Vijay was clearly not a peer. From the perspective of the youth, he was from an entirely different social, ethnic, cultural, and academic context, and most critically, he was from a prestigious university, which differentiated him hugely. In the eyes of the youth, he was *not* one of them.

Vijay explained to me later that he *knew* that the young men recognized that he was joking because they laughed and then proceeded to engage with him throughout the rest of the afternoon on the campus tour. He assured me that the young men spoke with him as if he were their peer, which clarified to him that he could joke with them as he might with his own friends. But, apparently, Vijay did not know that the students would misperceive him in this situation. Nor did he know that the youth did not see him as a peer. But how do we really know what Vijay meant by his joke — or by his laughter — and how do we know what the young men heard? Phillip Brian Harper discusses this constant state of ambiguity and questioning about racialized referencing in an essay on intuition and the minority experience. In this piece, Harper argues, "minority existence itself induces such speculative rumination, because it continually renders even the most routine instances of social activity and personal interaction as possibly cases of invidious social distinction or discriminatory treatment" (2000, 643). Harper explains that stereotypes often mute cultural richness, as people rely on tropes to make meaning about contexts and identities. Reflecting on his own positionality as a black queer scholar, he tests the boundaries of theory-construction and analysis by questioning how we can ever move beyond the emotion and intuition that guides us. He muses, "How to consider the meaning of an

experience no concrete evidence of which exists, and of which we can therefore claim no positive knowledge?" Essentially, how do we *know* what we *know*, especially when such divergent intentions populate each word and phrase?

Looking to Bakhtin's theoretical guidance to make sense of such inquiry-based obfuscation, we are reminded of the quote that begin this section on language and intentionality. Each person's own interpretive eye and ear shapes the meanings of language, and therefore it is impossible to arrive at a singular meaning behind any particular turn of phrase. "The word in language is half someone else's" (Bakhtin, 1981); and for Vijay, the "word" — or words — in question were clearly innocent and in jest. For Luis, Jose, Diego, and Cesar, however, the word(s) read as offensive and racist. Bakhtin reminds us, there is no *knowing* what any given word (or phrase) truly means, rather one takes "the word, and make it one's own" (1981). Moreover, this example illustrates the heteroglossic potential of the contact zone, or the opportunity that arose to break down language and to expose the various codes, interpretations and meanings that often co-exist across difference.

Untangling identities.

With this theoretical guidance, I return to unpacking the layers of this incident. Each "side" of the story must be explored, and the vantage point of each participant considered more closely. Vijay was 4th year undergraduate student who grew up in the nearby vicinity in a low-income, small urban city. In an assignment on racial identity for the education class, Vijay traced how he was impacted by his ethnic and racial status throughout his childhood. He explained that was one of the few Indian students in his town, and in fact, he was the *only* Indian student at his elementary school. The demographics of the small city where Vijay lived with his family comprised of primarily African American and Latino populations, and so, as he grew up, Vijay's friends were entirely Black and Latino. His parents were immigrants who came from India when he was six months old, which he admitted worked out well for him socially as he "wasn't considered a 'fob'"(Racial identity assignment, April 16, 2009)[42]. Plus, he explained, the way he dressed ("popular attire"), the fact that he played sports, and "associated with friends of other ethnicities" made him, as he put it, accepted despite "being Indian" (Racial identity assignment, April 16, 2009). Vijay acknowledged, however, that there was still a stigma around being Indian that followed him, and he worked actively to fit in and resist any shame around being Indian. He explained:

> There was simply a negative stigma associated with being Indian. It's hard for me to clearly put into words what I am attempting to say but more than anything I think being Indian simply wasn't 'cool'. I remember back in junior high and high school everyone used to hang out with their respective racial groups. If I had to rank the groups in terms of social status, the Indian group would definitely be at the bottom. It seemed like no one wanted to associate themselves with anyone that was part of that group because they sort of carried a negative stigma. I can't really say why this was the case but it was reality (Racial identity assignment, May 16, 2009).

But, Vijay negotiated his marginalized ethnic status quite well, he admitted, and he had friends, all of whom were Black and Latino. Vijay adopted a distinct way of speaking, acting,

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[42] The term "fob" is generally used as a derogatory term about immigrants, meaning "fresh off the boat" from elsewhere. Labeling someone a "fob" carries negative racialized and ethnic meanings in most contexts.

and being that fit in with his urban school environment and his friends. When Vijay arrived at college, he entered an atmosphere with a radically different racial composition than he had previously experienced throughout his schooling. The university reflected a white and Asian American majority, and there was a sizeable Indian and Southeast Asian population as well. African American and Latino students were significantly less represented on campus. Vijay described his social world as racially diverse at college, in part due to his own background and his comfort with reaching across racial and ethnic borders to make friends. He expressed surprise that racial groups seemed to self-segregate at the university level, and he worked to actively integrate himself across groups.

Vijay was a student in the education course in the last semester of his fourth year on campus. He took the class because it interested him and he was minoring in Education. Vijay selected Haven High as a site for his fieldwork because he wanted to work with high school students and he was curious about what a continuation high school would look like. At the beginning of the semester, Vijay admitted that he felt confident that he would make connections easily with the Haven students based on his background and familiarity with under-resourced, urban contexts. "I think I will be able to connect because I came from low-income neighborhoods and schools as well" (Reading assignment 1, January 27, 2009). Vijay spent the semester working with students at Haven every Tuesday and some Thursdays. He bonded with several students, made headway in terms of helping students with mathematics, and had a generally positive experience at the school and with the Haven High students. Vijay wrote descriptive field notes each week, which documented his conversations with students and teachers and captured his reflections on many topics, including how Haven reminded him of the high school that he attended in a nearby city.

Vijay attended the fieldtrip for the entire day. He traveled with one of the groups in the afternoon after the education lecture, and engaged with many of the students that he had gotten to know all semester. By his account, the fieldtrip was a huge success. By the account of most of the undergraduates, the graduate instructors, and the Dean of Haven who accompanied the trip, the day had also been a huge success. Therefore, it came as a shock to learn from a teacher about the perceived racist comments.

Did Vijay feel entitled to quip about racial inequities because he had grown up amidst African American and Latino populations and he thought he got a "pass"? Did he feel that his comment was political, á la Chris Rock, the edgy stand-up comic who riffs on race and racism? What does it mean for Vijay to admit that he speaks crassly about race and racial inequalities with his friends and therefore it's okay? What *is* permissible in terms of using humor for social commentary, and how did Vijay's comment miss the mark, despite his claims that he "gets it" having growing in low-income neighborhoods, amidst communities of color, and being a man of color himself? How does internalized racism play out in conversations about inequality? Questions abound, but answers are harder to define. Clearly, part of the "problem" in this scenario stemmed from the fact that Vijay was a mentor whose central role was to welcome the teens to campus and to encourage imagination around college possibilities. His position as university student at a top-notch university put him in a position of power in relation to the youth, with undeniable privilege and responsibility. His role as educator implied that he would facilitate conversation about racial realities and inequalities and encourage students' inquiry and imagination.

Whether he was aware of these responsibilities or not, Vijay was adamant that the youth *knew* he was joking. In a draft letter that Vijay planned to send to Mr. Rodriguez, he wrote[43]:

> By no means was what I said more than a simple joke, similar to what you see from comedians and many television shows. I'm not aware of how this was all explained to you, but this was taken as a joke by your students as well as they laughed it off when I said it. Due to our very small age difference and getting to know these students on more of a peer level than strictly having a tutor-student relationship, I knew they would take it as a joke and laugh it off which is what they did. Not once did they ever seem offended by what I said (Email correspondence, May 8, 2009).

The Haven High students recounted a different version of the story. According to Diego, who was present at the incident, but who did not talk with Mr. Rodriguez, it was obvious that they had been offended by the comment. Diego explained to me,

> Yeah…and so we asked that (question about where Mexicans on campus were) and that dude just said, "Over there, mowing the lawn," and he laughed. I didn't laugh. My partners and I just looked at each other like, "What?!" We were just staring. We didn't laugh…. *He* laughed. He thought it was funny! My partners and I couldn't believe it…(EG, FN 8, May 21, 2009).

How could such disparate perceptions of each other have emerged? How could such disparate perceptions of what took place have emerged?

"A simple joke": The role of laughter in contact zones.

Laughter is the closest distance between two people.

-- Victor Borja

According to comedian and artist Victor Borja, laughter unites people in the most basic, humanizing ways. A laugh can erase real or perceived distances between people, obscuring divisions of race, class, geography, nation, or background in a single moment. Laughter can be "the best medicine," bringing people together through shared understanding and mutual pleasure. However, just as laughter can serve as a unifying tool, a joke that does *not* engender laughter may naturally strike a chord in raw or painful ways. Therefore, a joke that goes well represents the closest distance between people; however, a joke that falls flat may bring miles of metaphoric emotional distance. In this example, "joking" plays an important role in understanding how Vijay was attempting to curry favor with the youth. He may have been trying to garner solidarity with the youth — to use satiric humor to say that he was one of them and to critique the institution from his "low-income-youth-of-color" shared background. Aiming for laughter, Vijay sought to connect with the high school students; however, according to the young men, they did not laugh, and thus the gulf between them grew exponentially.

The contextual nature of laughter is demonstrated by the fact that this "joke" might have had a very different impact if delivered by someone else. Laughter, therefore, serves as a tool to sew together commonalities, to share in mutual understanding. Later in an interview, Mr. Rodriguez reflected on this incident and vastly different understandings of what took place in

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[43] Vijay was advised not to send this note as it seemed to fan the flames rather than accept responsibility and acknowledge his misstep. The teaching team, myself included, convinced Vijay that this letter would not help relations with the school or youth.

that single comment. He theorized that the lack of laughter from the young men in response to Vijay spoke volumes about their disparate vantage point from Vijay's, despite both being young men of color. He admitted, "If I would have said that, they would have laughed about it, cause they know me, and we've been through similar experiences, the same experiences." However, Vijay's position was coded as privileged due to the fact that he represented the university. Even though he too grew up in a low-income, urban context, surrounded by communities of color, he now represented a very different social, racial, geographical and cultural reality. In Mr. Rodriguez's estimation, he (Mr. Rodriguez) would be entitled to crack such a joke, knowing that there was a shared background, a shared understanding of racial politics, and that his "joke" might reflect a socio-cultural critique, rather than a racial slur.

Hence, laughter means many things and can result from a range of situations beyond shared humor and intimacy. "Nervous laughter", for example, may emerge in the face of uncomfortable disconnections or social awkwardness; sardonic laughter can result from cynicism or frustration. Thus, laughter has multiple faces and fronts. In this scenario, as the young men tittered at the joke, a nervous laugh may have been released. However, such laughter was laden with layers of meaning, history, and emotion revealing the complex nature of utterances, and the heteroglossic nature of even a "simple joke" (Vijay, Email correspondence, May 8, 2009).

Furthermore, the discrepancy between what took place for the high school students and for Vijay can be partially understood by the complex narratives of where each come from, as well as differential levels of comfort on the college campus. Transitioning to the university may have required significant cultural shifting for Vijay, considering his upbringing in low-income communities and urban schools. However, the fact that he was graduating from a premier university endowed him with a level of privilege and power that he may not have recognized — or may not have wanted to recognize around the young men. While he saw himself almost like a "peer" to the teens, he also represented part of institutional body that reproduces inequalities through exclusionary practices such as limited recruitment efforts for racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic minorities. Despite trying to act cool around the students, he was also a symbol of what the youth may never have — a prestigious university experience.

Yet, Vijay's desire to feel close to the students may have prompted his attempt to make a joke with them. His joke reflected a very real ache to fit in with the young men, to be seen as cool, *to belong*. His comment also reflected real vulnerability on his part regarding his role at the university, and his role with impressionable youth with whom he felt he could relate, with whom he *longed* to relate. The vulnerability of the undergraduate student who may be experiencing class mobility through his university experience is glossed over as he is read as privileged, but Vijay may not have *felt* privileged then or ever. Attempting to understand what Vijay's university experience as well as his Haven High fieldwork experience is also critical to understand the multiple contact zones in motion through such university-community partnerships.

When we add a more nuanced lens to the constructs of "university" and "community," we can see how the heterogeneity of both groups of students who have been differently positioned in terms of educational trajectories create multiple webs of emotional, geographic, ethnic, racial, and classed experiences — all of which are dynamic, constantly changing the contours of contact zones. Although Vijay may have felt social distance from the university and a closer proximity to Luis, Cesar, Diego, and Jose on a cultural or class level, his status as a Kirkland student added lengths of social distance from the youth's lived experiences. The levels

of emotional or social distance that individuals feel in relation to cultural contexts reflects where they have come from, and where they are positioned to go.

Moreover, Vijay's comment had consequences reflecting political and racialized realities. The students already felt out of place on campus, and his comment cemented their location in society's system of stratification. Vijay put his own desires (to identify with the youth and be their friend) above the needs of the youth, and his comment may have ended up reifying structures of inequality, as he reminded them of their "place" in the world. Possibly, his comment reflected critique on his own place in the world (his own class background vis a vis changing class status through institutional affiliation) but none of this came through in his quick, but resonant, quip. In a matter of the mere moment it took to nod to the metaphoric Latino lawn mowers, the social distance between the youth and Vijay expanded exponentially. Nonetheless, it is imperative to also look at the emotional terrain of the engagement between the youth and undergraduates and to try to unpack how cultural contexts, past and present, are mapped onto the in-the-moment interactions.

Outcomes of the incident.

The ripple effect from this interchange brought tensions between community and university partners to the fore. Issues that generally tend to simmer in the subterranean world rose directly to the surface, as representatives from each "side" of the partnership were brought into conversation. Dialogue took place after a many heated email exchanges. These emails reflected much-needed release about the inequalities that shape the partnership, but also elicited much-needed conversation about how partnerships need to change. According to Mr. Rodriguez, the university presence at Haven represented an elite Other that actually reified divides between Haven students and the college experience. In their email, the teacher lumped all of the undergraduates into a monolithic category of oppressive Other as part of the structure of power. He framed the university and the student body as unlike his community. He explained,

> Right now i am angry, disgusted, deppressed [sic], and saddened by what my students told me about their experience at the "prestigious" Kirkland University. Luis, Juan, and Cesar informed me that some of the tutors said racist shit about Mexicanos and Blacks that were "jokes", apparently, to the tutors (Email correspondence, May 7, 2009).

It must be noted that this email was written in the heat of the moment, and is filled with raw pain about the personal and political nature of seemingly benign overtures that are actually the weapons of racism. It is also worth noting that this email is historically founded, and speaks volumes about long-standing divides between universities and communities. A history of exploitation, research de-humanization, and benevolent acts of paternalism mark the terrain of university-community relations. Therefore, Mr. Rodriguez's comments are haunted by a very real history of distrust between university and community due to the imperial presence of many institutions over the years with regard to particular locations and lives. While much is changing in terms of commitment to scholarship for the public good and collaborative research processes, his comment reflects historic wounds.

Nevertheless, Mr. Rodriguez reaffirms the divide between university students and the high school students by expressing an "us vs. them" framework throughout his letter. He explains, "When *we* get offended, *we* are made to look as if we are thin skinned and this tactic is used to turn the tables around the make the victims irrelevant" (Italics mine; Email correspondence, May 7, 2009). Here, presumably, his community represents victim. While I do

not mean to undermine this teacher's justifiable anger, I do want to underscore the border-work at play in his rhetoric. He establishes and re-establishes boundaries between his school and the university by compartmentalizing university students as racist oppressors and his community as victimized Others. He concludes his letter by implying that partnerships such as the education collaborative may be doing more harm than good to local communities. Additionally, he distinguishes himself from the "prestigious" university students by accentuating his own investment in his school and to his community in light of the negative influence of university elites. "I am motivated to come serve our students, communities, and families harder than before cuz i know there are fools like this who are making our communities worse" (Email correspondence, May 7, 2009). This letter reflects just one perspective from the partnered school, and therefore must not be made to symbolize a homogenous community stance. However, the ways in which the teacher employs metaphors of borders and us vs. them framing illustrates the ways in which symbolic, social, and spatial divides may be reified through partnership efforts.

While this incident was arguably atypical of university-community programs in that it erupted into palpable tension that led to head-on confrontations, the incident speaks more broadly to issues that may simmer beneath the surface much of the time. Spatialized boundaries are brought to the fore as outsiders enter urban communities, neighborhoods, and schools for a finite period. In CRP150, the teens at one of the partnered high schools remarked loudly, "What are we, a tourist attraction?" upon seeing a cluster of university students huddled together at the back of their classroom. As discussed in the last chapter, while the undergraduates and graduate students of CRP150 routinely stated that the urban high schools were "*very* different" from their own high schools, such cloaked commentary using vague terminology and the language of difference speaks to the contact zones that partnerships generate across race, class, and ethnic lines. For many of the university students, entering low-income, urban neighborhoods and schools means that suddenly they represent a racial minority. This experience may trigger a sense of discomfort, insecurity, vulnerability, or even fear. By the same token, seeing clusters of college kids congregating in the hallways and classrooms may evoke a sense of skepticism or critique for the high school students who are, for the most part, grounded at their local school sites. Moreover, racialized and classed contact zones are animated as diverse university students intermingle with diverse high school students across contexts, from the space of the high school to the grounds of the university.

Most of the time, comments such as Vijay's go unchecked. Racialized misunderstandings get passed off with the shrug of a shoulder, an uneasy titter, or avoidance of eye contact — all of which signal evasion of conflict for any number or reasons. But in this context, the young men returned home to their school setting and shared their pain and dismay. In this situation, the contact zone came to life as teachers, university instructors, and program participants were brought into conversation, reflection, and engagement with each other around issues of belonging, race, class, ethnicity, mentorship, opportunity, inequality, and education. Although this particular incident highlights the rupture and confrontation that can occur as encounters across race, class, geography, and ethnicity take place, university-community partnerships also serve to promote border-crossing and cross-cultural growth, especially when differential experiences are exposed and interrogated through curriculum and discussion. In this incident, healing did take place, which must be noted. The next section addresses the learning and growth that emerged in the aftermath of this incident.

Listening and learning: Engaging the contact zone.

In the week that followed the email exchanges, many conversations took place between Vijay and the graduate instructor team, myself included. We also spoke with teachers and administration at Haven, the professor of the education course, several of the young men, other students from Haven, and finally, other students in the education course. Back and forth messages on email proved to be less than constructive due to the shortcomings of the medium, which do not allow for tone of voice, empathy, or context to shine through. While Vijay composed many draft emails in response to Mr. Rodriguez's initial email, his messages were ultimately not sent as it was decided by the teaching team (both at the high school and the college) that an in-person forum for dialogue would be most constructive as a way to move forward. As one graduate student instructor advised Vijay after reading his draft letter, there was "an air of entitlement (to your letter) that follows suit with some of the very critiques that Mr. Rodriguez made. If the students told Mr. Rodriguez that they were offended, then we trust that and act in their interest" (Email correspondence, May 9, 2009). Despite the fact that the young men may have laughed at the joke, as discussed, laughter can result from many situations, and can be a response to discomfort or anxiety. This same instructor also weighed in on the importance of face-to-face communication in light of racial and class-related injury. She reminded Vijay about the power and privilege bestowed upon him, related to his institutional affiliation, and how, by contrast, the youth are traveling a very different academic route with real constraints related to resources, achievement rates, and societal visibility. The fact that Haven High was a continuation school implies that many of the students were in fact positioned as educational "failures," marginalized on a vulnerable educational trajectory. This teacher explained to Vijay in an email message to which the entire teaching team was copied:

> Regardless of where you are from or what race you are, you are a Kirkland University student hosting students who have been systematically pushed out of schools and have been told throughout their schooling careers that they don't belong at places like Kirkland. That being said, we need to go out of our way to be gracious and humble hosts and to make sure they feel welcomed. While the students may have laughed at the time (at the joke), they may have been being polite, or they may not have processed their feelings until they returned to the high school later on in the afternoon. Clearly they felt they needed to share this experience with a teacher they trust. Secondly, I think that face-to-face dialogue, while much more difficult than letter writing, opens an important dialogue and offers all parties an opportunity to speak. So, my recommendation is for all parties to sit down and talk it out (Email correspondence, May 9, 2009).

As a result of these numerous conversations and email exchanges between Vijay and the university teaching team, it was decided that the best approach would be to arrange a forum for all the student participants to come together to share perspectives, to learn, and to listen. Vijay also planned to apologize in person and to explain that he did not mean to offend anyone. The gathering would be a space for the youth to speak about how the comment impacted them and to process race and class-related observations from the fieldtrip. Ms. Drew, another Haven teacher who was actively involved in the university-community collaboration, hoped that such a forum would be a chance for all parties to "feel valued and heard" and an "opportunity for peace and understanding to be restored" (Email correspondence, May 9, 2009).

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The meeting was set for after school one day, and Mr. Rodriguez, Vijay, myself, and Ms. Drew planned to attend. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that he would let Jose, Luis, Diego, and Cesar know about the meeting and encourage them to come. Of the Haven students, only Luis attended, but the discussion proceeded despite Jose, Diego, and Cesar's absence. The group (Vijay, Ms. Drew, Mr. Rodriguez, myself, and Luis) sat in a circle in Mr. Rodriguez's room. Vijay tapped his feet uncomfortably and looked visibly anxious in the quiet room. Mr. Rodriguez began by explaining that Vijay sits in a place of power by being at the university and that "it doesn't matter where you're from" because the kind of racialized comment that he made to the young men was "unjust and inappropriate" (EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009). Vijay listened wide-eyed. Once Mr. Rodriguez finished, the room hung heavy with silence. Luis looked at the ground; Vijay shuffled in his seat. Mr. Rodriguez nodded to Vijay that it was his turn to speak, if he would like to. Vijay cleared his throat and looked Luis in the eye. He wore a nervous smile on his face. His voice trembled and cracked a bit as he began.

> Luis, look, I've been thinkin' non-stop about my comment on the fieldtrip, and I honestly just thought it was a funny joke, and there wasn't anything meant by it. But I see now how inappropriate and offensive my words were, and I want to apologize. Look, I'm in finals now, for the past 1.5 weeks, I haven't thought about my finals at all, I just been thinking about this incident. I truly am sorry. I didn't mean to offend you and if I had known I offended you I would have apologized right away. But I didn't, so I wanted to come down here…(EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009).

