Redacting 'Stock Stories' of Education Inequities: Toward Legitimate Digital Participation

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ABSTRACT: This practitioner research study examines one critical race media literacy (CRML) activity that invited students to digitally redact deficit framings of youth from minoritized and historically marginalized backgrounds. I illustrate how Latinx and Asian students used the project to re-articulate deficit narratives of themselves, their friends, and family members. I also convey how white students used the assignment to author incipient identities as racial allies. Based on these findings, I develop the notion of *legitimate digital participation* to distill how young people used CRML to craft more humanizing cultural narratives and self-determined political identities.

KEYWORDS: practitioner; deficit; privilege; digital; participation.

The commute from the base of campus to the University of California at Santa Cruz climbs a steep 1,000 feet of elevation. Excepting a few ambitious bike commuters, most students, instructors, and staff utilized the local bus system. On one trip to campus, I packed myself tightly in the aisle between taken seats as song lyrics reverberated from a fellow passenger's headphones. When reaching for a hand rail, a Latina student seated on a chair next to me, held out her phone to the traveler next to her. "This is so messed up," she remarked, pointing to her Twitter timeline. An article on the Trump administration's "shocking" zero-tolerance family separation policy was conspicuously displayed on her phone. The Latina student corrected, "This should read, 'Xenophobic U.S. doing what it's always done'." I smiled and looked toward the ground, quietly appreciating her cogent revision of the reporter's headline. We were on our way to campus to learn, but so much (digitally-mediated) learning was already taking place on our way to the university.

I open with this brief vignette to convey the sociocultural and material contexts of youth digital practices, which are often minimized or altogether ignored in abstract policy debates about "twenty-first century" learning (Chang, 2019a; Emejulu & McGregor, 2017; Sims, 2017). This vignette also makes clear the difficulty, if not impossibility, of demarcating moments in which young people are "on-" or "off-line." As Floridi (2015) points out, we now live "onlife" in hyper-connected contexts where digital technologies mediate our relations to self, others, and the world (cf., Ito, Matsuda, & Okabe, 2010; Selwyn, 2019). Few students ride the bus without first checking the online Metro bus timetable, listening to music, or scrolling through their Twitter timelines. How might critical educators build on young people's sophisticated uses of digital technologies and elaborate their existing analyses of educational and societal inequities?

This practitioner research study examines one digital learning activity that invited students to actively replace deficit educational policy narratives with more humanizing, emancipatory terms: what the Latina passenger on the bus critiqued as "This is so messed up" and rephrased by asserting, "This *should* read..." Informed by Critical Race Media Literacy (CRML) and sociocultural learning theories, the "Redacting Headlines, Re-Narrating 'Stock Stories' of Education Inequities" activity encouraged students to "relocate the deficit" of racist discourses from the bodies of minoritized and multiply marginalized youth to the systems and structures that tended to fail them (Baldridge, 2014). The activity also invited youth to "critique and oppose" social inequities, even as it encouraged them to "create and propose" alternative, more liberatory narratives for reflection and action (Green, 2017).

Drawing on student work samples and practitioner memos, I illustrate the ways in which students creatively re-articulated deficit narratives on topics of central importance to their lives. These included issues of educational politics and policy making at the intersections of racism, ableism, and sexism. I then examine the distinctive ways in which students of color and white students made meaning of this activity.[1] Students of color – primarily Latinx and Asian students – used the project to speak against deficit narratives that framed their own neighborhoods, families, and friends as "damaged" (Tuck, 2009). By contrast, white students approached the project as an incipient platform to practice emergent forms of racial allyship. In both instances, students applied CRML to craft humanizing cultural narratives and affirming identities for themselves and for each other. I use these

[1] I capitalize "Black" to underscore the social construction of race and racism and to attend to Blackness as "a politics rather than just a pigment, a culture rather than just a color, an epistemology rather than just an embodied identity" (Lipsitz, 2016). By contrast, I chose not to capitalize "white" given that the term does not represent a shared culture and history and that doing so tends to "follow the lead of white supremacists" (Laws, 2020). Anti-racist arguments in favor of capitalizing "White"—such as arguments that suggest "White" better explicates the complicity of white people and white institutions (Center for the Study of Social Policy, as cited in Appiah, 2020)—advance important and valid arguments. Still, I prefer the differential capitalization of "Black" and "white" to trouble moral relativist, "both sides" cultural narratives for making sense of anti-Black racism.

empirical findings to develop the notion of *legitimate digital participation*: creative digital practices in which youth leverage their lived experiences and interpretations of oppression to construct more humanizing cultural narratives and self-determined political identities. Qualitative differences between students of color and white students, however, raise important conceptual and pedagogical questions concerning ways to deepen intersectional struggles for justice that exceed thin, self-interested conceptions of allyship (Fujino, 2018; Hope, 2019).

I begin by outlining key concepts from CRML and explaining how and why embedding CRML within a sociocultural framework hones attention to the collective, situated, and practice-based dimensions of youth engagements with digital media. I then elaborate the tenets of practitioner research which guided a systematic inquiry into the Redacting Headlines activity. I report on my findings and conclude by wrestling with the constraints and affordances of digital media in "onlife" contexts by outlining possible directions for further CRML inquiry.

Situating Critical Race Media Literacy: A Sociocultural Perspective

Scholars of CRML examine how young people use digital media to make, unmake, and remake dominant cultural representations of race and racism, as well as classism, colonialism, sexism, ableism, homophobia (Kellner & Share, 2005; Share, 2009; Yosso, 2002). A key assumption of CRML is that young people are already engaged in sophisticated digital media practices, particularly in ways that schools do not recognize, or worse, actively delegitimize (Akom, Shah, Nakai, & Cruz, 2016; Garcia, Mirra, Morrell, Martinez, & Scorza, 2015; Koyama, 2017; Mirra & Garcia, 2017). CRML thus aims to cultivate young people's abilities to use digital media to discern and contest enduring tropes of race and racism as well as other oppressive cultural narratives (King, 2017; Share, 2009). In this sense, CRML animates key tenets of cultural studies that approach culture as a contested social text that historical actors actively "decode" and also "encode" new meanings into (Hall, 1993, p. 169; cf. Grossberg, 2005; Hall, 1996; Jenkins, McPherson, & Shattuc, 2009). The Redacting Headlines activity built on the assumptions of CRML and invited young people to leverage their existing digital repertoires to critique and re-articulate dominant media narratives of education inequities.

CRML offers a generative basis for thinking about the political agency of young people in relation to dominant cultural narratives. Yet, a more robust conception of how young people become effective users of CRML and develop new practices and identities as digital cultural producers remains limited. I turned to sociocultural learning theories to situate CRML in broader "activity systems" of distributed learning (Engeström, 1987). Contrary to cognitivist or behaviorist psychologists, sociocultural learning theorists conceptualize learning as a collective, culturally-mediated activity in which actors actively make meaning in relation to social others, tools, practices, and norms (Engeström & Sannino, 2010; Rogoff, 2003). From this perspective, digital media represents one among many elements of learning that also spans formal classroom and nonformal learning contexts (Ito, Matsuda, & Okabe, 2010; Sims, 2017, 2014). Sociocultural learning

theories also offer the generative concept of "legitimate peripheral participation," or processes by which new, more marginal members become proficient at skills and activities within a community of experts (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). I drew on the tenets of sociocultural learning theories to consider how students gained increasing expertise with CRML and authored identities as legitimate cultural producers alongside their peers.

Embedding CRML in a sociocultural framework provided a conceptual foundation to design and implement the Redacting Headlines activity, particularly in ways that built on the diverse assets and skills students brought into the classroom (Banks & Banks, 2019). In addition to formal course assessment goals, the activity also sought to facilitate more expansive forms of political learning in which students might apply CRML in their everyday "onlife" contexts (Floridi, 2015). I envisioned riding the bus with former students, long after the formal conclusion of our time together, observing them nudge a friend, critique popular headlines of education and social inequities, and posit more humanizing ways of "reading the word and the world" (Freire, 1987).