Vijay trailed off and looked away. Luis glanced up after listening to Vijay and shared that he was confused and hurt by what Vijay said. Luis continued quietly,

> When you said that [comment about the Mexicans mowing the lawn], I was thinking... "Is he for real? Is he kidding? Or is he for real?" I was thinking about it a lot after and I just was really bothered by it (EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009).

Vijay listened silently. A moment later, Ms. Drew stepped in, addressing Vijay, about the important position he was in as a mentor. She explained,

> I think it's especially it's important when you were inviting students in to space that's perceived to be an elite place, and you're trying to welcome and students who might not feel so comfortable there, it's even more important to extend yourselves, and that's why that comment was especially hurtful and offensive (EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009).

Vijay blinked back tears. At this point, Luis looked up and turned to Vijay and looked at him in the eyes. He said, "Well, I'm really glad you came down here today to apologize. That's cool … Thanks". Vijay's eyes were watering as he looked at Luis, and he spoke in a soft, shaking voice. "And I acknowledge that I was a tutor, a mentor, and I shouldn't have been saying stuff like that. I'm truly sorry" (EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009). The teachers nodded at the edge of the circle. Luis continued to look at Vijay, and his eyes grew wide as he noted Vijay's visible emotion.

If the contact zone could ever be seen and felt, it seemed to pulse through the circle in the small classroom that afternoon. Contact zones are animated not only in moments of rupture, but also in moments of reconciliation as differences are aired, acknowledged, and power relations critiqued. In the room, silence lingered for a moment longer after Vijay finished apologizing. I added how important such difficult dialogue is for everyone involved. "It's so important to meet

face to face when there's been a misunderstanding — it's hard and painful, but to sit with each other and hash stuff out is really powerful. Thank you both, Luis and Vijay" (EG, FN 7, May 18, 2009). The young men looked at each other one more time, then they both stood up, nodded to each other, and walked out of the room.

Conclusion

Incidents like the one between Vijay and the young men from Haven High School are rare — most such conflicts concerning miscommunications around race, class, ethnicity, and "differences" in perspective go unexposed and, therefore unresolved. However, as I have argued, the richness of contact zones comes from these potentially prickly, yet important dialogues in which differences are unraveled and given breathing room. Attempts to understand each other and to make sense of mis-understandings and mis-cues related to humor and other gestures of intimacy could yield greater awareness, understanding, and empathy at the individual level. Additionally, at the institutional level, enabling such critical dialogue to happen could strengthen institutional ties and reciprocal commitment to the partnerships.

In this case, the conflict came to life *at the hyphen*, and healing took place at the hyphen as well. The collision of worlds and perspectives activated contact zones between university and community entities and may have exacerbated already existent divides. Luckily, processes of healing also took place between people and places through dialogue, critical reflection, and productive tension. Over time, Vijay was forced to re-consider his assumptions about "knowing" local youth simply based on his background from a low-income urban environment and his association with black and brown peers. Vijay's affiliation with the university and the position of power that accompanied his university status differentiated him substantially from the young men, in their minds. The students did not know how to read Vijay's tone of voice as he "joked" that the only Latinos on campus were the grounds crew. Their "misunderstanding" of Vijay's tone and intention highlights the heteroglossic nature of language across difference as well as the heteroglossic nature of contact zones. Hence, different ways of speaking and reading the situation led to collisions of perspective and styles of humor—various ways of interpreting language. The contact zone then becomes a site through which the heteroglossia of language and meaning comes to life, as seen on the field trip and thereafter between the youth (undergraduates and high school students alike) and the various institutional partners. The *heteroglossic potential* of the contact zone emerges when opportunities for reflective dialogue are provided so that the multiplicity of voices and meanings might be heard.

Faced with the honest response of the students, Vijay was reminded of the power of his words and he was forced to recognize that he was now positioned within a power structure that was built upon such institutional inequalities. Being framed as racist sent ripples through his unconscious and troubled him deeply. At the individual level, Vijay was forced to reconsider his geographic and educational trajectory over time. He had traveled from an under-resourced urban high school like Haven to a prestigious urban university, and, accordingly, his own positionality shifted in response to the spatial re-configuration of his life. After all the email exchanges, conversations, and personal reflections had taken place, as Luis sat across from Vijay, the young men were able to see each other in a new way, beyond the racial, ethnic, and geographic categories each had lumped the other one into despite months of engagement with each other. Luis was able to see Vijay as vulnerable and capable of change. Luis may have felt empowered by the consistent verbal support that he received from his teachers and his peers, as well as representatives from the university. Following the conversation, Luis may also have been able to

imagine carving a niche for himself at such a university, his motivation fueled by learning about very real institutionalized inequalities. While this may have dissuaded him from trying for such a goal, it may also have invigorated his cause. We can only speculate about the range of potential responses.

Moreover, as the conflict rippled outwards after Vijay's quick quip, both university and community entities were called to reflect on the multi-vocality of contact zones, and the kinds of university-community divides and possibilities that exist. Fortunately, on both sides of the university-community hyphen, greater understanding was achieved as voices were made audible and perspectives were presented. After the tension rose to the surface, after words were exchanged behind the scenes and in front of each other, in the end, both university and community participants came to see each other as fallible, vulnerable, and ultimately human.

Hence, the richness of the contact zone comes to life in the messy, uncomfortable spaces when hybridity is harnessed and opportunities for reflective dialogue are provided. However, most of the time, conversations about inequality do not happen between divergent populations from varying social and cultural backgrounds, which is why engaging the contact zone through dialogue becomes all the more important in a variety of programmatic and academic spaces. Learning stems from the sometimes uncomfortable spaces of rupture, of heteroglossia, where disparate interpretations of language are shared and constructs of power are interrogated. In the next chapter, I address how participants negotiated shifting understandings of sameness and difference, equality and inequality through engagement with each other over time. Also this next chapter explores what happens when these negotiations of difference do not rise above the surface or transform into productive processes of negotiation such as what took place between Vijay and Luis. I analyze what it looks like at the individual level when perceived disconnects and dislocations remain subterranean, simmering below the surface. Moreover, Chapter Five broadly investigates how partnerships contribute to enabling and/or constraining cross-cultural understanding, specifically around race, class, geography, and educational "difference" through multiple levels of analysis. In the concluding chapter, Chapter Six, I consider how pedagogically such opportunities for engaging the contact zone through conversation might take place in program settings.

Chapter Five: From "So Different" to "Just Like Us": Shifting Ideas of Each Other Across the Hyphen

It (CRP150) changed what I thought about college because the college students were just like us.

-- Marlene, Washington High School 11th grader, May 15, 2009

*I must admit I felt pity for these students. "Poor things, they can hardly do fractions when I was taking AP Calculus and AP Statistics." I guess it is only natural for me to feel pity because I know what a great education I was provided and I am so grateful. To be honest **these students don't even know that they are below level**. I'm embarrassed to say, but I thought these students would think that they are stupid. I thought they would classify themselves as such because I figured they would know what level a senior in high school should be performing at. I was all prepared to offer hope and encouragement and to assure these students that they were smart and that they just had to keep working hard and they would succeed. However, they didn't need any of the sort. Instead of thinking they were dumb, they thought I was just brilliant. They thought it was weird that I was tutoring them since we are all 18—it would make sense for us to be at the same level. I also expected these students to think because they are so behind in school that they are going to struggle in the future. But it was quite the contrary. The students I talked to about our futures were so ambitious. Here Christina wants to start her own business and Isaiah says he might end up at Kirkland someday. These individuals aren't limiting themselves at all! **They have goals, dreams, and aspirations just like the rest of us.**

-- Caroline, Kirkland University, FN 1, February 16, 2009

*They (Haven High students) were **no different** than any other kids. They laughed, they were a bit louder, but they possessed the ability and desire to learn. They all had dreams and hopes for their future.*

-- Edwin, Kirkland University, FN 4, March 13, 2009

For Marlene, a junior in high school who took part in the CRP150 university-community program, college became a possibility she could imagine for herself because the college students were, in her words, "just like us." Likewise, Caroline, a Kirkland University first-year student from Orange County, came to see Haven High School students as "just like the rest of us" over time. What allowed Caroline to re-frame her perception of local urban youth from vastly different in terms of academics, socio-economics, cultural norms, and geography to "just like us" was the young people's ability to dream, aspire, and demonstrate ambition, which she observed from her first day at the site. This point of reckoning for Caroline took place repeatedly in a variety of ways over time, reflecting shifting perspectives about sameness and difference, educational and social inequalities and identities. Similarly, Edwin's realization that the youth from Ashland possessed a *desire* to learn, demonstrating hopes and future-oriented aspirations, emerged as a central turning point for him throughout his tutoring experience at Haven High. This recognition that the local urban students-whom he had previously presumed to be

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holistically different from himself either due to racial, ethnic, economic, linguistic, or educational circumstances, were in fact *"no different"* from students he knew, students like himself, signified growth and learning over time.

Marlene, Caroline, and Edwin all experienced variable degrees of change over the course of the semester, as evidenced by their telling statements that pointed to re-imagining the "other." Their changed perspectives were often uneven and inconsistent, however, as participants re-framed certain aspects of the other in some ways, but remained rooted in assumptions in other ways. Changes were therefore, complex and, at times, conflicting. Nevertheless, their varied evolutions reflect a particular kind of change—one that marks the current historical moment within the neoliberal, colorblind ideology that dominates in the U.S., as I will explore presently. For Marlene, recognizing the cohort of mostly white college students in CRP150 as *"just like"* her own peers, all youth of color, reflects an intricate process of re-imagining around racial, class, geographic, and educational lines. For Edwin and Caroline, the "ability and desire to learn" played a critical role in humanizing the urban youth of color, as the high school students became more relate-able, almost *"just like"* themselves, as upwardly mobile university students. Overall, in most students' experiences on both sides of the university-community hyphen, evolving theorizations about people and places informed the ways that learning, growth, and reflection took place.

In Chapters Three and Four, I explored how assumptions about urban youth and university students are imagined, and how these perceptions gain power to construct borders between people and places. In this chapter, I interrogate if and how those preconceptions break down or shift along a continuum due to engagement in service-oriented programs. I show how, in some cases, identification and demystification took place through individual connections and conversations that fostered curiosity about each other. What emerged as a central tenet of this demystification process included what I call, "seeing each other in each other." Throughout many conversations between high school students and undergraduates, the realization that the other was in fact *"just like me"* or *"just like us"* proved significant and in some ways helped facilitate genuine exchange, at the individual level. In this chapter, I examine how theorizations about identities, hopes, and dreams, as well as differential trajectories and opportunities circled around "just like us" moments, which I argue are co-constructed through colorblind racism, multicultural education, and the meritocratic ideology that dominates in our current historical moment.

"Just Like Us": Continuum of Change and Conceptual Framework

Over disparate amounts of time, many university-community program participants arrived at the realization that the other was "just like" themselves in one way or another, whether that other was a 9th grader from the heart of inner city Ashland, or a senior Economics major at Kirkland who grew up in Orange County. Recognizing each other in each other at various times throughout the program was arguably one way that participants evidenced shifting over time. In particular, undergraduates' evolving theorizations about identities and marked inequality often triggered "just like us" moments which reflect, in part, the colorblind ideologies that saturate American schools and social institutions. Interestingly, changing perceptions of the other allowed the undergraduate students to see the high school students as each "just like" themselves, and yet at the same time, these shifts activated a homogenizing process related to individuals' own peers or "like" population. A desire to see the other in new ways seemed to flatten the heterogeneity within their own university or high school peer population. Despite

intensifying contact zones reflecting growing racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic diversity in the U.S., in public schools saturated with colorblind curriculum and muted multicultural ideals (Appiah 1994; Banks & Banks 1995; Nieto 2000; Fine, et al. 1997; Gonzalez & Cauce, 1995), youth have been trained to aspire to be "like" each other—to celebrate diversity, rather than critically engage with "differences" of color or class, access, race, religion, or sexuality[44].

The theoretical framework that I use to analyze engagement across the hyphen can thus be termed the "just like us" conceptual tool kit. A bit of critical assessment is necessary to understand how this framework illuminates aspects of colorblind ideology, multicultural education, and neoliberal meritocracy, as well as investments in hope. I deploy the "just like us" framework to show multiple iterations of change over time to understand undergraduates' evolving theories and perceptions about urban youth, urban contexts, and structures of inequality. This framework not only articulates notions of likeness and liberal-minded desires for equality, but also explores how understandings of difference and disparity developed, revealing societal investments in hope as well as neoliberal ideologies of colorblindness and meritocracy. Ultimately, this binary, on the one end imagined sameness and on the other end difference, proved limited, and what took place in terms of sense-making turned out to be far more complex than a binary would suggest. Hence, I prefer to utilize a "just like us" *continuum* as a heuristic to chart change in thinking or growth over time.

If evolution in thinking about people and places could be represented by a metaphoric continuum rather than a binary, with each student starting at a particular place on the arc, undergraduates demonstrated varying degrees of movement along this continuum over the course of the semester. On this continuum spanning between poles of "sameness" to "difference," many undergraduate students initially imagined themselves on opposite sides of the spectrum from the local youth, as they assumed a variety of differences would distance each other. However, over varying amounts of time, as I will show, many inched closer to imagining "sameness" between themselves and inner city students. Both poles of this metaphoric continuum operate at different levels including at the individual, cultural, and structural level. For most undergraduates, change in thinking took place largely at the individual and cultural level. For other undergraduates, although significantly fewer, the "just like us" continuum functioned at the structural or institutional level. At each of the different levels, the "just like us" framework was co-constituted by intersecting ideals of multiculturalism, colorblind ideology, and meritocracy.

Such a continuum is clearly just a metaphoric heuristic, limited in its potentially rigid edges and distinct end points, but for the purposes of this chapter, it is meant to serve as a guiding lens, not as a deterministic calculation. By using this metaphor, I focus on the variable ways that shifts in perspective manifested over time, the arc of growth which looked different for each student, rather than a one-size-fits-all trajectory of change. The notion of a symbolic continuum representing iterations of change over time maps onto liberal humanist concepts of progress and development. The liberal humanist tradition, which has profound influence on our current educational, political, and ideological frameworks in the U.S., values the importance of

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[44] The 2010 census indicates that the population in the United States is growing steadily, with the numbers of racial and ethnic minorities increasing as well. Racial and ethnic diversification may be due to global economic forces, patterns of migration, and inter-marriage across racial and ethnic lines, as well as other variables. (See literature on globalization and trans-nationalism for more information on demographic shifts.) The states with the fastest population growth are California, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Florida. Information retrieved from: http://2010.census.gov/2010census/

the individual, free will, choice over actions, and individual progress. Exploring the range of experiences over time grants a unique window into the divergent ways the "just like us" phenomenon took shape and demonstrates the neoliberal education projects which intentionally—and unintentionally — expect a certain kind of individual progress.

While many came to recognize striking similarities "at the hyphen," which ultimately shrank the space between "university" and "community", others came to terms with substantial differences with each other over time. For university students who identified themselves *like* the youth at the onset, having grown up in similar low-income or urban environs or similar cultural contexts, these students frequently entered the fieldwork experience already "seeing each other in each other," already imagining that they were "just like" the local youth population. Some of these university students could relate easily and naturally with inner city students; more easily in fact than with college peers at times. For several of these students who assumed that they were "just like" local youth, reflection on their differences emerged as a turning point over the course of the semester. They experienced points of reckoning about raced, classed, ethnic, educational, and geographic identities and disparities, exposing how the "just like" sentiment reflected a hopeful, yet ultimately, color and class blind perspective.

Undergraduates' differences in migratory routes and changing conceptions of sameness and difference, self and others, illuminate ways in which programs promoting individual change play out differently depending on varying starting points and positions. Moreover, frequently, students registered change in thinking at one level, namely the individual level, but not at the structural level. Thus, where students began and where they traveled conceptually reflected a complex chemistry of variables, including their own backgrounds, previous exposure to similar cultural contexts, and program-specific details.

Reviewing the Terrain: Multiculturalism and Neoliberalism in the U.S.

Intersecting ideals drawing from multiculturalism, neoliberalism, and colorblind ideology inform this chapter, co-constituting the "just like us" toolkit. As discussed in Chapter One, multicultural education is understood generally as an approach to teaching and learning that prepares students to function in today's increasingly diverse society (Banks, 2008; Campbell, 2010; Gordon & Newfield, 1996). Liberal multiculturalism remains the dominant ideological approach in American schools to this day. Although various strands of multiculturalism proliferate, including conservative and liberal, pluralist and critical, the predominant version generally centers around honoring cultural richness, diversity, individual opportunity, and promoting empowerment and success through hard work and equal opportunity (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Within this version of multiculturalism, a focus on individual and cultural "difference" emerges as a central tenet, emphasizing an appreciation of cultural, racial, and ethnic traditions. Talk of "diversity" buzzes through curriculum and development and teacher education training; all colors of the rainbow are validated; all ethnicities, languages, and religions, honored.

The liberal approach has secured itself as the pre-eminent multicultural philosophy guiding education policies, practices, and curricula since the 1980s. However, some more left-leaning visions of multiculturalism advocate for more critical engagement with structural inequalities, seeing race, class, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality as axes of power which intersect to create differential oppressions and experiences. More progressive strands of multiculturalism aim to problematize whiteness, heteronormativity, and class privilege. Currently the kind of multiculturalism that undergirds most educational projects in the US, including university-

community programs, reflect a more liberal humanist approach, which promote learning about each other through descriptive means, with the individual as the primary unit of analysis. Hope, honor, and respect for diversity reverberate through these mainstream multicultural approaches.

Beneath the hopeful veneer of liberal multiculturalism, however, exists an inadvertent muting of inequality, as difference is addressed descriptively and superficially, according to some critics. The contemporary discourse focusing on equality that permeates public schools and other social institutions reflect the core of liberal humanism. This focus on equal opportunity asserts power but with insidious effects (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Buras, 2008; Leonardo, 2005). Critics of liberal multiculturalism or mainstream multiculturalism point out how "difference" becomes something to acknowledge minimally and to handle gingerly via school holiday fairs, ethnic festivals, and other one-size-fits-all celebratory units. Multicultural curriculum, programs, and policies therefore fail to unsettle inequality and lived disparities in any substantial way (Davis, 1996; Leonardo, 2005; Newfield & Gordon, 1996; Sen, 1999; Tannock, 2005). I argue that the "just like us" framework grows out of a multicultural ethos that predominates most of the schools and institutions that American young people grew up with, reflecting a multicultural nod toward difference while ultimately promoting colorblind language and practices. Most of the university-community participants were versed in the politically correct language of difference, as public schools' curriculum and pedagogy often give lip service to honoring diversity (Gordon & Newfield, 1996; Trainor, 2008). In fact, by high school, most students have internalized ways of talking about difference, while learning hard lessons on the ground about striving to be like others to fit in. "Just like us" reflects then an equality-minded way of thinking that threads through the fabric of multicultural U.S.A. As a theoretical toolkit and conceptual framework, "just like us" performs multiple maneuvers. It illuminates the hopeful side of multicultural appreciation of cultural richness and equality across difference; however, it also exposes the pernicious effects of colorblind neoliberal ideology that mute critical interventions in unsettling structures of inequality.

Furthermore, I have come to think of "just like us" as a framework of difference that helps us understand how students on both sides of the university-community hyphen came to make sense of each other in various ways. Ultimately, however, young people's diverse experiences represented different dimensions of this framework of difference. Proficient in the discourse of diversity, most of the university students presumed that dissimilar perspectives and backgrounds would form a gulf between themselves and individuals from the community site. Most of these young people, however, were then relieved to realize that the other was "just like" themselves. This perspective, this reckoning that the other is in fact "just like" oneself reflects a colorblind philosophy that serves as a dominant cultural lens in mainstream society. Such a sentiment may be nurtured by meritocratic ideals and the neoliberal concept of equality for all, with the individual social actor as the privileged perspective (Hochschild, 1996; McNamee & Miller, 2004; Tannock, 2005). Meritocracy reigns supreme in contemporary American educational systems, rewarding those who work hard in order to succeed in a competitive knowledge economy. Aiming for college and higher education as the penultimate goal reflects a modern-day hegemonic meritocratic social order according to some critics (Grubb & Lazerson, 2004; Sen, 1999; Tannock, 2005). Such a liberal standpoint, with the individual as the locus of change, orients contemporary educational and political ideology, and undergirds most university-community programming (Alperovitz, et al., 2008; Benson et al., 2000; Harkavy, 1997; Harkavy et al., 1992; Soska & Butterfield, 2004).

Iterations of the "just like us" framework could also been seen with students who

presumed similarity or sameness from the beginning. Many of these students who assumed they were "just like" local high school students, however, reconciled substantial variation in their life experiences, thereby challenging rather than affirming the precepts of meritocracy that they had bought into. Despite their heartfelt desire to see themselves as the same as disadvantaged urban youth of color, both Tess and Vijay, for example, were forced to acknowledge that their positions of privilege at a top research institution may not have been granted *solely* by hard work and bootstrap-determination as they had wanted to believe. Moreover, these students grappled with painful lessons of difference and sameness, equality and inequality, highlighting the powerful grip of meritocratic ideology over our lives. In general, despite student participants' rich variation in experience with the university-community programs, analysis using the "just like us" toolkit affords a window into how colorblind racism, meritocracy, and multiculturalism have become internalized and institutionalized in our particular historical moment of neoliberalism. This is a framework that also brings to life larger investments in hope through education projects.

Imagining Likeness: A Lesson in Engaging the Hyphen

For students in both CRP150 and the education collaborative, feelings of familiarity at the site often led to positive associations despite initial perceptions of difference. At Washington High, several university mentors voiced "surprise" at how different the culture of the school was from what they expected, and, accordingly, how different the students were from what they imagined they might be like. Some noted that the high schoolers were "quiet" and "skilled." One student, Ellie, recorded her emotional response in her field note after the first site visit:

> Today was my first day in Mr. G's 4th period US History class, and I was impressed. Before today, I was nervous; but today's trip has drastically calmed my fears. Washington High School reminds me of my high school. Walking through the hallways took me back in time to my high school years, and I found myself wanting to connect with all of the students—even if I was only able to meet their eyes for a quick moment (Ellie, FN 1, February 12, 2009).