Practitioner Research: Professional, Personal, and Political Aims of Inquiry

The theoretical assumptions and political commitments of practitioner research motivated this inquiry. Practitioner research (also called, "practitioner action research") entails a systematic inquiry into practice that aims to effect pedagogical, organizational, and social change (Brydon-Miller & Maguire, 2009; Carr & Kemmis, 2003). Many scholars have utilized practitioner research studies in K-12 settings, particularly as a means of honoring the epistemological expertise of K-12 educators and co-designing more relevant and responsive educational policies (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Herr, 2017). For this study, I drew on Noffke's (1997) typology of practitioner inquiry, which includes three guiding aims: professional aims that seek to produce new educational knowledge at the intersections of theory and practice; personal aims that seek to generate new self-knowledge and a greater sense of fulfillment in one's work; and political aims that deepen ongoing projects and movements to realize education and social justice.

Informed by practitioner inquiry, I investigated my efforts to design, implement, and assess the Redacting Headlines activity in an upper-division Education seminar called "Critical Perspectives in Urban Education." The purpose of this five-week course was to facilitate students' critical understandings of place, race, and schooling. A total of 39 students enrolled in the course across two sections; I taught the first course during the summer of 2018 and the second in the summer of 2019. Based on pre-course surveys, approximately 60% of students across both sections identified as Latinx; 20% as Asian; 15% as white; and 5% chose not to identify racially. In terms of gender, 80% of students identified as female, 10% as male, and 10% as gender expansive and/or gender non-binary. Additionally, 65% of students reported that they were first-generation college students.

Our collective inquiry into the formation of urban inequities explored the relations between material inequities and cultural discourses. In particular, we drew on Delgado and Stefancic's (2001) notion of "stock stories," or tales that people tell to explain social reality that tend to minimize attention to questions of power and privilege. The Redacting Headlines activity was one unit assessment couched within broader course goals that encouraged students to uncover how mainstream media framed the "urban" and "urban youth," a term often used as code for Black and Brown young people (Morrell, 2008). Here, we drew on Irby's (2015) instructive analysis that "humans through everyday practices produce, circulate, and make the urban available for consumption and use" (p. 24). We asked: How are we invited to "consume" the urban? And, following CRML, how might we discern, contest, and generate new meanings of the urban?

The activity also intersected with a parallel ethnographic project I conducted at the time of instruction, which examined the ways in which actors in positions of power censored, or redacted, the political aims of actors and organizations seeking transformative justice (Chang, 2019b). I wanted to explore the potential pedagogical possibilities of redaction not only as a strategy of power, but as a tactical practice for nondominant youth to re-articulate stock stories. Importantly, while the course and activity focus began with an explicitly racial analysis of the "urban," students actively troubled how the "urban" intersected with immigrant, dis/ability, and LGBTQ+ issues.

Before discussing how students responded to the assignment, it is important to specify the sociocultural contexts in which students interpreted and practiced redacting headlines. After reading the directions aloud as a group and creating space for students to pose questions, concerns, and suggestions for how they would be evaluated, I distributed a trans-phobic tweet from conservative actor and free-speech advocate, James Woods. The original tweet disparaged an image of a gender-expansive young person and his supportive parents, who held signs next to their son which read, "I love my gender creative son" and "My son wears dresses and makeup… Get over it!!" Woods reacted to the image and tweeted: "This is sweet. Wait until this poor kid grows up, realizes what you've done, and stuffs both of you dismembered into a freezer in the garage" (RealJamesWoods, 2017, Jul. 9). Students worked in groups of three and four to critically analyze the image and interrogate Woods's words. They then reprinted the original tweet on a large sheet of poster paper and worked collectively to consider how they might reframe Woods' trans-phobic tweet. Below are a few examples of students' collective efforts.

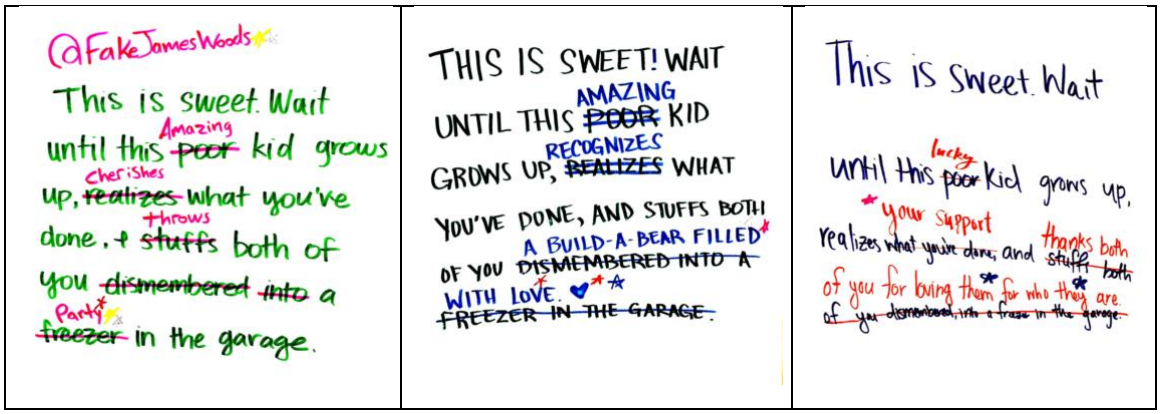

Figure #1. Examples of Students' Initial, Collaborative Attempts to Redact a Deficit Narrative.

Students posted their small group redactions and then participated in a gallery walk to read and highlight the various ways their peers similarly and differentially redacted Woods's tweet. This low stakes and collaborative opportunity to practice redacting a headline served multiple purposes. It deepened students' critical analyses of trans-phobia as a constraining social structure. It provided an experiential basis for students to grasp key dimensions of CRML, such as the social construction of media messages, how language shapes and is shaped by power and politics, and the diversity of ways in which a single media message can be interpreted and re-interpreted by different media "consumers" (Kellner & Share, 2005). The exercise also normalized practices of giving and receiving feedback and troubled a reductive search for a "right" or "wrong" answer. Collectively, the activity established a conceptual and participatory basis for students to identify, analyze, and redact a narrative of their own choosing.

Data for this paper focus on student unit assessments, which included a digitally redacted headline and a two- to three-page analytical essay. I also drew on whole group conversations, written survey reflections, and analytic memos that I wrote before, during, and after evaluating students' assessments. I thematically analyzed how students interpreted, applied, and then made meaning of the redaction activity. I also paid attention to students' evolving conceptions of self and whether any evidence in a shift from more peripheral to more expert identifications began to emerge (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The following section conveys the creative digital redactions students produced and draws on their own terms and words to offer insight to their thinking. I then disaggregate student data along race in ways that deepened emergent patterns in student work and that illumined the distinctive ways students of color and white students made meaning of the assignment.

Redacting 'Stock Stories' of Education Inequities

Students used the Redacting Headlines assignment to re-articulate deficit portrayals of historically marginalized groups and communities and re-center a focus on structural forms of oppression. I selected three illustrative examples in which students interrogated structural racism, ableism, and homophobia to offer a glimpse into the substantive critiques students authored. Students successfully applied CRML in some ways; they also left several key ideas unquestioned or unexamined. I begin by describing students' independent analyses and then elaborate how they supported and deepened each other's redactions through peer feedback, a post-activity gallery walk, and collective reflections.

Chrissy, a Latina, first-generation college student, redacted a deficit headline to read: "Latino *Latinx* students still lagging academically *lacking appropriate academic resources* despite state and national initiatives" (Sangha, 2016, Apr. 6). In her written analysis, Chrissy elaborated, "This author pushes blame on the students when they simply don't have the resources and quality of education that privileged students have as a result of residential segregation." Chrissy bridged a critique of Sangha's deficit portrayal with a broader analysis of "status ideologies" (Holme, 2002), narratives that, as Chrissy put it, "blamed *us* for *our* own academic failure when people fail to address the systemic injustices that keep *us* from succeeding" [emphasis added]. Chrissy shifted from a third-person reference ("the students") to first-person plural ("us") and plural possessive pronouns ("our own academic failure") in ways that suggest the intimate political and personal basis of her critique. For Chrissy, Fox News reporter Soni Sangha was not simply normalizing divestment in Latinx school-communities, but in Chrissy's own community as well.