In this example, similar to data that drove Chapter Three, we can see how feelings informed Ellie's impression of the place, which then informed her impression of the people who inhabited the classroom context, namely the local high school students. Ellie was reassured to find that the local high school "reminds me of my old high school" and this perceived sense of likeness or familiarity with the urban, poor high school "drastically" assuaged her nerves and made her feel that the students might be just like her former high school peers. This kind of value judgment was activated through the realm of embodied emotions as she admitted that even walking through the physical space of the hallways took her back to her own high school; the fact that she could *imagine* Washington like her former school, implied to her that the students attending the school might also be like her former peers. In this example, evolving impressions of the place shaped her changing impressions of the people. Also, embodied and emotional responses shaped theory development in notable ways, as Ellie was able to "see each other in each other," hypothesizing that Washington students might be "just like" youth from her own high school. Ellie's anticipatory fear before arriving at Washington was therefore rooted in assumptions that local urban youth would be *unlike* herself. On the metaphoric continuum operating at the individual level, Ellie briefly situated herself on the "different" side of the continuum, but relatively quickly, she re-positioned herself closer to "sameness" side of things, as she saw familiarity in the faces of the local youth milling through the school hallways. For

Ellie, a shift to respect and intimacy did not take much time at all; she developed this rough assessment after just one day on the site. For other undergraduates, easing into a relative comfort zone took more time.

The level of organization and control that the high school teachers maintained proved significant in undergraduates' evolving theories about people and places. The variable nature of each teacher's style and structure largely impacted undergraduates' assessments and evaluations of the academic culture of the entire high school, demonstrating the power of affective experiences in theory construction, as described in Chapter Three. One CRP150 undergraduate doing fieldwork at Washington commented on how the level of classroom structure impacted her perception of the students. She mused:

> The class itself was either very well behaved and/or shy at having six strangers in the room. In general Mr. J seems to have very good control in the class. The kids appear to respect him, and he is respectful back to the kids. The class also seems structured very well. The class starts everyday with a worksheet warm-up (Eva, FN 1, February 13, 2009).

This window into the controlled and calm classroom culture informed Eva's positive impression of the students from the start. CRP150 students at Washington High may have been "surprised" at the composed environment based on stereotypes about urban schools, as well as by the way the school representatives initially painted pictures of heightened anxiety in the school on the first day. As mentioned in Chapter Two, at Washington, the teachers and guidance counselors framed the high school as a "safe space" amidst a highly disadvantaged urban community that had faced dramatic amounts of youth violence as of late and that was dealing with questions surrounding the future of the school. According to school staff, five students from Washington High had been shot since the beginning of the school year, and the school community was feeling a sense of upheaval. As one guidance counselor explained to the CRP150 students at the onset of the program, "It's been a real rough time at Washington, but these kids have the fighting spirit. They're fighters" (EG, FN 1, February 9, 2009, CRP150). Left to the "urban imagination" (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007), images of disarray and youth violence may have lodged into the minds of students. However, as evidenced here through Eva and Ellie's brief descriptions, interacting with one particular "respected" teacher and his classroom shaped perceptions of the kind of student and level of engagement that they came to expect from the school.

Additionally, Eva's assessment of the culture of the classroom informed her overall impressions of the ability level of the students. Her field note continued:

> We (the mentors) all learned about the incredible abilities of everyone in the class—and how wide ranging they are and helpful they (the high school students) will undoubtedly be!! A handful of kids could talk about what urban planners do, and several more knew how to build a house!! I was really surprised to see how attentive and respectful the students were. They all were eager to listen (and I'm sure, glad to have a break from the monotonous classroom routine) (Eva, FN 2, Feb. 28, 2009).

Here, Eva expressed her genuine surprise and reassurance that the students were so ambitious, which she could relate to as a student at a prestigious institution of higher education, and also that the students were respectful to their teacher. Moreover, in many cases, developing

theories about individuals' academic levels as well as the surrounding socio-cultural contexts were connected to particular teachers' classroom management styles, degrees of familiarity with the "feel" of the school and urban site, and finally, relate-ability to the student populations. Needless to say, assessments evolved over time. In these examples spotlighting Ellie and Eva, we can see how university students who felt that the local sites reminded them of their former high schools developed favorable impressions of the youth and the urban schools. Employing the "just like us" framework, these examples, though subtle, highlight gradations of change that took place over time. Not all change, therefore, was dramatic, but these examples point to the ways that "seeing each other in each other" enabled positive engagement as participants were able to imagine likeness, rather than difference.

Becoming "Just Like Us"?: Underlying Aims of University-Community Programs

Using the "just like us" heuristic, we can see how many undergraduates' ached to see the youth as a reflection of themselves, as academic, ambitious, and disciplined, representing the middle class, meritocratic ethos that guides schooling in the U.S. This perspective, this reckoning that the other is in fact "just like" oneself, reflects an American, colorblind, meritocratic ideology that serves as a dominant cultural lens in mainstream society. Such a sentiment may be nurtured by the neoliberal concept of equality for all, with the individual social actor as the privileged perspective (Tannock, 2007). This liberal standpoint, with the individual as the locus of change, orients contemporary educational and political ideology, and undergirds most university-community programming.

As discussed earlier, an implicit and sometimes explicit goal of such programs, including the two studied, is to promote a "college-going culture," exposing primarily under-resourced youth to academic and social opportunities that might be beyond their purview. We are reminded of the guidance counselor's hopeful declaration before CRP150 students on their first day in class. He implored, "This may be these students *one chance to rub elbows with college kids*" (Italics, mine). Undercurrents of hope for what the youth might become lay at the root of this school counselor's set-up. Accordingly, the university mentors and tutors recognized the fundamental, albeit nebulous, goal to engage, inspire, and offer academic and personal guidance. Despite varying amounts of tutoring or mentoring training, and differential degrees of consciousness related to their roles, most undergraduates recognized the weight of their presence in under-resourced schools. As Caroline testified in the field note that began the chapter, she approached her role as an academic tutor at an underserved continuation school with a primary goal in mind. "I was all prepared to offer hope and encouragement and to assure these students that they were smart and that they just had to keep working hard and they would succeed" (FN 1). Beliefs in meritocracy echo through this selection, reflecting in part the ideological premise of education programs such as Caroline's tutoring program at Haven. For most university-community programs, including both CRP150 and the education collaborative, a central goal was to promote a liberal-minded sense of equal opportunity and meritocracy so that urban youth might be college kids too someday — so that they might become "*just like us.*"

This analysis of the programs is, of course, a generalization and an embellishment indeed. However, I deploy this level of hyperbole to call attention to at least some degree of the unwritten and unspoken goals at the heart of university-community programs and outreach in general: to make the other like ourselves. My intention here is not to cast judgment, but to illuminate the potentially narcissistic nature of education and outreach ventures at large. As aspirations for uplift lie at the heart of most educative projects in the progressive era, I am

neither proposing that education as we know it be entirely abandoned; however, I would like to point out the ways in which implicit aims to promote a college-going, "work-hard and you will succeed" experience reflects middle class values and belief systems. Such versions of success reflect neoliberal aspirations for upwardly mobile populations in a meritocracy, highly skilled in today's "knowledge economy" (Tannock, 2005).

Understanding Inequality: Undergraduates Weave Theories

Curriculum accompanying fieldwork generally presented a blend of explanatory frameworks to help students understand their experiences in the field. Individual, socio-cultural, as well as structural theories were presented through course materials. However, as this section argues, undergraduates generally utilized theories that they entered with in order to make sense of educational disparities that they witnessed. These theories were divided into two kinds of statements: theories related to individual or cultural frameworks, and those that were constructed in relation to one's own history. First, I will spotlight the ways in which some undergraduates rationalized deficit-based thinking through individual-oriented theories, which largely deployed constructs of difference.

Individual blame.

In mandatory field note assignments, most undergraduates tried to establish a rubric within which to understand the academic, structural, and cultural differences of the high school students from their own backgrounds or norms. Forging through processes of sense-making about the fieldwork, many undergraduates developed emerging theories about why local students' skills were generally "way below par" (Edwin, FN 2). Often university students linked Haven and Washington High students' academic capacities and apparent academic commitment to individual teachers' efficacy. For example, Sue expounded:

> To me it seemed the reason she (Raven) did not understand the material was because the teacher was not able to communicate with her one on one to help her, and that she needed more attention when it came to math. I feel that the reason students in this school are not up to the standards that my high school, and many other high schools had is because the students that *do* want to learn to get ahead are receiving less attention because all the attention is directed toward students who act out and are uncooperative (Sue, FN 1, February 7, 2009).

In this example, Sue charged students as well as the teachers for the perceived low level of academic standards. She sought to attribute the complex social phenomenon related to the "achievement gap" to individual behaviors. Although the course curriculum supporting Sue's fieldwork introduced multiple frameworks for understanding inequality, in this field note, Sue relied on individual-based theories for making sense of academic incongruities between her own former high school and the local site.

Interestingly, the official curriculum of the Education course that Sue was enrolled in equipped her with broader socio-cultural theories to employ as tools to understand her fieldwork[45]. However, at this early stage of the fieldwork, ideas and images already in circulation

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[45] Curriculum that supported theorizing about educational inequalities and relations of power included readings from Lisa Delpit (1995), Paolo Freire (1970), Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1986), Mike Rose (1989), Geneva Smitherman (1998), Beverly Tatum (1997), David Hilfiker (2002), Peggy McIntosh (1988), and many other educators, historians, and social critics. Focused on expanding students definitions of literacy to include "ways of reading the

based on the "urban imagination" (Leonardo & Hunter, 2007) occupied Sue's mind and she relied on assumptions and theories that she came in with to make sense of the inequality she witnessed. Many university students yearned to understand the relative disparity between local schools' academic levels and the caliber of academic rigor from their former high schools, as they remembered it. The element of time may have had exerted influence in the way that judgments about the local academic context played out.

One young man named David, a Filipino-American transfer student from southern California, struggled to make sense of pedagogic choices that seemed ineffective to him, and he thought back on his own high school experience frequently. He would note each week after spending the afternoon in Mrs. Harrison's math classroom that the Haven teacher relied heavily on worksheets, which made him reflect on his own high schools' teaching methods and academic culture. Week after week, in his field notes, he commented on the amount of "busy work" (FN 7) the students did as the teacher consistently handed out dittos at the beginning of class. He maintained that the worksheets were a "waste of time" (FN 7) and noted that the high school students had "no motivation to work at all" (FN 7) in part because the teachers' assignments lacked creativity, and seemed to encourage "regurgitation" (FN 7), rather than genuine inquiry. In his field notes, he sought to make sense of pedagogy and the implications of Mrs. Harrison's choices, but his hypotheses about the academic level extended beyond the reach of this one particular classroom. He looked to the surrounding communities, families, and cultural contexts for explanations for the academic disparities he witnessed. In field note 9, David speculated as to why "Mrs. Harrison relies heavily on worksheets with her students." He mused:

> Maybe it's because she doesn't want to deal with the stress and hard concentration it takes to teach kids who have low levels of motivation. So she uses these worksheets to sort of mask that whole problem. But the real problem is not being solved, it is just being suppressed for a time being….While the whole chaos was happening in Block C, I noticed another possible reason why Mrs. Harrison relies heavily on worksheets in her curriculum. I noticed that none of the students had backpacks. Many of the girls were carrying large bags that were purses and none of the male students carried backpacks, or at least none of the male students in Mrs. Harrison's math class. So is this a legitimate reason for the use of worksheets? Is it is because Mrs. Harrison knows that these students don't even bring paper or any other school supplies with them. So what does that say about the school? Or the families or backgrounds where these students come from? Or the neighborhood this school is in? Or the rules that require or don't require students to be prepared for a school day? Because I remember throughout my pre-college education, one of the main rules always was to be prepared at all times. You were moderately punished for not being prepared at times. So maybe the reasons for the usage of worksheets throughout Mrs. Harrison's math courses are due to (1) dealing with a lack of motivation, and/or (2) counter balancing the effects of low school supplies (David, FN 9, April 24, 2009).

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world" from a socio-cultural perspective, the literacy course was grounded in critical theories and literature that attended to intersections of race, class, ethnicity, language, education, and relations of power.

In this example, David's attempt to make sense of the ways in which Mrs. Harrison's teaching methods differed from the way he remembered his own high school experience, led him to construct deficit-based theories about an entire set of cultural contexts that extended beyond one classroom. Here, David drew a sharp line between the continuation school and his former high school, thereby emphasizing that they were *not* "just like" each other. Using memory of his own high school standards as the norm, David grappled with what the use of worksheets and the lack of backpacks revealed about students' motivation and academic potential, about families' commitment to their children's learning, and about the quality of the neighborhood overall. He reached to make sense of things, relying on relatively reductive analysis, noting material distinctions from his own former high school, which, in turn, led him to postulate about what the overall lack signified. David's field note suggests judgment about the community as he employed a "culture of poverty" framework to understand the differences that he observed. His memory, animated through the imagination, served to concretize a moral high ground and low ground between what he experienced as a high school student and what he witnessed at Haven High. Furthermore, the imagination plays a critical role in David's theory-construction about others. Time blurred conceptions of his past and shaped his impressions of people and places in the present as he remembered a high school that seemed to care about investments in learning, as demonstrated through the material evidence of backpacks and writing materials. By contrast, he read Mrs. Harrison's classroom and even the school, neighborhood and community at large as negligent and academically apathetic. This cultural argument differed from individual-oriented frameworks that other undergraduates espoused at the beginning of the fieldwork, both of which were iterations of the "just like us" analytic. Primarily students looked to individuals or their cultural contexts as "the" reason for any number of observed problems.

Notably, David may have just been trying out ideas, rather than making concrete conclusions about people and places, however, it is still significant to note the ways individual and cultural frameworks were employed to hypothesize about educational inequalities. These frameworks of difference are constructed alongside the "just like us" framework. "Just like us" reflects a colorblind desire to see each other as the same, as equals. This sentiment, which courses through contemporary curriculum, policies, and discourse, is co-constructed with "culture of poverty" frameworks of difference, I argue. Speaking crudely, "just like us" vs. "they're *so* different"[46], could both be imagined as conceptual toolkits of sorts, reflecting different sides of the same continuum. On the one hand, we are all the same in a liberal-minded, colorblind society; but on the other, if difference exists, it's cultural, national, ethnic, linguistic, geographic racial, or any other (you fill in the blank) socio-cultural variable that can and should be blamed for such differential experiences and inequalities. "Just like us" as an all-encompassing designation of identity is co-produced then by categories of difference.

Cultural frameworks.

Through close study of students' ethnographic material, we can see how the field notes become a canvas for university students to explore theory construction, to stretch their observational and analytic "legs," so to speak, to understand the lived experience. We can also see how reductive claims were tried out through writing, as some students sought to theorize

[46] As discussed in earlier chapters, this phrase and versions of this phrase, as well as ways that both people and places were designated as "different" re-occurred repeatedly throughout undergraduates' field notes and in classroom discourse at the beginning stages of the fieldwork experience.

about entire sets of conditions and experiences. Frequently, university students attributed a range of observed "issues" to a solitary reason rather than examining intersecting variables of race, class, culture, geography, educational pathways, ethnicity, and more.

Relying on singular axes for theory construction has been problematized historically via various disciplinary critiques which have asserted the importance of looking to the "co-formation" of variables of power (Baccheta, 2007), the "intersectional" ways identities can be understood (Crenshaw, 1991), and the importance of "integrated frameworks" for analysis (Glenn, 1999). It must be acknowledged, however, that through the field note assignment, students were not charged with developing sophisticated analyses each week through their field notes in either university-community collaborative. The exercise was primarily one of ethnographic observation, a first dabble into sociological methodology. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note how singular variables, such as a teacher's use of worksheets, the sight of backpacks, or, as we will see in the next example, the use of memorization and repetition in mathematics, all of which are visible and audible symbols of a middle class educational norm, were often honed in on in field notes to glean larger meaning about complex phenomenon.[47] As mentioned, many students sought to rely on the sameness versus difference binary, as if such explanatory frameworks might be sufficient to explain a range of experiences and conditions.

Other students generated theories about the academic culture as a whole in the urban context, relying on different analytic tools. Some sought to blame the "environment" (Edwin, FN 2, February 17, 2009) of the urban school for high school students' skills rather than individual teachers, per se. This maneuver activated a different sort of cultural analytics, moving the focus of blame from the neighborhood and families, to the schools themselves. Edwin shared:

> Yet, what shocked me most today was that Keola didn't know how to add. She told me that she wanted to be a surgeon when she grows up, but her math skills are way below par. I know that it is not her, but rather her *environment* and her *lack of practice through repetition*. This saddened me greatly, and I really wish that these kids will learn. I hope that by the end of this semester I can spark a light below them, and teach them to love learning (Italics, mine) (Edwin, FN 2, February 17, 2009).

In this example, we can see how this student grasped to make sense of the blatant skill differential between students from his former high school and Haven High. Edwin internalized the achievement gap that he witnessed and confessed that he experienced great sadness at the realization of the students' relative lack of skills, which he then concluded must also mean a relative inability to learn. As we see here, Edwin hoped to "spark a light below them and teach them to love learning," thereby implying that Haven students' antipathy to learning was a critical reason for their low level performances. Here, like David, Edwin blends both individual and cultural frameworks for understanding inequality.

Beyond Edwin and David, many others attributed students' perceived lack of ambition to specific environmental or cultural conditions. Especially at the beginning of the fieldwork experience, a few students experienced anger and frustration at what they observed as well as interactions they had. Many university students clung to belief in a colorblind, meritocratic

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[47] In the Education class, the instructor and teaching team were actively engaged in providing feedback on each students' field notes each week as a way of helping students to develop theories and make observations thoughtfully and thoroughly. In the CRP 150 class, the teaching team read field notes, but did not make comments.

society and the American dream, and they were reticent to alter their long-standing ideals. For example, Sue expressed frustration with the high school students she encountered for their lack of ambition and apathy. The following section is taken from a field note in which Sue describes an incident with a student who refused her help with homework. The Haven student explained that there is no point in doing her homework because she's black and "will never go to college" (FN 3). Sue recounted the incident in her field note.

> I asked her why she did not start the homework, even though she had unfinished work to do. Her response was that she did not want to do it. I then asked her why she did not want to do it and her response was that she felt there was no point in doing her homework because she was not planning to go to college and therefore grades had no importance to her. After hearing this, I dug deeper. I asked her why she did not want to go to college, and then explained the advantages of continuing to higher education. Her response was simple, and shocking. She half-heartedly, and somewhat jokingly stated, "I am Black, I will never go to college." Of course after hearing this I tried to persuade her otherwise, and asked her why she would think that way. She simply just got annoyed at my questions and kept replying with the same "I don't know" answer (Sue, FN 3, February 24, 2009).

In the Reflection section of Sue's field note, she came back to this interchange, which left a significant impression on her.

> I feel that these kids are conditioned so much in their home, neighborhood, and societal environments that they are unable to succeed because of their race. As much as that might be true, that there is discrimination in the workplace, I feel that the way this student said it to me was almost a flat out excuse to be lazy and not to complete her assigned homework. As horrible as it may sound, I observed this student goof off, disrespect the teacher and her peers, and distracted others during the entire E-Block Tutoring session. Even though her peers were the same race as her, their views on the world were not as negative as she put them out to be. I feel that at this point in time society is not the cruel place she makes it out to be. We have people of color in high positions in companies; we have a president of color. Race should not be a limiting factor, and in her case it is an excuse not to do her work (Sue, FN 3, February 24, 2009).

In this impassioned field note, Sue wrestles with complex topics that circulate in contemporary, neoliberal American discourse—conversations about playing the "race card" in a supposedly "post-racial" moment, as well as who is to blame for social inequities. This jam-packed field note reiterates much of the rhetoric that occupies neoliberal America about inequality and the purported meritocracy that defines our nation, as well as the supposedly passé state of racial politics. Sue leans on tropes that stem from larger conservative ideology about the "undeserving poor" (Lewis, 1961; Katz, 1990) who expect handouts, make excuses, and play the race card to try to get ahead. She reads the student's disinterest in doing her homework as a clear sign of her own individual failure as a student, rather than a reflection of a multiplicity of socio-cultural, institutional, as well as individual factors.

Additionally, Sue takes this students' rejection of her help and her statement that she won't go to college because she's black at face value. Her uncritical reflection on the student's reasons for making such a claim led her to sweeping generalizations about students' choice to

believe "they are unable to succeed because of their race." Such racialized rhetoric is hammered into their heads, she believes, in their "homes, neighborhoods, and societal environments." Although it is unclear exactly what "societal environments" refers to in Sue's mind we may deduce that she attributes this conditioning to the cultural contexts of urban, low-income communities of color. She repeats her firm conviction that "at this point in time, society is not the cruel place she makes it out to be" and asserts that race has become "an excuse" to fail. With this statement, Sue echoes the commonplace belief that forms the bedrock of the colorblind, meritocractic ideology that is dominant in the U.S. Many, like Sue, believe that racism is dead; that the race debate is over-played at this historical moment, and that *merit*, not racial, ethnic, or any other socio-cultural position, should enable opportunity and mobility. Moreover, Sue's field note reveals a photonegative, so to speak, of the "just like us" sentiment, as she articulates a distinct understanding of difference between herself, also a young woman of color, from the Haven student, who, she believes is limiting herself, not being limited *by* a set of institutionalized constraints. Reflecting the hallmark of colorblind ideology, which trains us to be "blind" to race, and by extension, racism, Sue rejects race as an influential variable, preferring to see the student's academic failure as self-imposed.

At this relatively early stage of the fieldwork, Sue expressed a sense of frustration with the student for espousing such a statement linking college opportunity, or lack thereof, and blackness. Although this student may have been speaking in a somewhat flip way in part to be alarmist, it is clear that Sue took the student's claim at face value. However, as some undergraduates came to realize, occasionally high school students chose to "mess" with the undergraduate at first, perhaps as a way to manipulate the power dynamics in an unequal relationship. It was quite common, especially at the onset of the undergraduate's arrival at the field site, for high school students to test the undergraduates, to play up the stereotypes about urban youth for shock value. Many undergraduates remarked how high school students "played" them, or tried to impress them with hyperbole about life in the ghetto, especially if the university student seemed particularly naive or out of place.

In the incident with Sue that I have just reviewed, we can only speculate as to the young woman's intention for claiming that doing her homework was futile, as she wouldn't be attending college due to her race. Perhaps, she was flustered with Sue's persistent badgering about homework, even though this was exactly what Sue had been instructed to do[48]. Or perhaps the young woman was resistant to the fact that tutors the same age as her were in her classroom in authority roles, or perhaps she was simply being flip and wanted to get Sue off her back. Or perhaps she felt it was true; her racial status as a black woman would severely limit her chances to attend college. Whatever the reason, we can see how this claim riled Sue and left an impression that helped reaffirm some of her stereotypes about "underprivileged" (FN 1) youth of color as lazy and unmotivated, holistically different from herself.