Anita, a mixed-race student, engaged President Trump's ableist critique of students with special needs. She redacted the original tweet to read: "DeVos is right *wrong*. Handicapped and minority children are too disruptive *being discriminated* in the classroom. Disaster! Perhaps not everyone needs K-12 we should find ways to help them [*sic*] these students achieve their goals in education." Anita agreed with Trump's language of "Disaster!" but re-oriented the focus of this apparent catastrophe away from the bodies of "handicapped and minority children" and toward the schools that inequitably served minoritized students and students with disabilities. "The disaster is not something inherent in children," Anita wrote, "but in schools and classrooms that do not adequately support students with diverse learning needs." Anita concluded that the President's words did not even rise to what Rolón-Dow (2005) might consider paternalistic racist care. As Anita put it, the President's words reflected "the absence of any kind of care" and affixed blame on youth of color and youth with disabilities as inherently "troublesome, undisciplined, and wild."

As a final example, Raegan, a white woman and first-generation college student, challenged a conservative re-presentation of queer activism at a private, Catholic university. She redacted a headline to read: "The latest *wave of* campus craziness *support for LGBTQ+ students*—At Loyola Marymount, Biology *Bigotry* is

a 'Hate Crime'" (French, 2016, May 3). Raegan offered a thoughtful critique of National Review reporter David French and his indictment of the ostensibly oppressive, "politically correct" culture pervading college campuses. She analyzed the intersections of undergraduate student agency and historically engrained, social and material structures of homophobia. "This community is not weak for speaking up about discrimination," Raegan wrote, "They are showing strength against a system that does not work for them or support them in their search for equality."

Figure #2. Selected Examples of Individual Students' Redacted Headlines.

Chrissy's redacted headline: "Latino *Latinx* students still lagging academically *lacking appropriate academic resources* despite state and national initiatives" (Sangha, 2016, Apr. 6)	
Anita's redacted headline: "DeVos is right *wrong*. Handicapped and minority children are too disruptive *being discriminated* in the classroom. Disaster! Perhaps not everyone needs K-12 we should *find ways to help them [sic] these students achieve their goals in* education."	
Raegan's redacted headline: "The latest *wave of* campus craziness *support for LGBTQ+ students*—At Loyola Marymount, Biology *Bigotry* is a 'Hate Crime'" (French, 2016, May 3).	

These examples offer a glimpse into how students applied CRML and the relative strengths and weaknesses of their individual analyses. Given observed areas of potential improvement across student work, students were encouraged to both affirm and critique their peers using a gallery walk with post-it notes and pair-share discussions. For example, several students appreciated Chrissy's cogent redaction of deficit narratives of Latinx students, but questioned whether she was too narrow in her demand for "academic resources." Several students left post-it notes that urged Chrissy to consider broader social and economic resources that also shaped life opportunities for Latinx youth, such as affordable housing and well-paid jobs. Similarly, students expressed appreciations for Anita's creative redaction of President Trump's tweet but urged her to consider how power is also embedded in the naming of "handicapped and minority children," terms that seemed to undercut the social construction of race and dis/ability in ways that terms like "minoritized" or "students with dis/abilities" might better invoke (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013). Importantly, one skeptical peer questioned whether President Trump did, in fact, author this tweet. Through a student-led, collective investigation, we discovered this statement had been fabricated (Lacapria, 2017, Feb. 15)! Nonetheless, we debated whether the tweet continued to do cultural and political work regardless of its inauthentic basis, particularly in ways that might intensify climates of racism and ableism that the Trump Administration symbolized and naturalized (Harnish, 2017). As a final example, students encouraged Raegan to consider replacing the term "support" when describing the actions of LGBTQ+ students with terms that more explicitly named the students' political work, such as "activism" or "organizing."

The gallery walk thus provided a collective space for students to critique, contradict, and support each other's applications of CRML. The activity also sparked a conversation about the limited occasions of meaningful, dialogic feedback in online comments sections of articles. We wrestled with broader questions about a prevalent "call-out" culture in online debate spaces, even as some students expressed a continued need to name violent racist, ableist, or transphobic defenses. These conversations revealed the imperative of situating CRML within intentional, co-designed learning communities in which tools, social others, practices, and norms of action and interaction can deepen students' abilities to practice CRML and inhabit identities as CRML experts (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Intriguingly, how students made meaning of the assignment differed considerably along dimensions of race.

Challenging Myths about 'My Community'

For many students of color, the redaction assignment offered a way to challenge stock stories of education inequity that often misrepresented or diminished their lived experiences. Many students extended Chrissy's angle of critique, which drew on personal terms (e.g., "us" or "our own academic failure") to re-articulate stock stories of communities of color. Jaime, a Latino student,

explained how the assignment "changed my understanding of news by highlighting the language used to marginalize groups like me." Likewise, Elise, a queer, mixed-race student remarked, "As someone who's grown up and had [a] sibling and friends let down by the systems in place, the assignment definitely made it seem more possible to re-write these narratives." Another Latina student, Julieta, explained that she was "quite frankly, shocked that this kind of news is being spread about my community."

Still other students spoke angrily about the deficit terms mainstream journalists used to describe their communities. During a whole group reflective discussion, one group listed as their first bullet point: "These authors are ignorant. How is this actual news?" Alexis, an Asian woman student offered these words in a written reflection: "In the headline I redacted, I can tell the author has no sense of awareness (or maybe desire) to include youth or families of color in the conversation." She explained that, relative to the author, she felt far better equipped to tell a story that students from similarly marginalized backgrounds might find valid. Melissa, a Latina student remarked: "I was once that kid in an urban school." She added, "I feel like she [the author] had no relation to even talk about the [school] experience especially if it relies on false info." I thought I misheard Melissa and asked if she meant the author had "no right" to talk about her experience. Melissa corrected me, "Yeah, but also no relation. She probably doesn't even know anybody in my community." For Melissa, relationships formed an ethical foundation to guide who can and should write about communities like her own. Melissa spoke back to the conservative media pundit even as she eloquently pushed back on my own mis-interpretations of her analysis.

Student participation in redacting headlines eroded the professional boundaries between students and professional journalists. Students of color drew on their lived experiences to critique the content of the article and defend "groups like me" or "my community." In the process, they brought the authors of their redacted articles into the classroom. They questioned the authoritative bases of the journalists who wrote these articles and positioned each other and themselves as experts relative to media pundits and paid journalists (Sims, 2014). The practice of redacting media headlines thus created an immediate context of learning for students to author identities as legitimate participants in digital education debates (Lave & Wenger, 1991) within and beyond the situated contexts of the classroom.

Authoring Emergent Identities as Racial Allies

In contrast to students of color, a majority of white students approached the assignment as a way to author emergent identities as racial allies. Notably, several white students opted to focus on the intersections of youth's lived experiences and structural racism. Holly, a white woman student, redacted an article that asserted, "Police department seeks more facts before deciding an apology in case of *refuses to apologize to 10 black college students after officers posed a* false dine and dash accusation" (Khan, 2018, Jul 16). Speaking directly to journalist Ayesha Khan, Holly advised:

> The focus should not be whether the students were within their rights to complain to the police or whether the university they are attending should publicly defend them. It should not be how many times the local IHOP [International House of Pancakes] called the police for dine and dashers, or how many of the 10 students paid in cash. The issue that you, as a reporter, should focus on is the fact that police in Missouri feel empowered by structural racism to a point that they feel comfortable openly targeting black youth as criminal based on nothing but the color of their skin.