Consequently, we identify how a framework of difference is mobilized as Sue's frustration with the one student's rejection of her help, was then extended to all "these kids" who she theorized "have been conditioned" to believe in racial determinism. In this field note, we can

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[48] Tutors were encouraged to ask more than once if high school students had homework or needed help. Often, high school students would initially say that they did not have homework, and did not need help; but after initial warm-up conversation, it was common for students to admit that they *did* have homework and could use some assistance. It remained a challenge for many university students to succeed in getting high school students to take out their work though. Some tutors tried to engage with youth in a more informal, conversational way as a way into the academic realm.

see how the rationale of a colorblind society has infiltrated Sue's mindset, reflecting an ideology in which race is no longer a legitimized as a valid organizing principle which informs one's life chances (Pollock, 2004a). In a post-racial moment, according to Sue, "society is not the cruel place she makes it out to be," as evidenced by the fact that we have "people of color in high positions in companies; we have a president of color." These indicators of progress are testament to Sue, moreover, that this student and others who "goofed off," rejected schoolwork, and struggled academically, *chose* to fail, thereby choosing their own downwardly mobile life. In this example, race is deployed as a scapegoat, according to Sue, an "excuse to be lazy."

Sue's sentiments echo much of the recent mainstream thinking about race in a particularly heightened moment of colorblind, post-racial rhetoric. Talk about race and racism is thought to be passé, as evidenced by the election of a black U.S. president in a nation that seems to be generally exhausted with conversations about race and racial inequalities. In the past two decades, vicious debates about affirmative action, multiculturalism, and diversity in the workplace and in schools, have invoked conversations about who "deserves" jobs, resources, and support and how *merit*, not race, should be the deciding factor in granting opportunities (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Gordon & Newfield, 1996). These public and private dialogues about race and mobility often circle back to the age-old belief that, in the United States of America, if you work hard, you will succeed. Success has no color according to the American mythos. Failure to succeed is, therefore, a personal defeat, rather than a complex puzzle of institutionalized racism, structural inequalities, and lack of access piled onto individual circumstance, all of which become written onto the body and mind.

In the above examples with Sue, David, and Edwin, each student mobilized difference to make sense of their contexts. In unique ways, all three students honed in on observed deficits at various levels (individual, cultural, and structural) related to the community contexts, employing an inverse of the sentiment "just like us." All relied on frames of difference to ultimately help make sense of the data they were seeing. Underlying all of their observations and related theory-construction was the assumption that if "they" really worked, if they tried harder to overcome their failed circumstances, then they too could be "*just like us.*" Leaning on a binary of sameness versus difference enabled students to make sense of the inequalities to which they were exposed. However, as many students demonstrated through increasingly nuanced and complex, and in some cases disillusioned, reflections over time, this binary framing of sameness versus difference proved to be overly deterministic and limiting.

Changing Perspectives Over Time: A Portrait of Sue

I selected the previous examples to highlight how personal experiences at the individual level at a particular moment in time often produced a ripple effect and facilitated theory construction related to other levels of analysis. Looking at Sue's change over time, therefore, grants an opportunity to see how students evidenced various degrees of growth and learning over the course of the semester. Sue began the fieldwork with admittedly entrenched beliefs about the "different" values she was certain she would witness amongst urban communities of color and her own deficit-based beliefs about urban schools held sway from the beginning (FN 1, 8). She admitted stereotypical conceptions about the students, the site of the urban school, and the kind of education she imagined she would find. Initial encounters with youth seemed to reaffirm her own stereotypes, as seen through the exchange above with the young woman who claimed she didn't want to do her homework because she was a black student and therefore wouldn't be going to college anyway, as a black student. Sue seemed to extend examples of individual

encounters to theorize about entire populations and contexts. She admitted, "I definitely had judgments coming into this program. I thought that these students *chose* to do poorly in school and get in trouble" (FN 8). However, over time, Sue demonstrated evolution in her thinking about urban "others." While she was not transformed, flaunting radical change, the development that did take place was nonetheless striking.

In this next section, I examine selections from several of Sue's field notes in chronologic to identify Sue's shift in perspective over time, examining how her theorizations about sameness and difference, ability and academic drive, individual and cultural contexts, race and class, as well as other topics, grew more complex. I will not include the entirety of each field note, just targeted, albeit extended portions, focusing on her engagement with one student named Bianca. I have marked selected phrases or sentences in bold font to call attention to sentiments which seem to exert influence in theory construction about people and places. Although many of the details of Sue's field notes may seem mundane, it is critical to do a close reading of her notes to unpack how development in thinking took place and what precipitated changes in perspective. Many undergraduates did not work consistently with one student each week, thus it was often harder to locate changes in perspectives via emerging relationships. Therefore, Sue's field notes, which document her sustained relationship with Bianca over a period of a few months, offer an opportunity for close study.

Sue, Field Note 2, February 17, 2009

The entire E-Block session I helped Bianca, a 12th grade student, with her Algebra 2 homework. She was 18 years old and was a little chubby. Her hair was long and unkept [sic], while her clothes also mirrored the way she kept her hair. Bianca's homework covered basic graphing, which included plotting points and drawing lines, and also finding slopes and y-intercepts of lines. **The main problem I found with Bianca was that I would explain something to her and she would forget it right after I would be done explaining**. I then would write down a step by step process of how to do a problem, and she would then look at the problem I wrote out and copy the exact method. It was very difficult for me to teach her how to graph because such simple concepts, such as the difference between negative and positive numbers, were very hard for her to grasp. I found myself repeating -5 - 5= -10, not 0. **Overall I felt that Bianca had no motivation**. She was very bored with her homework and did not seem to take it seriously. Towards the end of our tutoring session I left to use the restroom briefly after I felt she had a good understanding of her homework. I came back to find that she did not try to complete the problem we were working on and instead she went off to goof off with her friend.

Coming to Haven I fully expected to be dealing with students that were at a significantly lower education level than I was. For an example, Bianca is not much younger than I am, to be exact, probably a couple months, but the math she was going over was something I learned almost four years ago. **The difference between us is that I had the resources and the motivation to keep up with my homework and reinforce my math foundation, whereas the only attention and resource Bianca got with her math homework was with me. The teacher was mostly busy 'taming' the students** and trying to get them to open their

books to start their homework. I must say though, I was flattered when the teacher went up to me before E-Block and requested that I help Bianca with her homework. It made me feel wanted and needed. But as I started working with Bianca, I realized it was not Bianca's desire to learn that got the teacher to request me, but rather it was the teacher's need for control in the classroom that requested me. I now understand why these students, Bianca in particular, do not have the motivation to succeed or simply do their homework. These students are focused on the other students that are disruptive to class and make the classroom very unorganized. I also have the feeling that Bianca does not see the significance in Algebra 2, or math in general. Hopefully on my next visit I can inspire her to succeed and for her to make the most out of her time at school.

Sue, Field Note 4, March 5, 2009

During this trip I decided to continue helping Bianca with her math homework. The trimester at Haven was set to end on Friday so it was imperative that Bianca work efficiently all her unfinished homework. We worked on squares, square roots, and Pythagorean Theorem. To my surprise, she was able to complete most of her homework without my help. Because I had to help her so closely the last few times I tutored her, I had a skewed perception of what she was capable of. She was able to quickly calculate squares after I reminded her of the few basic rules for squaring. When it came to square roots she was also able to calculate them quickly. I was really happy that even though E-Block was over, she continued to listen to me, and practice with me the problems that I had made up for her, so that she could work on and finish her homework at home.

Being able to see Bianca want to learn and understand the concepts I was teaching changed my entire perception of her. I used to think that she just did not want to learn and was not trying, however, seeing her want me to stay behind after school to help her shows that she wants to understand and she wants to be able to do her homework by herself. I think that earlier when I was tutoring her, most of her actions were done out of frustration, not out her unwillingness to learn. However, I still feel like Bianca needs to build a better foundation.

Sue, Field Note 5, March 19, 2009

I decided to work with Bianca because I wanted her to get caught up with her schoolwork before she would be weighed down by piling assignments. As usual, she needed help with math homework and I was happy to help her with it. After completing all her work, we finally got a chance to talk a bit about her. **I just realized that even though I have been working with her for over a month that I know absolutely nothing about her. I wanted to know her story.** I started talking about the classes I was taking and about the classes that were related to my major. She was really interested in the psychology class I was taking. She did not completely understand what psychology covered, so I gave her an example of classical conditioning with Pavlov's dog. She was really interested in understand psychology and said that one day she would like to pursue a major in psychology. Bianca then asked about what kind of jobs come with a Psychology major. I told her about the many Psychology majors I know go into education, or continue to

pursue a medical degree and become a psychiatrist. **I was really surprised at her level of interest in psychology. All along I was under the impression that she wanted to get through high school, and her future was just a complete blur to her.**

Sue, Field Note 6, March 31, 2009

With Bianca, I discovered her problem was the basic arithmetic of a problem. For an example, something as simple as 1-(-1) is very difficult for her to grasp. Often she will come up with many different answers for that such as 2, 0, and sometimes 1. I do not want to go over negative numbers with her, but I feel that that is the sole source of the reasons she does badly on her homework. With Anjula, I definitely did a lot of comparing to Bianca when it came to tutoring her. Since they were both having trouble with math, I applied the same techniques I did with Bianca. Anjula was quick to catch on to the concepts I was teaching her. **Since Bianca has been at Haven for many years, I feel like her learning was hindered because she was in the Haven environment,** whereas Anjula was primarily at another high school before coming to Haven, where she learned how to approach math problems in a more structured way. I found that teaching Anjula was much easier and less frustrating. Anjula understood what I was talking about, whereas I felt myself repeating myself constantly when it came to Bianca.

Sue Field Note 8, April 25, 2009

When I saw the principal come in and announce a lockdown, I thought immediately that something was wrong, that possible the school was in danger. However, I saw all the students being calm I also calmed down. It is weird to see their reaction as opposed to mine. In my high school, if the principal ever personally came to a classroom, it meant that there was either some kind of tragedy, or that something was wrong with the school.

Observing Bianca was very interesting today. I have never really taken the chance to talk to her about her life or her goals in academia, but being able to hear her opinion was really interesting. I sympathize much more with her. **I definitely had judgements coming into this program. I thought that these students *chose* to do poorly in school and get in trouble**, **but really it is the environment they grow up in.** As much as parents shape a child, it is the environment around a child that really makes the impact.

Bianca is one of few that really seems to be able to snap out of the environment she was born into and be able to find her own thoughts, rather than conform and be those people in high school she did not want to become. I am personally very proud of her. I know the power of goals, especially if they revolve around their parents. From her actions and her drive, I can see that Bianca has so much potential to be great and I want to be there to be her stepping stone to her great future.

Sue Field Note 9, May 2, 2009

Going to Haven this week I had the mindset to create a video for Curtis's and my final reflection project. On the way to Haven I paid more attention to the details on the trip there, from leaving the ED180 classroom to actually arriving at Haven I took a series of photos of the journey to the tutoring site. More than ever I noticed the change in scenery from Kirkland to Ashland. When I arrived at Haven, I was greeted with warm faces and the casual, lively environment I witnessed at Kirkland. **It seems that Haven is a sanctuary for students to go to be expressive and be their fullest**. For my reflection I needed to get pictures of Haven, so I asked many of the students to pose and act in their natural setting. The students positively responded, and let me take multiple pictures of them and the school facility. While taking pictures I noticed the posters and other wall decorations that were put up around the school. For an example, I noticed a 'Going to College' poster, and a series of history posters plastered around the school. I feel this is very good as a motivator because it is a way to display individual achievement and words of encouragement.

Sue, Field Note 9, May 2, 2009

Over the last few weeks I have seen how Bianca has changed over time. I have seen her take concepts that even I do not remember teaching her, applied to things she was learning now. I know that when I was in high school, once the chapter test was over, all the concepts I learned would be emptied from my memory for the new information I would be receiving. However, I have observed that the way Bianca works is that she retains knowledge well and with practice and is able to apply all sorts of concepts together. **Seeing this kind of dedication to work really inspires me and makes me appreciate my education more.** So many people are working hard to get to where I am, and I should value every class I have and every opportunity thrown my way, just like she has. When tutors are there, she utilizes E-block time to get homework done, and to ask questions. However, as much as Bianca has improved, one thing I noticed is that she is nowhere where I want her to be. Many concepts are very shaky in her head, and if she were to advance mathematically, I do not think she would do particularly well. As much as I am confident in her drive to do well, without tutoring, I do not think she would be able to understand things on her own.

Iterations of change: Moving beyond the deficit frame.

Bianca and Sue's relationship over time articulates the university-community "hyphen" in distinct ways. The initial gulf that stretched between them diminished noticeably as both young women came to see each other in a new light. As the distance between them shrank, the metaphoric hyphen became less pronounced and an evolving sense of rapport developed. Despite — and perhaps because of — their varied academic, socio-cultural, ethnic, and geographic contexts they had begun to "bump up against each other" (Pratt, 1999) in new and generative ways. In particular, Sue evidenced notable change over time. Due to her experience at Haven and with Bianca, she reflected on her own education as valuable and a privilege and she realized some of the stereotypes and judgments that she had brought to the table at the beginning of her fieldwork. Additionally, as Sue observed Bianca's drive to succeed and her ambition, she developed empathy and respect for Bianca, whereas in the beginning, she read her as "having no

motivation" (FN 2), "very difficult" to teach (FN 2) and prone to "goof off" with friends. Also, at the outset, Sue used somewhat disparaging terms to describe Bianca, noting her appearance as "unkempt," and her learning style as problematic ("the main problem I found with Bianca was…."). Sue, however, re-framed her perspective on Bianca, the urban landscape, and Haven as a continuation school. Through Sue's notes, we can see the value of working with one student over time. Sue asserted that she could see "how Bianca has changed over time" (FN 9), but as readers, we observe *Sue's* development over time as perhaps more substantial than Bianca's.[49]

Sue's change in perspective seems to begin, according to her written documentation, when she witnessed Bianca's industriousness and ambition. Sue highly valued these two traits shaped by her secure position as a neoliberal subject on an upwardly mobile trajectory. Sue moreover only began to see Bianca in a more positive light, or as more *like* herself, when she demonstrated a thirst for knowledge, an efficiency in workmanship, and a longing to advance academically. In her fourth field note, Sue wrote, "Being able to see Bianca want to learn and understand the concepts I was teaching changed my entire perception of her" (FN 4). This surprising desire to learn made Sue re-evaluate Bianca, whom she had taken to be unmotivated and complacent with limited skill. In field note 5, Sue's reflexive process activated and she began to call into question her role as outside observer and mentor. Sue acknowledged how little she actually "knew" about Bianca despite tutoring her for the past five weeks. "I just realized that even though I have been working with her for over a month that I know absolutely nothing about her. I wanted to know her story" (FN 5). Sue recognized eventually that she only *thought* she knew Bianca based on her "shaky" math skills, "unkempt" appearance, and her admittedly biased impressions of both the Haven students and the site.

This evolving recognition of her own prejudice showed that she was beginning to genuinely interrogate the university-community hyphen and to dig deeper into the lived experiences of the people with whom she was engaging in the contact zone — as well as her own privileged positionality. At that point, Bianca became someone other than just a Haven student who Sue already thought she knew, and she became someone that Sue wanted to "know" (FN 5) and "see" (FN 8, 9) in a different way. "I wanted to know her story" (FN 5), Sue explained, thereby consciously shifting her own thinking about who Bianca was and what she stood for. In field note 8, Sue again acknowledged her own limits on how far she had to go in getting to know Bianca. She conceded, "I have never really taken the chance to talk to her about her life or her goals in academia, but being able to hear her opinion was really interesting. I sympathize much more with her" (FN 8). Sue's confessions over time reveal increasing awareness of her own role in the set of relationships and contexts comprising the contact zone.

Setting out to learn Bianca's story signifies that Sue had become willing and open to *re-imagine* urban youth, one at a time, and, to some extent, the urban context. Although Sue confessed in field note 5 that she knew "absolutely nothing" about Bianca despite working with her for over a month, her previous field note descriptions told a different narrative. For four weeks, she had chronicled her weekly attempts to tutor Bianca in math, and she projected a somewhat one-dimensional portrait of Bianca as an academic failure. However, after Sue's honest realization that she actually knew very little about Bianca as a person beyond her math

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[49] While Bianca likely furthered her mathematic ability and perhaps nuanced her notions of Kirkland and college students in general as mentioned previously, I captured significantly less data that spoke to youth's experiences, for a variety of reasons. Thus, this section hones in on Sue's evolution.

skills, she set out "see" Bianca differently (FN 5)[50]. Upon learning more about her, Bianca morphed into someone that Sue could genuinely admire and relate to, despite the academic struggles that Sue had focused on previously. In field note 8, Sue asserted, "From her (Bianca's) actions and her drive, I can see that Bianca has so much potential to be great and I want to be there to be her stepping stone to her great future." Moreover, learning Bianca's story over time and witnessing her ambition and desire to learn, despite conceptual hurdles in mathematics, humanized her in Sue's mind.

While it is clear that Sue re-framed her vision of Bianca as a person, it is less clear whether her perspective on other Haven students, or on urban youth of color on a different educational trajectory, changed at all. In fact, Sue saw Bianca as in some way rising above the other students that surrounded her, as if she was one of the few people who could climb her way out of the disarray that Sue still imagined the urban school and the urban context to be. Sue declared, "Bianca is one of few that really seems to be able to snap out of the environment she was born into…."(FN 8). Hence, even at the end of her fieldwork, Sue still believed that the other Haven youth were on a dead-end journey in the urban academic context and that this rendered them somewhat useless or lesser-than. This perspective clearly reflects the common social message about urban youth of color, who have been framed as fundamentally "at risk". Moreover, while Sue clearly evidenced change at the individual level via her relationship with Bianca, it is unclear whether her perceptions of urban others and social and structural contexts changed at all.

Additionally, Sue's shift in perspective remained limited within the same neoliberal ideological paradigm in which she began. If anything, learning Bianca's story reaffirmed her beliefs in meritocracy, rather than shedding light on the matrix of socio-cultural, structural, individual, and political variables that shape a person's experience in the world, as the course instruction and curriculum presented. By Sue's final field note, she had been encouraged by the level of motivation for individual achievement, the admirable college-going culture on display at Haven (FN 9), and the ways that Bianca strove to make the most of her academic environment (FN 8, 9). This re-visioning reflects a significant difference from Sue's initial portraits of Bianca as an academic disappointment and Haven as a hotbed of academic apathy and disruption; however, this revision remains squarely situated within a neoliberal framework of "progress." In her tenth field note, she noted:

> I have seen her (Bianca) take concepts that even I do not remember teaching her, applied to things she was learning now. I know that when I was in high school, once the chapter test was over, all the concepts I learned would be emptied from my memory for the new information I would be receiving. However, I have observed that the way Bianca works is that she retains knowledge well and with practice and is able to apply all sorts of concepts together. Seeing this kind of dedication to work really inspires me and makes me appreciate my education more (Sue, FN 9, May 2, 2009).

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[50] It is unclear exactly what pedagogical turn took place alongside the mid-way point in Sue's fieldwork, but curriculum and instructor support encouraged an expansion of students' perspectives on literacy as well as academic and cultural "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al., 1992). There was an emphasis on how students' experiences in school often reflected complex socio-cultural and institutional variables. It is possible that Sue was influenced at this mid-point in the semester by learning about historical legacies of inequalities, although we cannot be certain.

Here, we can see how Sue is gratified to see Bianca's integrity, industry, and retention of information, and she even critiques her own former propensity to regurgitate information for testing purposes, rather than for deeper level engagement and inquiry like Bianca. However, despite this personal reflection on her own educational path and privilege, Sue's change is ultimately rooted in the same ideological framework—one that rewards individual achievement and schooling as the paramount route to success. Bianca was rendered legible, valuable, and productive in Sue's mind *only* when she redeemed herself through commitment to hard work and academic effort. Moreover, Sue's shift over time occurred at the level of the individual, but at the cultural and institutional level little change took place.

Meritocracy reigned supreme in Sue's mind, despite curriculum in her education course that said otherwise. Essentially, Sue was gratified to re-imagine Bianca as hard working, ambitious, college-driven, and because of this dedication, she was therefore worthy of hope. We can almost hear Sue breathing a sigh of relief, thinking, "She is more like me than I realized. She is a hard worker with academic dreams and goals." Furthermore, while Sue demonstrated renewed perspective, she remained rooted within the same ideological paradigm throughout, using hard work, individual ambition, and drive as the barometer for worthiness or human value. Certainly, her writing demonstrated that she experienced shifts in thinking, as she moved from a belief that urban youth are "conditioned" to play the race card, to be "lazy," or to take the "easy route" (FN 3) rather than try to achieve. Sue moved to a more humanistic perspective, seeing Bianca as a good, smart, and ambitious person (FN 8, 9) because of her "drive" (FN 8) and "dedication to work" (FN 9). However, Sue's re-framing of Bianca only reaffirmed her initial commitment to the meritocratic, neoliberal ideal. Although the shift in thinking might have been significant for Sue, this change is limited in terms of transformation at multiple levels. Furthermore, we are reminded that deep changes in thinking might take a long time to truly effect. Transformative change is a painstaking, iterative process, and is likely close to impossible during the time and scope of such a semester-long fieldwork experience. University-community programs are thus limited in their level of impact at the structural and individual level if programs are modeled on one-semester timeframes.

Internal Changes of a Different Sort: From Sameness to Difference

On the metaphoric continuum spanning between the poles of "sameness" and "difference," Sue initially situated herself on the "difference" side of things; but over time, as discussed, she inched closer to imagining "sameness" between herself and one Haven student in particular who showed ambition and drive. Tess, another university student who we have met previously, started at a different location on the scale, aligning herself with the urban youth from the outset. Over time, her position on the imagined arc migrated closer to difference. These variations in migratory routes and changing conceptions of sameness and difference, self and others, illuminate ways in which programs promoting individual change play out differently depending on varying starting points and positionalities.

Tess immediately felt a sense of "solidarity" (Interview, March 1, 2011) with the Haven students when she began her fieldwork. She employed a set of rationales and lines of thinking to help make sense of Haven students' academic levels and ambitions that were different than Sue's. Tess explained that she anticipated chaos and unruliness, as she grew up in schools "like Haven" and she knew from experience that the chaos came from institutional inequalities, rather than individual deficits. She *expected* the bar to be low and for students to be disengaged, thus she worked even harder to ignite conversation and curiosity. She knew students would be

feigning apathy and disinterest, as that is the culture of many schools with marginalized communities, she asserted. Tess recognized that most Haven students embodied the oppositional culture of the "oppressed," and she related to this immediately. Hence, Tess did not imagine Haven students as genuinely apathetic or disengaged; she saw it as a *performance* that she was well-versed in, having performed her own anti-establishment resistance throughout her childhood and teen years. As she explained, the chaotic atmosphere and the seemingly disinterested student body reflected a survival and resistance strategy, not a fundamental deficiency as many of her university peers initially concluded. She explained:

> Self-ghettoizing is what a lot of these kids do. 'I'm going to sit in the back of the class and act like I don't care'…that's *ghettoizing*.… A lot of the loud talking to yourself declarations ….Ghettoizing is going, 'I'm not playing the game, I'm gonna do what *I* want….Fuck it, I'm going to make up my *own* game. And I'm going to play it and I'm going to play loud and I'm going to play it so you can't ignore it so you realize *I'm not playing your game'* (Interview, March 1, 2011).

Based on her own experiences with alternative education and schools for marginalized youth, Tess showed a deep connection with the high school student's seeming disavowal of academics[51]. She wrote, "I knew that the way they *seemed,* in terms of their level of interest, was not indicative of their *actual* level of interest. I saw through that." She went on to explain her theories on her fellow Kirkland students' perceptions of Haven High youth. She also developed tactics to engage youth who had been de-railed from academics. She shared:

> The other undergraduates (in the Education course) felt the high school kids didn't have any homework, didn't try, etc.… But, what's the motivation if your mom isn't going to take your dessert away if you don't do your homework? If your teacher *expects* you not to do your homework? I mean, what incentive do they have to do their homework? For *most* people in high school, homework is bullshit. It's worksheets; it's busy work. And, I mean the whole game was being able to chat with them and engage as a person, to figure out where they were at, to see what they might *actually* need. (Interview, March 1, 2011).

Furthermore, Tess applied a sharp level of critique to the educational milieu of Haven High, based on own experience as a disadvantaged former student. Unlike many of her college peers, Tess *arrived* at the university-community collaborative with a structural critique, and accordingly, she focused less on individual deficits and more on institutional and socio-cultural complexity. At the individual level, Tess immediately assumed solidarity with Haven students as she saw herself as having gone through similar contexts to what she presumed they might have experienced—namely, poverty, family instability, educational marginalization, as well as tough navigation of "the system," referring to state welfare systems at large.

However, over time, Tess experienced significant reflection and reckoning when she acknowledged that she was not the same as many of the marginalized youth of color who attended Haven, that in fact, she had been afforded a lot more resources. At the beginning of her experience, she used every opportunity to share her story to make a connection with the youth, recognizing that her alternative route to an upwardly mobile location such as Kirkland University

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[51] Tess dropped out of high school, although she attended numerous high schools throughout her teens, including one in a juvenile hall/ lock-down facility in Colorado. This was her last and most formative high school experience.

might be appreciated by young people at Haven. She felt that she was "just like" Haven High students, reading her own experience as more like theirs than like many of her university peers, who she perceived to be largely middle class and sheltered. In the fourth week of her fieldwork, Tess wrote about sharing a bit of her biography with a young man named Martin as she helped him complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms. As they sat together, filling in the requisite details, she revealed to him that she had bounced in and out of group homes for much of her teens and that she had lived on the streets at one point, but how she had leveraged this hardship to help her financially at the college level. She wrote:

> There was one element of the FAFSA which was really significant for me. there is a series of questions which determines the student as independent or dependent for financial purposes — they ask, among other things, if at any point under the age of 18 a student was an orphan, ward of the court, or in state/county custody. when i first asked Martin about this question, he answered no very quickly. i figured it was worth prodding, so i told him my story, about how i grew up in group homes and foster homes, and as a result, i answer "yes" on that question, and it qualified me as an independent, which means that i go to Kirkland for free, and in fact get a bit of surplus financial aid on top of my tuition being paid for. it also qualifies me for a thing called the BOG fee waiver, which grants you free enrollment at community colleges. after telling him about this, he told me, "it was only for a little while" (i forget if he said "6 months" or "1 month"). i informed him that it didn't matter, and that this question was set up to help students who came from that kind of situation, and that he would get "hooked up" with financial help.

> after telling him about this, we went on and answered a few more questions, but i was still kind of tripping about the fact that he didn't answer yes until i explained my story. so i mentioned it to him again. i told him, "this box here, this one part, it's super important. if you ever know ANYONE applying for college, anyone, friends, whatever, TELL THEM ABOUT THIS. because lots of people think they can't afford college, and lots of people don't mark 'yes' on this because it has all sorts of stigma, but..." i went on a tiny passionatte [sic] rant actually. i think he could see how it impacted me, and how important it was to me. but he didn't really react much, being the quiet guy he is.

> this week really affirmed a few things for me — the desire to foster a love of learning, the desire to help open doors for people who may not know how to take advantages of the resources available to them, the desire to share with these kids how much i love college and how open the possibilities are. it was great having a chance to pass on some of my knowledge — i had a friend in Santa Barbara City College who helped me learn how to negotiate the financial aid department, and i did some pretty extensive research into the IGETC and etc. when it was relevant to my transfer, so i have a great background knowledge of some topics that can be helpful to these students (Tess, FN 4, March 4, 2009).

Like this exchange with Martin, Tess repeatedly divulged her own experiences with individual students at Haven, using her assumption of their *likenesses* as a bridge to connect with youth. Although Tess slid into her experience at Haven naturally, discovering immediate rapport

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with the students, her perspective shifted over time. She was ultimately forced to reconcile her own positionality as relatively privileged compared to many of the Haven High youth. From the beginning she earned "street cred," as she called it, with the students. Admittedly, she could relate with much of the experiences she *imagined* students at Haven High had been through, including navigating "the system," dealing with police, managing unstable family dynamics, under-resourced schools, teachers that set the bar low, and other experiences defined by her status as a marginalized, poor youth who had to fend for herself from a young age. However, during the sixth week of Tess' tutoring experience at Haven, she experienced an interaction that rocked her to the core, forcing her to interrogate relations of power as they played out on her body and mind. She shared the incident, which triggered her epiphany in field note 6 as she documented a subsequent conversation that took place with Martin.

Tess, Field Note 6, March 18, 2009

—at some point during this discussion, the slant switched to environmental influences and determinants, and one of the kids added, 'man, don't nobody from the streets ever go to college.' and from here, i took my cue. i told my story in about 3 sentences [sic]: (2 felony convictions, homeless and on the streets and in group homes on and off from 10-18, 4.0 at Kirkland, and applying to law schools) there was a pause while they took it in, and then the kid who had made the comment replied, **'well, you're *white*.'**

i acknowledged, "that may have something to do with it. but that doesn't necessarily have EVERYTHING to do with it."

This comment sank into Tess' unconscious and caused a major ripple effect of reflection on her own positionality and relative privilege in the world. In a subsequent assignment for the Education class, Tess shared how Martin's comment unsettled her and made her reconsider her entire identity. She wrote:

Before our discussions (in class), i would never have said that ("That may have something to do with it…." [FN 6]). i would have protested hotly that if i could do it, anyone could do it. i would have itemized my disadvantages and elaborated on how no one expected anything of me, and detailed some of the more painful statements against my abilities that i've received throughout my life. but that day, i had to acknowledge that he had a point. i don't like that it's true. it makes me angry, frustrated, and sad. my mind rebels against the truth that i have an advantage. **i always thought that my advantage was my love of learning and my stubbornness to beat the system. i still believe that those things play a role, but i have to acknowledge now that whiteness does too.**

because of my race, people see me differently. even as a poor, ex-foster care youth, with dreadlocks, funny earrings, and a potty mouth, i am still seen differently than someone of the same description who is not white. when i was in jail, i may have gotten OR (own recognizance, or released without bail) the first time because i was a young white girl. when i was in court regarding my felony charges, my ability to speak with the "culture of power" dialect may have saved me from further jail time. **there are many hidden privileges of being white, and up until recently, i fought my hardest to block them out of my mind.** now i am

attempting to learn to see them, and trying to figure out a way that i can use my "white privilege" to help others who do not have that natural advantage.

i am very excited about further involvement at Haven, and i am currently plotting some ideas about a possible advisory course, and other ways to use both my birthright advantage and my life skills to work with these kids. i hope that through giving back to other young people who come from my background, of all races, i may come to terms with this issue of race in a way that doesn't leave me feeling dirty and worthless (Racial Identity Assignment, March 22, 2009).

This narrative documents how, like Sue, Tess grappled with the tenets of meritocracy and core beliefs in relying on hard work and smarts to overcome adversity. She had to acknowledge the power of whiteness, which bestowed on her undeniable privilege, as well as the fact that she had had a mother who instilled in her a love for learning and language early on in her life. In addition to being white, she possessed the discourse needed to navigate systems, as she knew the "codes of power" (Delpit, 1995). Over a year and a half after this exchange with Martin, Tess recounted in an interview how this conversation with Martin had rocked her and left a lasting impression. In her own words, the conversation "knocked me into this new part of my life" and changed her forever. She explained to me:

I told you about sharing my story with this kid but him saying yeah, but you're *white*. Well, for me, that was a massive turning point in my own identity with myself and that context, **because up until that point I was like, yeah, I may be white and of the majority power structure, but *I'm like you* (Haven students). Solidarity. I went through this too.** I think a lot of majority students/individuals like to think, "I care about this stuff. I went through similar things and I really truly empathize." But it's almost like a guilt. It's like overcoming this guilt about being part of that majority.

But I learned from that, I don't. I don't. *I don't get it.* This (moment of reckoning) was HUGE. It was huge, and what I thought at the moment was, "You shit. What do I say to Martin?" It made me sad because I wanted so much to reach and **I wanted so much to have them (Haven students) internalize the message of whatever they wanted, they could achieve too**… but as a person that is racially and socio-economically distribution conscious, I *used* to try to act like it (race and racism) didn't exist. I tried to overcome inequality in a different way where I was like, "I identify with these people, minorities, across socio-economic difference….". But, the conversation with Martin made me realize that no matter how much crap I've gone through, I have experienced a lot of things that have enabled me to *sympathize*. **In a very positive, equality-minded way, I like to try, in my personal life, to pretend that racial, socio-economic disparities don't matter.** I talk to bums all the time. I refuse to establish those lines and divisions in my own mind, you know, to overcome that inherent racism, but then **by ignoring those lines, you are being implicitly racist because you are not giving validity to the fact that, yeah, things are unequal** (Interview, March 1, 2011).

Tess experienced a shift at the individual and structural level as she was forced to interrogate the reality of white privilege in new and painful way. She admitted that she had

wanted to see herself as the "same" as the Haven youth; she pledged "solidarity" and was able to share stories that gave her legitimacy or "street cred" (Interview, March 1, 2011) immediately. She thought she was the same individually and structurally, due to her like status as marginalized by institutions of class, education, and family. However, over time, Tess came to terms with her own privileges related to how whiteness in addition to a foundation of educational privilege, linguistic fluency, and a love for learning probably served as a tool of power that allowed her to get where she is today.

While she wanted to believe that she was just like many of the Haven youth — marginalized, disenfranchised, and pushed out of society's graces, that she alone had uplifted herself, following the meritocratic ideal — her engagement across the hyphen with Martin triggered a painful reckoning for her. She had to admit and reconcile the fact that, with whiteness came privilege, and being able to speak the discourse of power combined with her racial status likely enabled her to land on an upwardly mobile trajectory, despite previous adversities. Meritocracy crumbled in her mind, and power relations were articulated in sharper, clearer, and more painful ways. Yet again, Tess was inspired however, and she used her anger to fuel her activism related to fighting inequalities. She is now a second year law student who plans to focus on the juvenile justice system as a litigator.

Caroline's Trajectory of Growth

For many students, the desire to categorize contexts neatly in a binary was particularly appealing, especially at the beginning; but over time, binaries proved less useful as thinking grew more complex. The binary would not suffice as an analytic tool as participants' perspectives on social, cultural, and institutional realities grew more layered and complex. And in terms of students' own changes over time, just as the binary grew ineffective as a categorical tool for sense-making, the smooth continuum of change was clearly a hypothetical heuristic rather than reality-based as well. In fact, many of the undergraduates exhibited more jagged, nonlinear change over time.

Caroline, the first-year Kirkland University student whose words opened up the chapter, was particularly drawn toward black-and-white thinking at the beginning, and although she grew slightly more nuanced in her perspective, her trajectory of change did not reflect a neatly outlined or easily summarized arc of growth. Most likely, Caroline's consciousness and level of critique *did* develop; however, Caroline continued to display somewhat reductive, deterministic thinking even at the end of her fieldwork, as well as several months after the experience. Drawing on Caroline's perspective and own words about her own limited shift in perspective reveals the painstakingly slow, albeit important, process of creating change at the individual level through education projects such as university-community programs.

Caroline ached thinking that Haven students were "years behind" (FN 7) in their math skills and largely "unaware" of their relative deficits. As she lamented earlier, students in the math classroom where she was tutoring were still working with fractions and just learning how to calculate slope which her brothers learned in "sixth grade" (FN 1). In her first field note, Caroline had commented on the appearance of the room. "It felt like more of a 4th grade classroom than a high school one" (FN 1). Each week throughout the semester, Caroline shared sadness in her field notes, as she commented on the achievement gap that she saw and felt acutely. Guilt, as well as shock, were salient emotions that Caroline experienced repeatedly throughout her fieldwork semester. Although Caroline developed many positive one-on-one relationships at Haven and observed impressive goal-setting and ambition which gratified her,

her perceptions of the social and cultural contexts remained fairly one-dimensional. Also, Caroline clung to beliefs of meritocracy despite her increased awareness of material and institutional constraints.

In one field note towards the end of her semester at Haven, Caroline labeled a young woman named Arianna "naïve" when Arianna shared her desire to become an actress. Arianna expressed her dream to "go to acting school like Natasha Richards" who succeeded as an actress after acting school. Caroline explained the conversation further in her field note:

> Arianna also noted though that she is a little nervous about that choice because if acting didn't work out she would want an education. I seized this opportunity to plug schools that offer a good education and acting. I did not want to dash Arianna's dreams because having dreams is great. I just think that Arianna is naïve (Caroline, FN 7, March 20, 2009).

Caroline caught herself casting judgment and this level of reflexiveness to some degree demonstrates a heightened level of awareness of her own role in a position of power. She even caught herself assigning labels to Arianna unconsciously and she remarked on the interchange with Arianna. She wrote:

> I feel bad for labeling her (Arianna) as naïve—who am I to say that she won't make a great actress? I felt like I was society already labeling her and saying what she will or won't amount to. It made me feel terrible about myself. I don't want to be negative, but every time I see Arianna she has the same, almost oblivious, expression. Arianna can hardly grasp the concepts of math, isn't the best communicator, and I don't see her exuberating the free-flowing energy that an actress would probably need to embody. I hated the role I was in. Here, only two years younger than me, Arianna was taking on the role as a kid and I was like the worried parent who didn't want their child's dreams to be crushed, but had a feeling it was inevitable. Arianna was comparing herself to Natasha Richards. She said Natasha went to acting school and became an actress. Making the process seem easy. She doesn't see the difference. Natasha's dad was a director, so obviously she had an advantage. Natasha Richards is a clear example of someone born into the system, but Arianna isn't. She doesn't understand the economic and social norms of our society and I can't decide if that is a positive or a negative. She is one of those students who doesn't realize her and her classmates are years behind in math. **I want Arianna to dream big and to continue to believe in herself because without motivation there is no possible way to rise above. However, her aspirations are a bit lofty considering her talents and current situation.** If she doesn't achieve her dream, I hope she doesn't settle for having nothing. Shooting for a college degree would be the most amazing thing for her— she just needs to realize it. It is weird for me to be put in this parent type roll for two reasons. First of all I feel like a hypocrite for putting restraints on Arianna when I had parents who told me I could do anything I wanted to do. I always aimed high, but I guess what I'm trying to say was I was realistic too. Secondly it is strange because I know I was naïve in my past. Junior year in high school was only two years ago for me and while I thought I knew a lot about the world—I had no idea. It wasn't until I got to college that I really started to see things. I had

heard that California had a lot of poorer schools, but it wasn't until I came to Haven and saw kids rationalizing fractions that it became a reality. **We always say ignorance is bliss. Living in my bubble where I could tell myself that there really wasn't racism or poverty was nice—but then I woke up.** I lost that innocence, and although it is scary, it's for the better because now I can do something proactive about it*.* I'm just wondering how Arianna is going to take things when her bubble pops (Caroline, FN 7, March 20, 2009).

Competing discourses about meritocracy and colorblindness as well as the realities of social capital, racial and socio-economic advantage run through this complicated field note. While Caroline espouses a paternalistic approach toward this young woman, she also catches herself enacting deterministic thinking about Arianna's limited status as a poor, young woman of color in a continuation school for "at risk" youth. Interestingly, Caroline refrains from explicitly naming the obstacles that Arianna faces, choosing instead to write off Arianna's ability to succeed due to her presumably limited "talents and current situation" (FN 7). But, as Mica Pollock argues in her text *Colormute* (2004a*)*, people employ racial categories and *delete* race-categories in complex and revealing ways. It's when the race-labels are deleted from conversations, Pollock claims, that they most signal a need to attend to race and racial inequalities. However, instead of identifying societal barriers which could hinder Arianna's chances for mobility, such as institutional racism, educational inequalities, socio-economic adversity, limited social capital, and lack of access to the "discourse of power" (Delpit, 1995), Caroline simplifies Arianna's context in reductive ways. Caroline deduces that Arianna will fail to succeed because of her "current situation," which implies a hint of structural critique, although we are left to wonder what she means exactly. Nonetheless, Caroline's tone changes direction as she contends that aspiration might in fact be Arianna's ticket to "rise above" her current context (FN 7) — if only she were to *aspire to college* as a way out rather than acting school. Here, Caroline reaffirms beliefs in the meritocratic society, relentlessly asserting that higher education is the paramount route to success. Hence, Caroline's definitions of success remain rooted in white, middle class, neoliberal values evidencing little critique, despite curriculum in her education class which aimed to shed light on socio-cultural manifestations of structural inequality.

Moreover, this field note is tense with contradiction and complexity as Caroline struggles to make sense of how young people might overcome societal hurdles without the proper tools. She theorizes that Natasha Richards, for example, "was born into the system," which reflects understanding of social capital and the entrenched nature of the structural inequalities of the class system in the U.S. Also, she testifies that she herself has "woken up" to social ills, such as racism and poverty; however, just sentences later, she fearfully anticipates Arianna's failure as self-imposed ("I hope she doesn't settle for having nothing") and she again asserts the primary way to "save" her from metaphoric destitution would be through a college education, implying that this goal might be her only hope for becoming "just like us."

Caroline's paternalistic approach toward Arianna manifests in multiple ways, namely, as she suggests how much aspiration Arianna "should" possess, according to her own metric. Caroline wants to set limits on April's ambition, because she thinks she understands the social and structural realities, but is it possible for her to understand Arianna's realities after such a brief amount of time? Caroline believes that her own experience at Haven has awoken her, but

throughout this field note she proceeds to project ignorance and limited goals on the youth of Haven even calling Arianna "oblivious" and "naïve." She admits:

> We always say ignorance is bliss. Living in my bubble where I could tell myself that there wasn't really racism or poverty was nice — but then I woke up (after going to Haven). I lost that innocence and although it's scary, it's for the better because now I can do something proactive about it. I'm just wondering how Arianna is going to take things when her bubble pops (Caroline, FN 7, March 20, 2009).

In this selection, Caroline embodies the role of the older, wiser colonial figure who "knows better" than the ignorant other, who lives simply in the dark. Her tone and approach to this high school student harkens colonialism, paternalism, and racialized entitlement. Nevertheless, Caroline is not *trying* to be paternalistic or imposing; she genuinely believes that she is helping the students, and that the students are in "need" of her individualized help. Caroline seems to feel a "white man's burden" to uplift the students and be charitable with her intellect and care. She only wants to inspire hope, which she sees as the central goal of her "service" at Haven. Sentiments of hope are double-edged, however, reflecting, entitlement, relations of power, and assumptions of difference.

Moreover, Caroline's change over time remains limited, but layered. Her approach and tone of voice in her writing throughout the ten-week experience at Haven were marked by black and white thinking, as demonstrated by the selections from field note 7. She continually relied on an either/or construction when thinking about the students vis-a-vis herself and the rest of the world. She presented matters as positive or negative, the students as motivated or apathetic, and she positioned herself versus Haven students in a polarizing fashion. From the beginning of Caroline's experience at Haven to the her final session and even months later, Caroline took on a worried, paternal role with regard to the Haven students who were largely just about the same age as her. While she demonstrated contradiction and complexity over time, much of her writing at the end of her fieldwork remained rooted in polarized thinking about the state of Haven students' abilities, capacities, contexts, and futures.

Nevertheless, the complexity remains: at the end of Caroline's experience at Haven, she showed an increased depth of thinking about the young people's lives, and she made connections at the individual level, but much of her thinking at the structural level remained limited. At the end of her field experience, Caroline mused about her "Haven soul mate" Jessica and how personal and deep their conversations were. She shared,

> She (Jessica) and I click on so many issues and I have gotten into deep conversation about religion with her that I haven't even gotten into with my best friend. It is funny because I could see Jessica being an excellent best friend to someone…I feel Jessica and I share the same traits… (FN 9).

However, she remained gripped by fear when entering the urban landscape, rooted in fearful perceptions of places that then effected her beliefs about the possibilities of such a place. She admitted:

> Honestly going into Ashland each and every time freaks me. Hearing the stories week in and week out that these students have had to go through makes me want to stay as far away from Ashland as possible. It is eye-opening but it is so scary. I can't tell you the relief I feel once I get back on that bus and head back to campus.