Holly challenged deficit portrayals of Black youth and called on the author to situate the particular incident within broader histories of racism in Clayton, Missouri. In her written reflection, Holly wrote, "The assignment helped me call out racism more easily."

Other white students echoed Holly's reflections. Megan, a white woman student reflected, "This assignment has really made me think about and understand these issues that I'm normally totally distanced from." Rose, another white woman student, similarly observed, "I already understood how narratives could shift blame and paint certain portraits of people/groups but this assignment helped me understand the deficit part of it. I feel like I'm better able to identify and reframe these deficit narratives."

White students interpreted the redaction activity as a way to practice incipient, or "prefigurative" politics of racial solidarity (Isaac, Jacobs, Kucinskas, & McGrath, 2019). This optimistic interpretation conveys how CRML offers a potential basis for white, and more privileged students broadly, to author identities in solidarity with social others and with struggles for racial and education justice. But a less optimistic reading might raise questions about the depth and future application of white students' newfound racial understandings. Holly's comfort with "calling out" racism left much wanting. In addition, while there was a qualitative difference in how students of color and white students talked about inequality, intra-group variation within students of color and white student groups raise additional questions about the limits of this activity. These observations signaled a need to revise and deepen the redaction activity in ways that might specify concrete actions for students to take, not just powerful emotions to feel (Lipsitz, 2017, Jan. 17).

Discussion: Legitimate Digital Participation and Accompliceship

If the purpose of practitioner research is "to move from felt 'troubles' and 'anxieties' to a statement of an issue" (Adelman, 1993, p. 18), then findings from this inquiry helped to illumine the pedagogical affordances of CRML. In this discussion, I elaborate on how student responses offer evidence of what I term *legitimate digital participation*. But I also grapple with the enduring "troubles" and "anxieties" left unresolved by this activity and perhaps of CRML more broadly. In particular, I trouble incipient forms of white student allyship and ask whether the activity favored critical analysis in ways that overshadowed potentially more robust conceptions of political solidarity and practical modes of social action (Banks,

1989). I conclude by outlining potential directions for further research that might address the various missteps and missed opportunities of this initial effort.

Toward Legitimate Digital Participation

Student reflections offer insight into the ways in which young people authored new cultural narratives and new critical and civic identities (Sims, 2014). I term these practices *legitimate digital participation*: creative digital practices in which youth leverage their lived experiences and interpretations of oppression to construct more humanizing cultural narratives and self-determined political identities. Legitimate digital participation bridges digital sociology and critical learning sciences by explicitly naming how the "digital" co-constitutes social relations (Selwyn, 2019), which are themselves shaped by broader structures of power and privilege (Curnow, Davis, & Asher, 2019; Esmonde & Booker, 2017; Mendoza, Kirshner, & Gutiérrez, 2018; Uttamchandani, 2018). The digital is thus a site of constraint and possibility, a medium through which youth might reproduce prevailing cultural accounts or redact and rearticulate them. Legitimate digital participation also troubles the schooled boundaries of digital use by replacing a spatial grammar of "periphery" and "center" in ways that more readily honor the undervalued, unsanctioned, "peripheral" digital practices young people are already engaged in. Legitimate digital participation thus orients teaching and research toward the ways young people use digital media to make meaning of social realities, translate private troubles into collective problems, and imagine (and actively build toward) the kinds of worlds they need and desire (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Gutiérrez & Jurow, 2016).

Evidence of legitimate digital participation was also evident in the ways students felt constrained by the initial design of the Redacting Headlines project. When asked how I might improve the activity, one student in the initial seminar explained, "I know how to re-narrate these stories but we are not actually circulating it outside the classroom." Another student similarly reflected, "As I was doing the assignment, I didn't really understand how we were interrupting [deficit narratives], but now that you mention we could email the author, it makes me think we could possibly make the author think critically about our communities." As evident in these comments, my narrow, classroom conceptions of a "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) contradicted the less rigid, more permeable ways that young people interpreted classroom boundaries. Consistent with Floridi's (2015) "onlife" thesis, students were already imagining learning in more integrated ways, as always already connected to social others beyond those in formal classroom settings.