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But that's the sad part: there is not relief for these students. When they go home they probably go back to worse areas of Ashland instead of the pretty decent business district that Haven is in. I can't imagine having to live in this fear day in and day out. I don't know how they do it—could it be that this is all they know? (Caroline, FN 9, April 3, 2009)

Needless to say, Caroline remained relatively overarching in her sweep of Ashland as a holistically dangerous place, holistically brown and poor, un-academic, and rife with problems. However, she evidenced change at the individual level, as she shifted perspectives considerably and came to see certain individuals as shining stars who might "rise above" (FN 7) the urban blight that she associated with the city. Interestingly, Caroline correlated Ashland schools with disrepair and apathy, even though she admitted that she was "impressed" on multiple accounts by students showing ambition, drive, and intelligence. However, she attributed none of the students' industry and achievement to the schools or cultural contexts, only to individual motivation and talent. In addition to remaining individual-oriented in her framework, Caroline also demonstrated little change in terms of her perspective on the urban landscape. In fact, several months after her fieldwork concluded, with ample time and space for reflection, Caroline shared that she had been generally "uncomfortable" in Ashland and at Haven throughout her entire four-month fieldwork experience. She confessed: "I still felt that way (uncomfortable and nervous) even at the end. I never really let my guard down there" (Interview, September 4, 2009). In terms of assumptions about urban schools, the ideas Caroline came into the program with remained firmly lodged in place for the most part. Accordingly, she summarized her experience at Haven as such:

It was really eye-opening. Like, you hear statistics about CA education and how it's not up —you hear the rate that people don't graduate. And I always go to my own high school in my head cause that's what I know…and I match that or judge those stats against my own high school and think, "*What?* Is that really accurate? No, that can't be right." But being at Haven in Ashland, I see it now. I see how different it is and that what people say on the news is true — whereas before I was kind of skeptical. Like before I was like, it can't be *that bad*, but I feel like it *really* is… It really is. And I think that **all the schools in Ashland are all kind of like Haven** (Interview, September 4, 2009).

Caroline made these sorts of sweeping statement even after she had admittedly positive and "impressive" experiences in the urban context. This reveals the danger of programs across the university-community hyphen with or without proper reflection or curricular support. Even at the end of her fieldwork, in a course that provided multifaceted curricular support to assist students' sense-making about engagement, Caroline believed that she "knew" better than the youth about the realities and possibilities that lay before them. Such paternalism could be exacerbated even more by hit-and-run style programming in the university-community partnerships. In any case, despite the tools that existed for Caroline to draw from in her university-community program, including socio-cultural theory about language, education, race, class, ethnicity, and power, as well as intimate discussion sections and written feedback from instructors on field notes, Caroline remained relatively fixed in her ideas about urban others and the urban context. The literature, theory, and class activities in Caroline's education course interrogated power relations, structures of inequality, and institutional and cultural complexities;

however, this was largely lost on Caroline. Moreover, in some cases, it is possible that racialized assumptions and constructions of difference could be reified through engagement across the university-community hyphen. In the next chapter, which concludes the dissertation, I will discuss the pedagogical possibilities for enabling critical reflection and growth, rather than reifying divides, through university-community engagement.

Conclusion

Each of the students encountered in this chapter evidenced change over time in vastly different ways, grappling with new understandings of sameness and difference, opportunities and inequalities, identities and geographies. Some undergraduates increasingly recognized urban youth as "just like" themselves in a variety of ways, while others reconciled differences related to access, privilege, and positionality. Students pulled from various discourses and frameworks to understand social problems, thereby demonstrating complex processes of sense-making at various levels of analysis. Most undergraduates began their fieldwork experience largely informed by the neoliberal, individual-oriented ideologies which dominate the public arena. As upwardly mobile students in the American education system, the Kirkland University undergraduates entered the experience *already* equipped with discourses and frameworks at their disposal. With themes of colorblind ideology, multiculturalism, and meritocracy emblazoned on their hearts and minds, they entered the fieldwork with deeply ingrained assumptions, accompanied by heartfelt desires to "inspire hope" and promote a particular kind of change at the individual level.

However, some students, such as Edwin, moved the beyond individual level of analysis to some extent and broadened his perspective over time. He increasingly drew from socio-cultural theory and discourses. As additional frameworks were folded into their evolving theories on individuals and contexts, some undergraduates developed more complex, although ultimately painful understandings of inequality. Incorporating socio-cultural theoretical tools to understand inequality proved eye opening for many, such as Sue; disheartening for some, such as Tess; however, for others like Caroline, assumptions of difference may have actually been exacerbated through engagement across the hyphen. Despite variations in experiences with the university-community partnerships, most undergraduates displayed a heartfelt desire to "see each other in each other," which revealed powerful themes of liberalism, hope for equality, and generosity of spirit at the individual level.

Moreover, as each undergraduate demonstrated varying shades of growth and change over time depending on his or her starting point, we are reminded of the lengthy process of creating social change at the individual level. Focusing on points of connection and dislocation between participants, as well as ways in which individuals' perspectives grew more nuanced, animates various aspects of the "just like us" conceptual toolkit. This framework illustrates the powerful chords of colorblind ideology, multiculturalism, meritocracy, and undercurrents of hope, which reverberate through education projects, such as university-community collaborations. In the next and final chapter, I take up topics related to pedagogies of possibility for university-community collaborations so that ample reflection, critique, and reciprocity might be imagined and realized, so that the space of the hyphen might be reduced, and desires to see the "other" as "just like us" might loosen its grip.

Chapter Six: How Ruptures, Reciprocity, and Re-imagining Take Place in University-Community Partnerships: Conclusion and Recommendations

This dissertation has explored how constructs of difference and "otherness" are reified as well as re-imagined through university-community partnerships. A central question guiding this study was, "Do university-community programs and collaborations enable young people to identify with, rather than differentiate themselves from 'others'? If so, how?" These questions and many others related to how cross-sections of diverse students make sense of each other and each other's worlds have guided this research. In this concluding chapter, I will begin with a review of the findings of this study, and discuss implications for practice. I will also remind readers of the methods, design, and significance, as well as the shortcomings of my research in order to lay the foundation for future research on university-community intersections. Finally, I will propose pedagogical considerations for how to achieve successful hybridity and mutually generative exchange between young people of various backgrounds, educational contexts, and means. This chapter also addresses the various levels on which university-community partnerships operate, as well as makes suggestions for how greater interdependence and reciprocity might be achieved.

Re-Viewing the Terrain: Design, Summary, and Significance

This research drew on ethnographic methods to capture complex processes of negotiation between two groups of young people differently positioned on educational trajectories, yet bound together through university-community partnerships. After years of involvement in the day-to-day operations of such collaborations at both university and community sites, I designed a study that attempted to dig deeper into subterranean moments, processes of meaning-making, and imaginings of difference that were inspired through intersections of individuals, institutions, and social worlds.

This study was driven by the following questions:
1. How do relations of power shape university-community partnerships and how do programs impact youth participants and university participants in various ways?
2. What do encounters across race, class, geography, ethnicity, and educational contexts look like and how do participants from both sides of the partnership negotiate "contact zones" that emerge in and around the program space?
3. How do participants make sense of constructs of difference, "otherness," and inequality in response to program participation over time?
4. How do participants understand their relationships to the local urban landscape, and in what ways do notions of "place" shift over time?
5. Finally, do partnerships affect change at different levels or scales, and if so, what are the implications for those changes?

I utilized primarily participant observation, supplemented with interviews, to gather data related to participants' experiences. One population attended a prestigious public university and the other attended nearby urban high schools. While these students were young adults remarkably close in age who lived in close geographic proximity, they inhabited vastly different worlds separated by a matter of mere miles. Class, racial, ethnic, and educational inequalities forged symbolic borders between groups, represented by the metaphoric "hyphen" in the university-community nomenclature. However, both sets of young people became entangled in

each other's lives through their respective schools' partnerships; this research was born out of curiosity about the processes of meaning-making, understanding, and mis-understandings that took place over time through their engagements with each other and with their programs. This study found that deeply engrained assumptions about urbanity extended from the physical space and place onto the people who lived there. Likewise, constructions of race, class, and privilege were also projected onto university students and spaces. This projection takes place despite the notably public nature of this particular university, as well as the relatively diverse nature of the students who attended it, many of whom were working class, poor, or first-generation college students. However, mapped onto both places and populations were assumptions that had a life of their own. This study found that larger discourses about urbanity, education, race, and class which circulated in society shaped the contours of the movements, moments, and meanings in between these groups of young people.

As I addressed in the introduction and review of the literature, university-community initiatives have traditionally emerged out of a desire to bridge the divides that often mark the landscape in and around universities. Many universities have sought to further their central visions — the university as a socially just institution — by offering educational enrichment and collaborative community development initiatives in an attempt to repair local rifts and mitigate systemic inequalities. Although age-old town-gown disjunctures have been widely acknowledged, such phenomena have only begun to be theorized in academic literature in the last few decades. Recent literature on university outreach in local communities has largely been housed in the literature on service learning. And as I delineated in Chapter One, much of the focus of research on partnerships has tended to focus on those individuals "performing" the service, rather than on those "receiving" service. While this reductive framing of outreach is in itself problematic, throughout this study, I have aimed to re-imagine these kinds of initiatives so that they are not cast in such dichotomous terms. Moreover, this study has offered somewhat of a paradigm shift in terms of language usage when talking about university-community partnerships. I have advocated that collaborations need not be marked reductively by the "hyphen" — set up as oppositional or monolithic entities or organized around one-directional patterns of mobility.

Additionally, I have demonstrated the heterogeneous composition of both university *and* community populations and the ways in which stark categories serve to obscure the range of experiences within and across constructions of "difference." As readers encountered Tess and Caroline, two university students from radically divergent backgrounds and perspectives, this research hopefully helped to add nuance, texture, and depth to the one-dimensional portraits of university-community collaborations in action. I found far more continuity between university and community populations than homogenizing categorizations would indicate. I met high school students who were college-bound, future-oriented, and versed in Marxist analysis. I encountered university students from one of the most esteemed public universities whose family histories and schooling backgrounds mirrored those of the local youth from disadvantaged urban schools — university students who did *not* identify themselves with the prestige or privilege that being at Kirkland afforded. Both populations of young people, therefore, were initially envisaged by assumptions and stereotypes about their current educational school site and place of residence. My study shone a light on the differential trajectories, positionings, and institutional arrangements which further constructions of difference and patterns of inequality. By complicating understandings of the people and places who occupy either side of the university-community hyphen, and by pointing to the larger phenomena which shape symbolic and material

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constructions of difference, I hope to help strengthen literature on university-community outreach, service learning, and engaged scholarship. This contribution to the literature is just the beginning of possibly a new kind of research on the subject that adds racial and classed analysis, as well as theoretical rigor rather than uncritical advocacy for "service." I have attempted to carve a space in the scholarship and to present a theoretical intervention in the literature on service learning, thereby situating my work within broader conversations about educational inequality, discourses of urbanity, and geographies of youth. Also, my work built on the literatures that conceive of identities as relational, contextual, and in process.

Significance: Reflections on the research process and product.

I contend that these partnerships remain critical despite constraints, as they foster curiosity and connection between participants, as well as possibilities for more porous pathways between university and community sites. Before I discuss the recommendations for future partnerships, I will address the relative shortcomings of this research, which illuminate larger issues beyond my own scope as an individual researcher.

All research projects finish differently than they began. In my case, like many researchers before me, I was not able to capture all of the kinds of data that I imagined I might. This speaks volumes about larger phenomena rather than my own research practices. I sought to achieve a balanced set of perspectives from the local high school students and from the university students participating in the partnerships. I aimed to produce research that would add texture and depth to the glossy, one-dimensional images of multicultural diversity projected on the first day of class. Driven by the desire to examine encounters across institutional differences such as race, class, educational context, and geography, I hypothesized that I might gather relatively balanced amounts of written, observed, and verbal data from both sets of populations at the four sites: ED180, CRP150, Haven High, and Washington High. University-community partnerships embodied a window into cross-sections of young people, and I sought to further understand the lived experiences of young people who lived in close proximity, but who experienced vastly differently social, cultural, and academic worlds.

However, the research design took on new shapes throughout the process and the data I ended up with looked slightly different than I had imagined. Because of my own positioning as a university researcher, I was saddled with a set of meanings and assumptions written onto my body and language. Beyond my own status as a white woman and an academic, I encountered other logistical obstacles in the data-gathering phase which hampered my ability to achieve the reciprocal amounts of data from each population of students. Namely, the partnerships were structurally unequal in organization, curriculum, and design. More resources and support systems were provided for the university participants to process their program experiences and related issues than for their high school counterparts. Hence, the heavily weighted focus on undergraduate learning enabled me as a researcher to gather copious, yet, uneven amounts of information. For example, I was able to fill notebooks of observations and dialogues with the undergraduates across a range of settings, whereas I gathered far less data from the high school students and most of that data was limited to the parameters of the program space. As a university instructor for the ED180 class, and a support for the CRP150 course, I was privy to college students' written field notes, their public observations in lectures, their confessions in discussion section, and their written responses to various kinds of writing assignments. Also, I traveled in the car with undergraduates to the site, and listened closely during the sanctioned opportunities for reflection in their university classes. In short, in addition to my own position

within the university, the ample course curricula and the time and space afforded to the undergraduates to process, develop ideas, and coalesce theories allowed me to gather disproportionate amounts of data from the university side of the partnership.

By contrast, sparse curriculum or classroom time was structured into the high schools' schedules for students' comparable analysis of the partnerships or related disciplinary content. Unequal resources bestowed upon the populations thus shaped the ways in which I not only designed my study, but gathered data. Many teachers that I spoke with at Haven and Washington High attested to the fact that few curricular materials, pedagogic supports, or institutional resources were in place to assist the teachers' or students' navigations of the university-community program. High school students, rather, showed up at their E-block class and undergraduate tutors appeared or they arrived at their history class once a week and college students were there, facilitating class and enlisting them in a local city-planning project. This gap in resources at the institutional level trickled down, and the local participants were left with limited time, space, and tools to enter the conversations that their university counterparts had been engaging in across multiple other forums. The high school students became entangled in the lives of the university students not by conscious choice but by default, as students who happened to attend under-funded local public schools. Meanwhile, the university students had actively chosen to participate in the class. And with their differently positioned placement in the programs came a differential level of opportunities for critique, analysis, or support.

Overall, despite my initial goal to generate research representing both sets of populations equally, my study emerged university-centric. However, in spite of and *because of* this focus on the university as the dominant power structure, I believe that this research shone a light on the problematic nature of asymmetrical set of relations which shape university-community partnerships. The critiques that I have presented hopefully will help to re-imagine the ways in which institutional arrangements are conceived of and carried out at the local level. The significance of this study relates, then, to the ways in which university-community partnerships and service learning initiatives are examined in a critical and theoretically rigorous way. This research exposed the stark relations of power which shape university-community partnerships, as well as the ways that partnerships both reify — as well as disrupt — borders within and around the university. Moreover, this study's critical focus on the university will hopefully help to shine a light on the larger inequities at the institutional level which trickle down to the day-to-day encounters between participants.

Fortunately, the pitfalls of my own project point to the kind of research that is needed in the future. Rather than relying on a singular researcher to gather stories, perspectives, and voices in the form of ethnographic data, I contend that the more effective approach to research would be through collaborative community-based methods. Training youth as researchers as well as enlisting community representatives as research counterparts and promoting collaborative community-based research practices might afford a more proportional, multi-faceted research design and result.

A new niche of research.

This research adds empirical depth to theoretical conversations about race, class and education, as well as theoretical depth to conversations about service learning and civic engagement. It speaks to and with a variety of scholars and stakeholders because engaging with just one or two bodies of literature or research camps would fail to represent the robust, multidimensional nature of this topic. As I have argued throughout this study, outcomes and

practices related to university-community partnerships can most helpfully be analyzed with a range of theoretical and empirical tools in order to critically take into account the various levels and issues that such partnerships engage. Thus, I have advocated that university-community partnerships be brought into conversation with broader theoretical frameworks, from socio-cultural theory and racial and class analysis, to theories on geography, mobility, and urbanity. Also, this work directly converses with the work of other scholars who see youth identities as contextual and relational, and youth as immersed in active processes of identity construction (Holland, et al., 1998; Hull, 2007; Lesko, 2001; Maira & Soep, 2004; Thorne, 1993; Weis & Fine, 2000, 2005).

Situated within the broad arena of multicultural education efforts, university-community partnerships serve as one kind of educational intervention that aims to "build bridges" (Sleeter & Grant, 1998), promote intersectionality of people and perspectives, and nurture cultural richness within local contexts. In order to achieve the original vision of multicultural education as a transformative practice, I have argued throughout this study that critically engaged methods and curricula in a range of multicultural education efforts, including university-partnerships, must be re-imagined and re-claimed (Banks, 2004; Buras, 2008; Sleeter, 2009). This research built on critiques of mainstream multicultural education efforts, which have been interrogated for an emphasis on individualism and the underlying assumptions that change results from a shift in attitudes and behaviors, with the individual actor as the agent for change (Buras, 2008; Giroux, 2003; Jackson & Solis, 1995; Leandro, 2009; McCarthy & Willis, 1995).

As discussed, university-community partnerships and literature that addresses such efforts often fall under the rubric of service learning. While some of the literature in this arena offers critique alongside analysis of learning outcomes, much of the scholarship in this area lacks structural, racial, or geographic analysis, focusing instead on the individual learner or the individual program context. Some studies do offer cautionary conclusions, reporting that without proper reflection, dialogue, and contextualization, service-learning programs might magnify misunderstandings about poverty, race, ethnicity, and structural inequity (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Raskoff, 1994; Rhoads, 1998; Wade, 2000). However, most of these studies still do not take this precaution to the next level by analyzing them with a theoretical lens. I hope that this study, therefore, adds dimension and depth to the field of service learning by incorporating a critical lens on the limits of multicultural tools that promote change primarily at the individual level (Buras, 2008; Giroux, 2003; Jackson & Solis, 1995; Leandro, 2009; McCarthy & Willis, 1995). Also, my study adds depth to the arena by contributing elements of racial, linguistic, and spatial analysis, thereby exposing the ways in which university-community programs operate through bodily, linguistic, affective, and spatial practices. While many critics have voiced concern about the potentially self-serving nature of service-learning initiatives as well as some of the research that has emerged from the field (Densmore, 2000; Flowers, 2002; Nieto, 2000; O'Grady, 2000; Wade, 2000), this study enters into conversation with broader socio-cultural theories and theorists concerned with urbanity, racialization, space and place, language and literacy, and finally educational inequality in the United States.

This research brought a geographical lens to the body of work on multicultural education and outreach. As addressed earlier, new scholarship on how issues of mobility and immobility impact young people is emerging across disciplines, as evidenced by studies that focus on how young people navigate dangerous city streets (Gleason, 2008; Jones, 2004; Rios, 2006); how they manage surveillance (Fine, 2003); and how they negotiate poverty (Fine & Weis, 1998; Weis, 2007). But as this study has pointed out, gaps in the literature on urban youth and mobility

persist, despite the renaissance of scholarship on race, space, and place, as of late. Geographers and urban studies scholars have taken up issues of unequal "geographies of opportunity" (Briggs, 2005) that lead to limited housing and residential options (Briggs, 2005; Massey & Denton, 1993). I have built on the concept of the "geography of opportunity," thereby extending the conversation to the realm of educational access, university-community outreach, and implications for one-directional journeying to program sites. My study thus has contributed to geographical scholarship by exploring *how* limited spatial mobility plays out on the hearts, minds, and bodies of urban youth and, likewise, how affordances of mobility influence ever-changing constructions of urbanity. I have argued that broadening learning opportunities through dialogue around inequalities, and enabling exposure beyond a limited set of spaces and places, facilitates critical thinking, growth, and development in critical ways.

Central to discussions of mobility and immobility, as well as race and space in the context of university-community partnerships, is also a discussion of the urban site, as I have reiterated. My work added empirical strength to theoretical conversations related to the construction of urbanity. Building on Leonardo and Hunter's work on the "urban imagination" (2007), my study developed this theoretical framing by showing the ways in which the imagination is deployed to maintain borders, construct difference, and yet also to *re-vision* assumptions about people and places. My research clearly owed much to the thoughtful and theoretical contributions of other researchers on urbanity and geography (See Leonardo, 2007; Lipman, 2006; Lipsitz, 2011; Massey & Denton, 1993; Paperson, 2010; Roy, 2003). My research adds a new level of empirical data, however, to the ways in which cities have been theorized as sites of practice in relation to racialized and spatialized co-formations.

Leonardo and Hunter (2007), among others, validate the vulnerability that many urban youth experience on a day-to-day basis, while also working to counter mainstream pathologizing of urban youth, schools, neighborhoods, and so forth (Ferguson, 2000; Fordham, 1996; Giroux, 1996; MacLeod, 1995; Males, 1999; Noguera, 2003, 2006, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999). My study was designed to add historical depth to research on service-learning, multicultural education, and geographies of youth, as I traced the historical constructions of urbanity over time in order to contextualize how commonplace assumptions about places shaped assumptions about the residents who live there. My research has argued that as urbanity is *imagined* in the hearts and minds of individuals, as well as through the body, those impressions of places shaped conceptions of entire communities as well as individuals.

While some scholars and activists point out the implications of the demonizing of urban youth (Ferguson, 2000; Giroux, 1996, 2000; Males, 1999; Noguera 2003, 2008), the current project extended such critiques and offered new ways to disrupt such destructive imagery and stereotyping. I have suggested that university-community partnerships, amongst other multicultural education efforts, can do more than disrupt the deficit frames at the individual level by attempting to create change at various levels in city spaces. As I will discuss in the upcoming section on recommendations, university-community partnerships might play a role in re-shaping the social imagination on urban schools, neighborhoods, and youth — as well as the ways the university collaborates with local entities. This research has asserted that breaking down physical and metaphoric borders might enable such re-visioning to take place.

Finally this study offered a theoretical intervention into the conversations about race, language, and "othering." Scholarship on the ways in which language practices are imbued with relations of power have been well-documented, and these works have been instrumental in calling attention to "new" forms of racism that show up in coded, carefully constructed patterns

of language (Bonilla-Silva 1997, 2003; Hill Collins, 1989; Leonardo, 2009; Pollock, 2004a; Trainor, 2008). While many scholars have pointed out the ways in which colorblind ideology and discourse have seeped into educational curricula (Hytten & Warren, 2003; McIntosh, 1997; Pollock, 2004a; Prendergast, 2003; Trainor 2008), this study has attempted to hone in on the logics of race and class that play out in language practices, as well as how those language practices might change. This research examined various linguistic mediums in academic contexts over time, such as speaking privately (with colleagues) and publicly (in lectures and discussion sections) and writing across a range of genres. Incorporating a linguistic lens, this study captured the kinds of codes and rhetorical maneuvers deployed when talking and writing about "others" and other places. While many researchers explore the ways in which race "talk" takes shape in sanctioned classroom forums when issues of power and race are negotiated in overt and covert ways, (Leonardo, 2007, 2009; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Marx, 2006; McIntyre, 1997; Pollock, 2004a; Tatum, 1997; Trainor, 2008), my project offered a range of recommendations to address individual dialogue, curricular and pedagogic tools, and institutional change related to the language of "othering." Moreover, I believe that a significant contribution of this research relates to the ways that empirical data strengthen theoretical conversations about geography and racial and class formation with regard to language practices.

Research Findings: Engaging the Hyphen

Despite university-community programs' fundamental aim to perform educational interventions in a climate of sharp inequality, this research found that additional layers of messaging were projected by such partnerships. Yet, while ideals of hope, humanity, and academic excellence were fostered at the individual level, colorblind ideology, meritocracy, and institutionalized borders may have been perpetuated as well. This study found that palpable feelings of comfort and discomfort were written onto the bodies of individuals in the different places and experienced emotionally and physically. As a reminder, in Chapter Three, readers encountered a young woman named Caroline and learned about her anxiety related to being visible and vulnerable as a white woman walking through the streets of Ashland. As the chapter progressed, I demonstrated how linguistic, affective, and embodied expressions of difference were mapped onto particular people and places, illustrating the role of the imagination in maintaining borders. A key finding in this chapter spotlighted the ways in which assumptions about places were projected onto populations of young people, and these constructions exerted influence in forming preliminary conceptions of schools, neighborhoods, and the people who made up those sites. I argued that "difference" was mobilized by both populations, but particularly by university students, to distance themselves from presumed urban blight, academic apathy, and a rowdy, inner city academic milieu.

Moving on with the theme of ethnicity, race, class, and geography written onto the bodies and practices of young people, in Chapter Four, I further developed this argument. This chapter explored an incident in which three young men from one of the local high school sites internalized visible racial politics on the university campus grounds during a field trip to the campus. I argued that this conflict illuminated underlying contact zones activated through such partnerships — contact zones which remain subterranean most of the time in day-to-day university-community programming. This particular incident exposed the ways in which linguistic differences, styles of humor, and ways of reading the world, or the heteroglossia of language and identities, reflects variations in power, perspective, and place. Through the ripple effects of Vijay's joke gone awry came an opportunity to break down language and to expose the

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various codes, interpretations, and meanings that co-existed across difference. I argued that such conflict was rife with heteroglossic potential; it was a rupture in which individuals and institutions were invited to re-evaluate the terms and conditions, as well as the linguistic, logistic, and affective dimensions of the relationships. Both sets of parties were thus tasked with re-imagining the other as well as each other's worlds, to some extent.

Chapter Five illustrated a wide range of changes that took place at the individual level for participants engaging in university-community collaborations. This chapter asserted that students' desires to "see each other in each other" reflected a humanistic, hopeful sentiment, one that was emphasized through such initiatives. However, I also argued that chords of colorblind ideology, neoliberalism, and meritocracy reverberated through university-community partnerships as well. And, despite hopeful gestures toward intimacy, individuals' transformations over time essentially remained rooted in the same ideological paradigm — one which values hard work, college as a route to success, and white middle class ideals. As an educational intervention, university-community partnerships were thus tasked with the multi-faceted process of injecting hope, building connections, and breaking down educational borders. However, alongside this project, unintended consequences may have been manifested related to reproducing racial and class divides, perpetuating messages of meritocracy, and obscuring conversations related to educational inequality and relations of power.

Recommendations: Re-Imagining Community-University Collaboration

In order to take the lessons from this research to heart, we must consider how long-lasting, multidirectional, and mutually beneficial effects might reverberate from university-community partnerships in the future. Using the contact zone metaphor, how might partnerships engage the contact zone in productive ways such that individual, cultural, and structural positions might be impacted through this educational intervention? As I have argued, some of the richest opportunities for learning come from the messy, sometimes uncomfortable frictions that can and do emerge in the contact zone when individuals from various ethnic, racial, linguistic, geographic, educational, and classed backgrounds bump up against each other and grapple with difference. Pedagogical considerations are central then to ensuring that these contact zones are fruitful and dialogic opportunities for learning and listening, rather than strictly smooth or conflict-free sessions that obscure individual, group, and structural disparities. Also, how might we propose that broad inequalities be challenged through university-community initiatives in order to move beyond the individual level of change? While I have no neat answers, I offer a set of recommendations upon analyzing the data, and spending years in both university and community contexts.

1. *Curriculum matters—both the kinds of curricula as well as the amounts of curricula for university and community participants should be balanced.* Ensure that curriculum has been developed and is in place for both university and community participants related to identities, educational structures, and power relations. Reciprocal *kinds* of curriculum as well *amounts* of curriculum might facilitate greater development of ideas and exchange at the individual level for all participants.

2. *Pedagogy: Where the learning takes place also matters.* Multidirectional mobility for participants between sites is recommended. Both youth and university students should travel to each other's schools or sites equally. As it currently stands, most programs' structures and designs operate with a one-directional flow of university students to local

sites. Reciprocal mobility would even the playing field for the kinds of learning that can take place for all participants.

3. *Pedagogy: The kinds of assignments, theoretical support, and teacher-student engagement must be considered.* Program and course pedagogy should be prioritized in order to enable the deepest level of reflection and opportunity for all participants. At both university and community sites, beyond class lectures, there should be frequent occasions for student engagement and interaction with course themes in smaller discussion sections and through written assignments. Consistent feedback should be given on written materials. Structure opportunities for students in both community and university sites to lead sessions on site experiences, themes, and course content.

4. *Hold facilitated dialogue for participants in separate forums —at the university and the community sites separately.* Separate forums for discussion should be structured into the schedules at both the university and community sites, separate from regular program activity. These sessions would be opportunities to discuss the other population and school site, as well as issues of power, inequality, class, race, geography, and any number of other socio-cultural observations that emerge from the process of engaging across physical and metaphoric borders.

5. *Hold facilitated dialogue in a shared forum — university and community populations together.* Regular discussion sessions should take place during the program space to address personal reflections related to the "other" population, as well as each other's schools and social worlds. These conversations might occur two to three times over the course of the semester — or more times over the course of a year. Facilitators must be trained to lead discussions of power, race, class, and "difference."

6. *University-community partnerships should attempt to create change at multiple levels.* Educational interventions that operate at only the individual level may ultimately be limited in impact. Promoting iterations of change at the institutional and structural levels might broaden the scope and impact of university-community collaborations.

7. *Sustained relationships are critical to such interventions.* The one-semester model for university-community engagement is ultimately limited. This study advocates for longer-term relationships and at least a two-semester participation on the part of university-community partners.

Service for Whom? Who Does Service-Learning Serve?: Reflections on Recommendations

In the following pages, I will briefly elaborate on each of the recommendations that I have made.

Recommendation # 1: *Curriculum matters.*

As reiterated throughout this study, university-community collaborations often provide ample curricular support for university students completing fieldwork for course credit. The classes also offer sufficient space within which the students can reflect on a host of issues that exposure beyond the campus affords. However, uneven curricular support existed at the community sites, as teachers and program staff were often pressed for time beyond the allotted program space, and few regularly scheduled forums were put in place for community participants to make sense of the university-community exchange.

While power relations are inevitably uneven to some extent, a balanced approach to enabling opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and writing about the shared experiences could be

useful. As it is, many partnerships focus on undergraduate learning and less on the youth learning outcomes related to educational inequalities. Also, curriculum should present a range of socio-cultural theories and explanatory frameworks for power differentials exposed through partnerships. Race, class, geography, language, and other social relations imbued with power should be addressed to some extent in course and program curriculum for both populations, even if other disciplinary content will take precedence.

        In addition to the amount of curricular content, the kinds of written and in-class activities, which reflect pedagogy in addition to curriculum, must also be considered very carefully in order to generate a multi-directional flow between sites. In Recommendations #2 and #3, I discuss specific pedagogic and curricular suggestions related to course assignments, teacher responses, and program space.

Recommendation #2: *Pedagogy: Where the learning takes place also matters.*

        Pedagogies that promote active engagement and out-of-school learning are instrumental in enabling these changes for individuals from each realm. For undergraduates who leave the comfort zone of the university and travel to urban schools, either by public transit or through carpools with other students much of the learning stems from the physical and metaphoric journeying that is required. Additionally, curriculum that supports reflection on one's own educational, geographic, and cultural backgrounds plays a significant role in learning to think critically about identities and the politics of place. I argue that much of the learning that occurs for high school students and university students comes from reconciling one's own experiences *in relation* to others. The processes of engagement in the contact zone and subsequent reflection enable significant growth. However, the influence on learning as a result of the partnership may be more acutely experienced by undergraduates than by the high school students. The symbolic nature of leaving one's own space and entering a new terrain facilitates the learning process. Programs that are built around enabling a journey of sorts for urban youth (to the university, or to a nearby city, or to other realms outside the local purview), may facilitate expansion of the imaginary, but I speculate that learning and meaning-making for undergraduates and youth may not be reciprocal if such multi-directionality does not occur. Furthermore, I recommend that both sets of populations travel equally between each other's educational sites.

Recommendation # 3: *Pedagogy: The kinds of assignments, theoretical support, and teacher-student engagement must be considered.*

Field notes

        In both of the studied partnerships, undergraduates processed their fieldwork in conjunction with a range of tools — lectures on specific topics that related to fieldwork and large-group dialogue in lectures and discussion sections — as well as through various written assignments that required critical reflection. Especially in ED180, undergraduates were encouraged to think critically, to analyze observations, and to develop case studies on socio-cultural topics. Feedback on students' reflections and responses was shared with undergraduates throughout their fieldwork. This consistent multidirectional exchange on students' thought-processes encouraged a meaningful level of reflection on assumptions, biases, and sense-making about explanatory frameworks and course themes. CRP150 did not require the kind of extensive field notes that ED180 did. Rather, course content on urban planning processes, in addition to logistics related to an authentic planning project, assumed center stage in CRP150, and social science research was largely overlooked. The field notes required in CRP150 were primarily

descriptive of the program activities and short in length (one or two paragraphs at the most), whereas ED180's field notes included three sections: General Observations, Focused Observations, and Reflections. (ED180's field notes ranged in length from one to ten pages in length each week.) As a result, in CRP150, students' levels of critical reflection, inquiry, and developing consciousness about course themes may have been limited by comparison. As a result of this observation, I recommend training on the kind of reflective field notes for *all* students involved, both the high school and college students, regardless of the disciplinary content that guides the program space (urban planning, media literacy, public health, or any number of other possible themes). Certainly programs need not focus on only ethnographic methods in order to encourage a meaningful level of written reflection for all participants. I contend that there might be room for content- specific curricula, such as was the case with the literacy course, while still training students around critical reflection, ethnographic observation, and socio-cultural analysis.

Curricular support: Readings and theories presented

Many university students evidenced growth via incorporation of ideas from the readings and discussions[52]. As we saw, university students frequently developed more nuanced understandings of people, places, literacies, and identities in relation to structures of power. Some students were more reflective than others about their own processes of adjustment to the field site and to the transition to a new academic climate, as well as their own process of imagining the other. For example, Lindsay, a white woman whom we have met several times throughout this study, "caught" herself, so to speak, in the process of idea-formation about the socio-cultural environment that she was immersed in at Haven. She was able to identify her own internal contact zone as she noted how the more "chaotic" and somewhat free-form "alternative" environment at Haven touched her in surprising ways. Lindsay was able to think critically about how her own comfort zone might be expanded to include academic environs where the official and unofficial curriculum inside the school looked very different from her own former high school. She explained that she had been quite sheltered, having attended a well-to-do private school, with small classes and personal academic attention. Clearly, her own academic background looked quite different from Haven High. After Lindsey's second visit to the site, she shared about her own process of reconciling the disjuncture she was experiencing.

Lindsey, FN 2, February 10, 2009

I am still getting used [to] being in an environment that feels somewhat unorganized and chaotic. Although it is a scholastic environment that I have little experience in, I am still impressed with the caliber of students that attend this school. The poetry class really took me by surprise. I was surprised by how honest

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[52] Although students from both programs may have experienced academic and personal growth due to engagement in the initiatives, I found significantly *more* in-depth reflection and critical analysis from university students in ED180 than in CR150. This is likely due to a myriad of factors, including the disciplinary focus, the nature of the required written assignments, supporting theoretical materials, the style of teaching, and many other potential variables that are difficult to determine. Notably, there may have been more critical reflection and action-oriented praxis for the youth who participated in CRP150 than for the youth who took part in ED180's program. Both collaborations offered different emphases and therefore offered different affordances in terms of learning and exchange. Nevertheless, as I emphasized throughout this study, the aim of this research was *not* to compare or evaluate program specifics. The larger focus of this final chapter is on strategic tools that might be adopted even beyond the parameters of university-community partnerships. These curricular, pedagogical, and discursive recommendations might be applied to a range of educational sites.

the teachers were with their students, as they would tell me that a lot of the students do not take their classes very seriously. I am unaware if this shocked me simply because it was so different from my high school experience.

Reading Delaney's poem was an intimate experience, and I felt privileged to be invited to read her work. After I read it I reiterated to her how good it was, and that she was a very talented writer. She almost seemed shocked by that, and I was able to see that positive comments and reinforcement may be lacking in these students lives. When I was sitting in the earth science classroom during the E-block period, I was listening to young males use terms that they may have thought I did not recognize as they spoke about marijuana. I could not help but think about how Paulo Freire's observation that "Language variations are intimately interconnected with, coincide with, and express identity." It was as if this was their way to communicate with their peers in public but still not include the tutors or teachers. These terms where a part of their "identity kit" and how they interacted with other members in their group.

In this field note, Lindsey caught herself recognizing her own discomfort with such a "different" school climate and culture. However, she resisted seeking explanatory rationalizations for the "chaos" and student distractability (such as young men talking about marijuana during class). Rather, through this field note, Lindsey worked to re-frame Haven's academic climate, rife with noise, movement, and a sense of alluring intimacy, to be read as "scholastic" as well, but in a different way from her own former high school. Lindsey also avoided making reductive claims about the school's academic rigor and ability to foster a sense of student self-efficacy. While she noted how touched Delaney was by her appreciation of her poetic voice, she speculated, rather than concluded that such "positive comments and reinforcement *may be lacking* in these students lives" (Italics, mine). She reached for possible explanations rather than asserting deficit-based conclusions, all the while, she demonstrated openness to expanding her notions of academic "success" and funds of knowledge, as in the case of the young men. Instead of reading students' conversations about marijuana as reflective of some form of social deviance as other undergraduates did disparagingly, Lindsey theorized about the high school students' funds of knowledge and multifaceted literacy skills. This level of self-reflection on her own perspective and potential bias may have been drawn out through the process of generating ethnographic field notes, as well as through the process of receiving consistent feedback on her field notes. Both the assignment, as well as the responses she received on her own process, therefore may have enabled her to critically engage with her own comfort zone and educational background.

In addition to documenting the day's activities on site, an underlying goal of such field note assignments was to incorporate theories from the course into sense-making about daily practices on site. Looking to Lindsey again, we see a clear example of such engaged praxis. For example, Lindsay reflected thoughtfully on the course material, which problematized white privilege in relation to educational standards and societal norms. She emphasized in her sixth field note that she had ventured to Haven High after a provocative class one afternoon, her mind spinning about notions of whiteness, questions of paternalism, "white guilt," and the project of "service" itself. She questioned her own interest in "helping" and charged herself with tough questions about her positionality, problematizing the power relations reproduced in many service-learning opportunities. Lindsey reflected in her sixth field note:

Lindsey, FN 6, March 11, 2009

I was extremely happy to get one on one time talking to Dejanique without feeling the pressure to keep her focused on a specific subject. I feel that it is important to establish a relationship of respect that goes both ways so hopefully she will value the advice I can give her about academics and her personal life. As I previously stated, I could not get the themes we had discussed in class about white privilege out of my head during this trip to Haven. I decided I wanted to step away from feeling guilty because I felt like guilt was just another privilege I had as a white individual. I instead want to be an individual who brings about change through my actions. I want to help these students to see me as someone who wants them to create a strong sense of self-worth and that with a solid work ethic and persistence I have faith they can succeed. It is important for me and others to understand that my desire comes from the knowledge that these students have something to give back to their community and not viewed as another white woman who is trying to give back because she feels guilt. I know there is not only one way to create a change, but by getting this experience at Haven I am actually seeing a positive result in the lives of these students and in my own.

Here, Lindsey talked through contested issues of privilege, whiteness, meritocracy, and the degree of impact such a program can have on the lives on individuals across contexts. Topics that were theorized through the ED180 course readings and discussions stuck with her as she made her way to the local site. As a result of class forums and readings in conjunction with her on-the-ground experiences, issues of class, race, and reciprocity grew more complex for Lindsey. This response to theoretical material as well as course discussions changed the ways that she approached her engagement with youth and the community.

Lindsey grappled with complex issues of intention and perception as well in her field notes. She asserted that she wants the youth to see her desire to help as *genuine*, driven by her belief that the youth have resources, talent, and potential, rather than by guilt. Such depth of thought may have been facilitated by her course's required written reflections on the experiences, as she was set up to digest fieldwork alongside accompanying theoretical and curricular support. Furthermore, written assignments and readings for youth participants as well might also afford increasing levels of critical consciousness for both populations[53].

Recommendation #4: *Hold facilitated dialogue for participants in separate forums — at the university and the community sites separately.*

Separate forums for discussion should be structured into the schedules at both the university and community sites. These sessions would be opportunities to discuss the other population and school site, as well as issues of power, inequality, class, race, geography, and any number of other socio-cultural observations that emerge from the process of engaging across physical and metaphoric borders. These discussions might allow participants to share thoughts,

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[53] In spite of the lack of facilitated dialogues that took place between populations in the program space, as evidenced throughout this study, some undergraduates internalized the socio-cultural frameworks presented via course material and thus brought a critical lens to their engagement with local youth. It is possible that high school participants also gained a critical perspective due to their programmatic engagement. However, due to both my own positionality, as well as the uneven resource allocation between university and community sites for programs, I was unable to conclude this.

emerging theories, and analyses related to educational sites, differences, similarities, and other observations related to the university-community collaboration. The purpose of separate forums for the two populations is to facilitate conversation in as natural an environment as possible so that students may address issues and questions in somewhat of sheltered environment, solely with young people of roughly their own age group and from the same educational community.

Of course, such dialogue might be difficult, evoking raw emotions about charged topics. The heterogeneity of experiences within "university" or "community" populations might invite charged conversations, as was often the case in discussion sections in ED180 when Tess and Caroline, two university students from significantly different backgrounds, shared their perspectives. However, while many people seek to avoid conflict in classroom conversations, facilitators should not privilege consensus over productive tension. Facilitators should be trained to lead conversations that are potentially loaded. As discussed in previous chapters, "safe space" for some may serve to silence others (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). This study has illustrated how contact zones that come to life through university-community partnerships can potentially become sites of meaning-making rather than rupture if tensions that characterize participants' differential raced and classed experiences in the world are harnessed, rather than smoothed over. Instead of avoiding conflict and race/class "talk," I argue that university-community partnerships should attend to racial, classed, geographic, and educational differentials pedagogically, as the wonderful messiness that comes of contact zones can lead to authentic inter-learning. Rather than trying to prevent tensions from occurring in either the university or community forum, perhaps the richest opportunities for learning emerge when tensions are exposed and dialogue is facilitated in a thoughtful fashion. These conversations might be challenging, but they may lead to greater learning outcomes.

Recommendation #5: *Hold facilitated dialogue in a shared forum — university and community populations together.*

Regular discussions sessions should take place between university and community students to address personal reflections that relate to the "other" as well as each other's schools and social worlds. These conversations might occur two to three times over the course of the semester or more times over the course of a year.

How might such potentially difficult encounters be structured into the program settings and what would such dialogues look like? How might students from all backgrounds be encouraged to handle potentially prickly conversations? And, of course, what pedagogical tools might enable a smooth yet critically engaged forum for all stakeholders? I spoke with university students throughout the data collection process about how they imagined formal dialogues on race, class, ethnicity, and inequality might play out. Such suggestions were purely speculative, of course, as neither of the studied university-community collaborative structured such forums into the program space. Individual participants had different ideas for how to facilitate such discussions where relations of power, educational inequities, and identities were addressed. Tess feared that many undergraduates from Kirkland would not be able to handle such potentially exposing or possibly threatening conversations about power and positionality. She offered, however, that a key pedagogical choice might be to position high school students to take the lead on such dialogue. She shared:

> It would be interesting to ask the high school kids, "What's different about me
> (being a college student)? What makes me different from you? What do you

notice about me initially? What do you think about me?" Maybe because of the way the power structures work in that situation, the high school kids would probably be more comfortable to start that dialogue off….They might be like, "Yeah, you're white, and you have that fancy watch…or you talk funny, or…". They would probably be more comfortable to start that dialogue, and maybe the college student would be able to respond on the same level. As the person coming from the dominant side of things, you don't want to open it (the discussion), No…but if you had an idea for how they were seeing you, then you could maybe know at what level you could penetrate and respond (Interview, March 1, 2011).

However, Caroline felt wary about such potentially difficult conversations with the youth. She imagined that such a forum between high school students and undergraduates "could have been intimidating" and therefore would not be optimal. She conceded though, "As long as it wasn't hostile, it might have worked" (Interview, Sept. 1, 2009). Needless to say, what one person perceives as "hostile" might be very different for someone else. Ranges of reflection and comfort with speaking in public forums clearly depend on a host of variables. However, the point remains: while hostility is certainly discouraged, avoiding tension need not be the goal of such a forum across university-community contact zones either. After all, productive tension in which inequalities are exposed might lead to enhanced understanding, empathy, and inspiration to enact change, as we saw in Chapter Four.

Nevertheless, as both Caroline and Tess anticipated, such conversations could be potentially raw, and therefore would necessitate training on the part of facilitators. Engaging conversations related to identities and inequalities inevitably invites discussion of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, geography, and other identity categories. Talking about each other's places in the world and perspectives might elicit emotions and, therefore, both students as well as facilitators must be coached to take part in such forums. Such preparation should happen before engagement occurs as well as throughout the program duration. Even with the most conscious and sufficiently trained facilitator, however, such conversations and forums may not be conflict free or comfortable for all those involved at all times. However, some of the richest opportunities for learning and connection occur within contact zones, when perspectives collide and people encounter differences as well as grapple to understand each other.