Legitimate digital participation also specifies a sense of critical hope that emerged among students who began to grasp the more mutable dimensions of oppressive social structures (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Edgoose, 2010). hooks (2003) reminds us that, "When we only name the problem, when we state complaint without a constructive focus on resolution, we take away hope [. . .] which then works to sustain dominant culture" (p. xiv). The Redacting Headlines

activity elaborated hooks' important insights by providing small, but concrete, ways for students to critique and circulate more humanizing cultural education narratives. In this way, students cultivated a form of critical hope that scrutinized naïve approaches to urban education reform even as it animated a sense of political possibility for transforming schools and society.

From Allyship to Accompliceship

Notwithstanding the affordances of legitimate digital participation, students' reflections also revealed potential limitations of the Redacted Headlines activity, specifically concerning a de-coupling between critical analysis and concrete actions (Banks, 1989). Simply naming deficit narratives and proposing resolutions as racial allies felt inadequate as a course outcome. I was encouraged to hear that the assignment supported Holly to "call out racism more easily," but wanted to extend students' newfound racial analyses to include practical actions they might take.

Recent scholarship on the limits of allyship convey this point well. Dean (2019) critiques the notion of "allyship" as a metaphor drawn from militarist and imperial discourses in which "individuals are imagined like little sovereign states, defending their territory and only joining together under the most cautious and self-interested terms" (p. 20). She prefers the term "comrade" as a way to elevate themes of supportive cover and political belonging in united struggles for justice. Similarly, Fujino (2018) develops the notion of "deep solidarities" to conceptualize forms of intersectional solidarity that "accompany oppressed groups in ways that often required a risk or sacrifice to direct self-interest" (p. 185). Likewise, Hope (2019) interrogates the limits of allyship as a coalitional organizing metaphor and posits the generative notion of "accompliceship" as an alternative, more robust frame. She writes:

> The framework of accompliceship recognizes that standing in solidarity with oppressed people is in some cases a criminal act where one is quite literally an 'accomplice.' The willingness to put one's body, freedom, and livelihood on the line for others and to challenge an injustice is accompliceship. Accompliceship always necessitates risk and the abandonment of self-interest for the sake of collective liberation and justice. (p. 230)

Examining student responses through the lens of accompliceship reveals the limits of the Redacting Headlines assignment. White students engaged in a critical reading of digital narratives, but the extent to which their newfound understandings and recognitions facilitated a willingness "to put one's body" on the line remain unclear. Similarly, students of color who offered ardent, rhetorical defenses of their own communities might have left the course with new terms of analysis but with few concrete actions to take.

These observations point toward potential extensions of CRML as a pedagogical project that combines critical analysis and action. Here, Mirra and Garcia's (2017) analysis of the creative multimodal, digital practices of

#BlackLivesMatter activists offers an instructive basis for thinking at the intersections of structural analysis and a socio-material praxis of accompliceship. Likewise, Koyama's (2017) analysis of the creative on- and offline practices among Latinx youth offers insight into the creative, digitally mediated ways in which young people combined policy critiques with concrete actions: mobilizing their peers, coordinating collective action campaigns, and forging relations of accompliceship that risked their own safety in pursuit of collective justice. These examples trouble liberal-democratic assumptions rooted in notions of allyship and offer potentially generative extensions of CRML.

Concluding Thoughts

Freire (1970) observed that "education is suffering from narrative sickness" (p. 71). This paper has endeavored to develop one CRML activity that invited students to remedy that sickness and identify, interrogate, and re-narrate deficit narratives of educational and social inequality. The Redacting Headlines activity encouraged students to invent new terms, practices, and modes of digital narration as a basis for authoring identities as legitimate producers of knowledge. Scholar-educator-activists interested in CRML might explore ways to address the observed limitations of this activity and deepen projects that fuse cultural production with an ethics of accompliceship (Hope, 2019). Such studies can help to elaborate the political and pedagogical project of CRML by encouraging young people to critically read the (digital) word and world in order to change it (Freire, 1987).

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