Recommendation # 6: *University-community partnerships should attempt to create change at multiple levels.*

Currently, the focus of many university-community collaborations centers on micro changes at the individual level, as discussed in Chapter Five. However, educational interventions that operate at only the individual level may ultimately be limited in impact. Promoting iterations of change at the institutional and structural levels might broaden the scope and impact of university-community collaborations.

By looking primarily to individuals and individual relationships throughout this study, I demonstrated the ways that growth took place, with the individual as the locus for change, rather than socio-cultural contexts. However, we might begin to speculate, what might institutional change look like as a result of partnerships? How might structural changes transpire beyond the level of the individual? While this is only speculative, I imagine that a range of choices at the institutional level could lead to greater reciprocity and investment in under-resourced schools, neighborhoods, sites, organizations, and so forth.

Recommendation # 7: *Sustained relationships are critical to such interventions.*

The one-semester model is ultimately limited. This study advocates for longer-term relationships and at least a two-semester participation on the part of university-community partners. Longer timeframes for participation may, of course, present challenges of their own; however, this recommendation emerges from data that suggests that one-semester timeframes may privilege the university's paradigm, schedule, and constituents.

In the next field note, Lindsey, a student we have met throughout this study, reflected on the short-term nature of her tenure at Haven High in Ashland. Here, Lindsey demonstrated insight and compassion as she questioned the influence of such one-semester programs on the participating youth. She wrote:

Lindsey, FN 9, April 14, 2009

I am feeling bittersweet about my recent connections with Haven students during my time tutoring in Mrs. Harrison's class. I am beginning to realize that I have established a level of security and trust with these students as they begin to ask me for guidance on their homework, as well as bigger issues in their life. Recently I read an article that it takes about six months to establish a strong relationship between a tutor and a student. If the tutor ends their time before they have completed six months, their time with the student could have an adverse effect. To think that my time at Haven is about to come to an end makes me wonder if these students feel a sense of abandonment by tutors when the week comes where we no longer attend their E-block.

As a student I feel as though I would become frustrated with a constant cycle of new tutors attending E-block just as I was connecting with a tutor beyond the school environment. The difference between my feelings and interactions at Haven since my first site visit are comparable to a 180 degree transformation. I yearned for these connections and to feel that I could be a resource to these students, and I am left wondering how to extend my influence at Haven after I am no longer available to volunteer? The students at Haven are just beginning to share their wealth of knowledge in and outside of the classroom, and I am determined to find out a way to continue the exploration of their talents and a way for them to realize how to realistically set and attain their goals.

Here Lindsey questioned structures of change and the impact that her peers might in fact have on youth due to their limited intersection. Lindsey was able to step into the high school students' shoes to try to *imagine* what it would be like to have a revolving door of tutors each semester. She decided that she would be frustrated with such instability if she were in the high school student's positions, and she extended this thought-process to question whether in fact the short-term engagement could actually cause an adverse effect despite positive intentions. This level of inquiry and empathy demonstrated both the growth that can be captured through reflective field notes, as well as the conscious awareness of the potentially self-serving nature of university-community collaborations. While Lindsey asserted clearly that the fieldwork at Haven was a profound experience for *her*, she questioned the level of impact on the youth. Her critique echoes practitioners who have also voiced concern about perpetuating inequitable relations of power through such partnerships (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Raskoff, 1994; Stoeker & Tyron, 2009; Strom, 2009). I believe that mutually beneficial partnerships can and do exist. However, as this

study has demonstrated, with the execution of such programs also comes a set of risks and responsibilities that extends far beyond the parameters of the programs. Striving for more equalized patterns of mobility for university and community participants, such that all participants might experience the physical and symbolic journeys beyond their comfort zones and "home" contexts emerges as a key recommendation. Also, ensuring that curriculum exists, as well as the time and space for reflection and dialogue for both sets of participating populations might afford multidirectionality as well as interdependence.

Conclusion and Reflection

In conclusion, this study contributed essential knowledge and critique about educational partnerships that will better inform development of programs, schools, and learning contexts in our increasingly multicultural world. This research reminds us that deep changes in thinking take a long time to truly effect. Transformative change requires painstaking, iterative processes, and is likely close to impossible during the time and scope of semester-long fieldwork experiences. University-community programs are thus limited in their level of impact at the structural and individual level if programs are modeled on one-semester timeframes. Nevertheless, such efforts — even at the individual level — are *critical* despite limitations, in that they can lead to connection, curiosity, and a re-imagining of social worlds. In conclusion, I argue that university-community partnerships embody hopeful initiatives that are rife with power and possibility. Yet with these opportunities for engaging youth from diverse socio-cultural, ethnic, class, linguistic, and geographic borders comes a set of complex risks and responsibilities.

By taking seriously how undergraduates and youth from different backgrounds conceptualize subjectivity, schooling, and relations of power and opportunity (or lack thereof), and by exploring how those negotiations might transform through involvement in programming, future research can add to our growing body knowledge about interventions in a climate of great educational inequality. As more and more university-community collaborations crop up nationally, it is especially imperative to interrogate *how such partnerships are working and for whom*. Critical are questions about how socio-cultural messaging, economics, educational inequalities, and geographies of opportunity shape processes of meaning-making, understanding, and learning about what is possible — and what is not — for all participants. Also, it is crucial to consider how university-community initiatives may be impacting undergraduates and youth in potentially divergent ways.

Stakeholders from both sides of the university-community hyphen must be enlisted to think through how such partnerships might be re-visioned such that resources, curricular support, and spatial mobility of participants might be more evenly distributed and multidirectional. Borders between university and community sites need not be hyphenated to the degree that they were in this study. The issues that arose were not unique to the Kirkland campus or to the geography wherein this research took place. This sort of town-gown divide has shaped the contexts within and around universities for ages. However, the current political moment, drenched in issues of power inequalities, globalizing urban landscapes, and heightened educational inequality, offers an opportunity to re-imagine the ways in which such partnerships operate across a range of levels. Such partnerships need not be limited to the individual level; in fact substantial change might be re-configured at the institutional and cultural levels as well. However, in order to do away with hyphens that serve as symbolic borders between people and places, future research must be taken up to consider examples of how such interdependence might occur. In order to reduce the racial and classed divides mapped onto the physical

landscape, we might imagine a more seamless terrain such that community and university inform each other and nurture interdependence within and across contexts.

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Appendix: Course Information

Rather than including actual syllabi for Education 180 and City and Regional Planning 150, the two courses which sponsored the university-community partnerships, I have included just a truncated list of readings, so as to preserve the anonymous integrity of the courses. The comprehensive list of assignments, course descriptions, fieldwork requirements, and grading systems need not be included here. It is my hope that this abbreviated list of readings will still be useful for practitioners interested in reviewing the materials offered to the university students. The citations listed below reflect the ways in which the materials were cited in the actual course syllabi.

Education 180: Socio-Cultural Literacy and Fieldwork

What is literacy?

Scribner, S. (1988).Literacy in three metaphors. In E.R. Kintgen, B.M. Kroll, & M. Rose (Eds.), Perspectives on literacy (71-81). Carbondale, IL: Southern READ Illinois University Press.
> Scribner examines different and conflicting views of literacy's social purposes and values; in so doing, she summarizes her and Michael Cole's research among the Vai people of West Africa.

Hull, G. (2003). Youth culture and digital media: New literacies for new times. Research In the Teaching of English, 38 (2), 229-233.
> A brief article that argues for a new definition of literacy that takes into account multiple media and modalities.

Learning as social

Vygotsky, L. (1978) Interaction between learning and development & The Prehistory of Written Language. In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.), Mind in society (79-91; 105-119). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
> This is a foundational text that offers a view of learning as social, and represents learning as bringing with it development; Vygotsky is also important for this course in privileging "psychological tools" — such as language, writing, and other media — as mediating thinking.

What is ethnographic research?

Bogdan, Robert C., & Biklen, S.K. (1998). Selections from Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods 3rd edition. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (121-129).
> This reading offers clear advice on how an observer does the nitty-gritty work of turning observations into written text.

Sample field notes by former ED180 students.

Cushman, Ellen. (1998). Selections from The struggle and the tools: Oral and literate strategies in an inner city community. (1-4; 21-32). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
> In this selection, Cushman discusses her perspective as a social scientist who believes in conducting socially responsible, respectful, and collaborative research.

Critical literacy, critical pedagogy

Freire, Paulo. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed. 30th Anniversary Edition (2000) with an introduction by Donaldo Macedo (71-86). New York: Continuum.
> In this now classic text by the Brazilian educator, Freire, we are asked to contrast education as "banking" with "education as the practice of freedom."

Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. Theory Into Practice, (31), 2, 132-141.
> Moll and his coauthors describe their collaborative project involving joint research with teachers, students, and families in southern Arizona. He uses his concept of "funds of knowledge" to refer to knowledge about their worlds that children bring to school, and offers ways that teachers can build on such knowledge.

The geography of poverty

Hilfiker, David. (2002). Foreward, Introduction, and Chapter One: Building the ghetto: A history. In Urban injustice: How ghettos happen (vii – 16). New York: Seven Stories.
> Hilfiker presents a comprehensive, chronological summary of the dynamics that have and continue to shape inner-city, low-income communities of color.

Heteroglossia and discourses

Gee, James P. (1991). "What is Literacy?" In C. Mitchell & K. Weiler (Eds.), Rewriting literacy: Culture and the discourse of the other (3-11). New York: Bergin & Garvey.
> A short but valuable piece that adds the term "discourses" to our literacy vocabulary.

Bakhtin, M. (1994). Excerpts from The Bakhtin Reader, Pam Morris (Ed.). London: Arnold (73-80).
> This complex theoretical piece introduces the concept of heteroglossia: language and literacy as multiple voices.

Literacy as subversive

Pratt, Mary Louise. (1999). Arts of the contact zone. In D. Bartholomae & A. Petrosky (Eds.), Ways of Reading, 5th edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press.
> Pratt introduces us to the term "contact zone," which she explains as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power." She illustrates the term "autoethnography," one means by which people who are in unpowerful positions write about themselves to the people in power over them. Autoethnography is one example of what she calls "literate arts of the contact zone."

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). How to tame a wild tongue. In Borderlands/La Frontera: The new mestiza (53-64). San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.
> This essay describes Anzaldúa's experience as a bilingual/biliterate/bicultural woman living along the Texas/Mexico border, attempting to negotiate a number of boundaries that separate languages, peoples, and ideas.

The cultural construction of difference/deficiency

Gates, Jr., Henry Louis. (1986). 'Race' as the trope of the world. In "Race," writing, and difference (590-597). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
> Gates challenges the careless use of "race" as the ultimate trope for irreducible difference between cultures; gives an account of Phyllis Wheatley's "oral examination" to prove that she, as an African girl, was capable of having written a set of poems; rehearses and demolishes the European assumption, existing since the 1600's, that Africans were incapable of creating formal literature.

Douglass, Frederick. (1987). Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass. In H.L. Gates, Jr. (Ed.), The Classic Slave Narratives (273-281). New York: Penguin.
This section of Douglass's autobiography gives an account of his learning to read and write, despite the fact that, from the perspective of Douglass's slave owners, "it was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read."

Varenne, Hervé & McDermott, Ray. (1998). Disability as a cultural fact. In H. Varenne & R. McDermott (Eds.), Successful Failure: The School America Builds (134-144). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
Similar to Gates' discussion of race as a cultural construct, Varenne and McDermott problematize labels of "disability" and, in doing so, discourage the notion of "difference" as "deficiency."

Literacy development and identity

Rose, Mike. (1989). "I just wanna be average." In Lives on the boundary: An account of the struggles and achievements of America's educationally underprepared (11-37). New York: Penguin.
Rose writes an evocative account of his years in the "Voc. Ed." track, reflecting on his own school experiences in light of public discussions of education and the underprepared student.

Literacy autobiographies by former students

Language, power, and pedagogy

Delpit, Lisa. (1995). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. In Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom (21-47). New York: The New Press.
Delpit questions both why some children of color don't learn to read when taught by means of "progressive" and "child-centered" methods and why teachers and parents of color are often excluded in conversations about what is good for their children.

Smitherman, G. (1998). Black English/Ebonics: What it be like? In T. Perry & L. Delpit (Eds.), The real Ebonics debate (29-37). Boston: Beacon Press.
A noted linguist explains some of the features of African American English Vernacular.

Connecting race, identity, and schooling

Olsen, Laurie. (1997). We make each other racial: The Madison High world as perceived by the "American" student. In Made in America (58-89). New York: The New Press.
This chapter presents high school students' views on how race factors into their social experience.

English-language learning and identity

Tan, Amy. (1999). Mother tongue. In S. Gillespie & R. Singleon (Eds.), Across cultures: A reader for writers (pp. 26-31). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
Tan describes the many languages spoken by her mother, an immigrant from China, and reflects on the ways in which her mother's linguistic experiences shaped Tan's development as a writer.

Orellana, Marjorie; Reynolds, Jennifer; Dorner, Lisa; & Meza, María (2003). In other words: Translating or "para-phrasing" as a family literacy practice in immigrant households. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38 (1), .
This article illustrates the many ways in which multi-lingual children develop and utilize linguistic funds of knowledge at home and how teachers can connect those skills with classroom learning.

Supplemental reading: Dorner, Lisa; Orellan, Marjorie; & Li-Grining, Christine P. (2007). "I helped my mom," and it helped me: Translating the skills of language brokers into improved standardized test scores. *American Journal of Education 113*: 451-478.

Supplemental reading: Kindler, Anneka. (2002). Survey of the states' limited English proficient students and available educational programs and services 2000-2001 summary report. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs.

In this study, the authors provide quantitative data that reflect the growing need to address multilingual/multicultural and immigrant students throughout the United States and especially in California.

Narrative of language and identity

Rodriguez, R. (1981). The achievement of desire. In Hunger of memory: The education of Richard Rodriguez, An autobiography. (pp. 43-73). Boston: D.R. Godine.

In this chapter, Rodriguez describes his education, and his resulting feeling of alienation from his family.

Confronting racism and complicating "Whiteness"

Tatum, Beverly. (1997). Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race (93-113). New York: Basic Books.

Tatum writes in this chapter about how white people can develop identities both as white and as anti-racist.

McIntosh, Peggy (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Excerpt from Working Paper 189, "*White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in Women's Studies.*" Wellesley College: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women (accessed from http://seamonkey.ed.asu.edu/~mcisaac/emc598ge/Unpacking.html).

This short essay lists the "daily effects of white privilege," from the author's point of view as a white woman.

Hammons, Jane. (2001). Bigger than Michael Jordan. *High Plains Literary Review XVI (2&3),* 138-152.

In this narrative, Hammons reflects on her experiences as a young women growing up in New Mexico and, through her reflection, contemplates commonalities she shares with a boy she tutors.

Schooling and identity

Lee, Stacey J. (1994). Beyond the model-minority stereotype: Voices of high- and low-achieving Asian-American students. Anthropology & Education Quarterly 25:413-429.

This article examines the complex relationship between Asian American student identity(ies) and perceptions regarding future opportunity and attitudes towards schooling.

Scaffolding reading

Ambe, Elizabeth BiFuh. (2007). Inviting reluctant adolescent readers into the literacy club: Some comprehension strategies to tutor individuals or small groups of reluctant readers. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, (50), 8, 632-639.

Using effective strategies and materials that appeal to learners' interests can improve the reading abilities of reluctant readers and help them comprehend the subject matter found in content area textbooks.

Perspectives on reading pedagogy

Brumer, Leah. (1998). Phonics and the politics of reading instruction. In C. Weaver (Ed.), Practicing what we know: Informed reading instruction (7-25). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

In this article, written originally for the East Bay Express, Brumer profiles a number of elementary school teachers, describing their methods of teaching reading and outlining some of the central issues of the phonics/whole language debate in California.

Pearson, P. David. (2001). Life in the radical middle: A personal apology for a balanced view of reading. In R.F. Flippo (Ed.), Reading researchers in search of common ground (78-83). New York: Routledge.

Pearson reacts to the "Reading Wars" with his own "radical" conceptualization of a pedagogy that integrates phonics and whole languages approaches to reading instruction.

Student perspectives on writing and the logic of errors

Hull, Glynda. (1986). Acts of wonderment: Fixing mistakes and correcting errors. In D. Bartholomae & A. Petrosky (Eds.), Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts: Theory and Method for a Reading and Writing Course (199-226). Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton Cook.

Hull provides insight into the logic of "buggy rules," systematic errors students make in writing (and math). In doing so, she emphasizes the importance of student-centric communication.

Supplemental reading: Hull, Glynda, & Rose, Mike (1990). "The wooden shack place": The logic of an unconventional reading. College Composition and Communication, 41(3), 287-298.

In this article, Hull & Rose present a case study of a UCLA undergraduate whose interpretation of poem was viewed by his teacher as "off mark." Relying on interviews with the student and knowledge of his history and background, they demonstrate what they call the "logic and coherence" of his unconventional reading.

Student-centered pedagogy

Morrell, Ernest & Duncan-Andrade, Jeff (2004). What they do learn in school: Hip-hop as a bridge to canonical poetry (247-272). In J. Mahiri (Ed.), *What they don't learn in school: Literacy in the lives of urban youth*. New York: Peter Lang.

Teacher-researchers discuss their pedagogy, which integrates elements of popular culture into English literature lessons. This piece provides a model for employing methods presented in this class.

Pluralizing literaracy(ies)

New London Group (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66 (1), 60-92.

This work defines a new movement in literacy studies. In this "manifesto," a cross-disciplinary group of social scientists collaborates to address and document the connection between literacy and social equity, providing a theoretical stance that grapples with the need for educators to modernize and contextualize pedagogies.

New literacies, new pedagogies

Morrell, Ernest (2002). Toward a critical pedagogy of popular culture: Literacy development among urban youth. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 46 (1), 72-77.

Morrell connects popular culture with critical pedagogy, providing an overview of how to construct culturally relevant classroom practices.

O'Brien, David & Scharber, Cassandra (2008). Digital literacies go to school: Potholes and possibilities. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52 (1), 66-68.
This article presents a definition of "digital literacies" and summarizes the affordances and challenges of integrating computer-based technologies into schools.

Multimodal literacy as resistance

Hull, Glynda; Kenney, Nora; Marple, Stacy; and Forsman-Schneider, Ali. (2006). Excerpt from Many versions of masculine: An exploration of boys' identity formation through digital storytelling in an afterschool program (10-30). Afterschool Matters Occasional Paper Series (No. 6). New York: The Robert Bowne Foundation.
This article presents a case study of a focal student and discusses how he and his peers use technology-enabled multiliteracies to enact identities that counter prevailing media representations of boys of color.

Multimodalities and spatial literacy

Comber, Barbara & Nixon, Helen (2008). Spatial literacies, design texts, and emergent pedagogies in purposeful literacy curriculum. *Pedagogies: An International Journal,* 3 (4), 221-240.

The power of drama

Boal, Augusto. (1979). Poetics of the oppressed (selections). In Theater of the oppressed (120-126; 142-156). New York: Theatre Communications Group.
Boal uses theatre to enact Freirean pedagogical theories that intertwine literacy and democracy, and that result in personal and collective revolution.
Movie in class: Shakespeare's Children.

Case studies and case study workshop

Print and bring your field notes and/or a rough draft of your case study to section.

Bissex, Glenda. (1987). Why case studies? In G. Bissex & R.H. Bullock (Eds.), Seeing for Ourselves: Case Study Research by Teachers of Writing (7-19). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Bissex writes about the construction of a case study, from observation and data collection to composition, showing the benefits of qualitative research as it relates to the social sciences and contrasts with the hard sciences.

Case studies by former ED180 students.

Wrapping up course themes

Hull, Glynda & Schultz, Katherine (2002). Connecting schools with out-of-school worlds: Insights from recent research on literacy in non-school settings. In G. Hull & K. Schultz (Eds.), *School's Out: Bridging Out-of-School Literacies with Classroom Practice* (32-57).
Classroom teachers provide resources and tools for children to imagine acting upon and beautifying urban spaces, beginning with their school.

City and Regional Planning 150: Youth in Participatory Planning

Engaging youth in participatory planning

McKoy, D. and Vincent, J. (2007). Engaging Schools in Urban Revitalization: The Y-PLAN (Youth – Plan, Learn, Act, Now), *Journal of Planning Education and Research*. Vol (26) no 4. pg (389-403).

Bernard, Sara. (2008). Mapping Their Futures. *Edutopia*, Oct/Nov (2008) Vol (4) no. 5. pg. 50-55.

Stone, et al. (1999). Schools and Disadvantaged Neighborhoods: The Community Development Challenge. *Urban Problems and Community Development* (Chapter 8 and Commentary by Orfield).

CRP Project Packets

Pedagogy of place

Hayden, Delores (1995). Chapters 1 *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, Intro (pg. 3-13).

Delpit, Lisa. *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom,* The New Press, New York. Pg 91 – 104.

Dewey, John (1938). Chap. 6 The Meaning of Purpose in *Experience and Education.(*67-72).

Wenger, Etienne (1998). Communities of Practice – Learning, Meaning and Identity. Introduction: A Social Theory of Learning (pg. 3 – 15).

Review CRP 150 Handbook

The role of education in building equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities

Coburn, Jason (2009). "Some Challenges for Healthy City Planning" in Toward the Healthy City: People, Places and the Politics of Urban Planning (1 – 24).

Ayers and Ford. (1996). The Pedagogy of Poverty (pages 118-130) in *City Kids: City Teachers.*

"Trajectories of Opportunity for Young Men and Boys of Color", in Christopher Edley, Jr. and Jorge Ruiz de Velasco (eds.): Changing Places: How Communities Will Improve the Health of Boys of Color, pp. 495-297. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010.

The power & politics of place: Community mapping

Hayden, Delores (1995). *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, Chapter 2 (14–43).

Nespor, Jan (1997). Neighborhood Intersections, Chapter 3.

Genius of Common Sense: Jane Jacobs and the Death and Life of Great American Cities (Chap 6-8).

History of place & design for the future

Hayden, Delores (1995). *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, Chapter 3 (pg. 44 – 78).

Review Community Mapping Resources (distributed in class).

Importance of communication and telling your story!

www.opportunityagenda.org

Into action!! The Charrette—Re-visioning the future

Race and Torma (1998). Case Studies: Learning, Living and Advocacy Chapter 1 in *Youth Planning Charrettes.* APA Publications.