"Counterstory Mapping Our City":
Teachers Reckoning with Latinx Students' Knowledges, Cultures, and Communities

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ABSTRACT: The study focuses on a two-week unit with 90 students at an urban, Latinx-serving charter middle and high school in the south midwestern U.S. to create digital counterstory maps. The maps then served as the organizing content for a subsequent week-long summer professional development the authors led for their teachers. Analysis suggests the significance of engaging the students' counterstories and cultural knowledge for designing teacher education committed to culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). Further, it articulates the challenges for engaging CSP with students and teachers in a charter school context in which disciplinary and curricular mandates conflate cultural assimilation with academic achievement.

KEYWORDS: authorizing student perspectives, counter-mapping, counterstories, culturally sustaining pedagogy, teacher education

As I (Erin) waited for the bell to ring in Mr. Richard's 4th hour high school technology class, I organized the mess of paper maps for the group activities in the corner of the room. We were spending the day mapping places where students felt they belonged in their city. Mr. Richard stepped out briefly to go to the restroom, and an administrator, Mr. Gail, must have been at the door observing the teacher-less room of energetic students milling around, visiting with friends. Or perhaps he was in the nearby office, watching via the school's surveillance cameras. He walked in, not seeing me in the corner, and abruptly pointed at four boys whose polo shirts were untucked, "You, you, you, and you," he said simply and sternly. In the space of a few seconds, the room fell into a sour silence and the four boys were written up for dress code violations. After class, Mr. Richard told me he hasn't allowed any students to use the bathroom since my arrival (this is my second day)

out of respect. I responded evenly, explaining to him that they may respond more warmly to the unit if my presence is not keeping them from taking care of their needs. He looked down, face flushed, nodding – embarrassed? – and readily agreed to change course. By the end of the day, out of 90 students across all of Mr. Richard's class sections, only a few had mapped STEM CITY Charter School as a place they felt they belonged.

The vignette begins to illuminate teachers' ambivalent relationships to students in the curriculum and in the racialized and material complexities of engaging culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). Like many urban charter schools targeting working class Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students, STEM City administrators employ strict disciplinary rules that police students' dress and sociality on the basis of deference to adult authority, the culture of which teachers are tasked with upholding. At the same time, along with many other teachers at the school, Mr. Richard, a second career, newly alternatively certified technology teacher, welcomed us into his class and participated in professional developments (PDs) with us because he wanted to know more about how to get his students more interested in learning. He knew that connecting with who they are had something to do with it. In the following, we explore in more depth our efforts to minimize teachers' ambivalence and to cultivate an ethic of curricular accountability to students' cultural knowledges and agency.

Drawing on a two-year ethnographic study with STEM City Charter School teachers, a 6th-12th grade primarily Latinx-serving school located in a southern midwestern U.S. city, we explore the complexities of facilitating teachers' study of CSP. Our analysis especially engages our experiences from a two-week unit that Erin and Kevin co-developed and co-led with Mr. Richard. In our unit, titled "Counterstory Mapping Our City," students learned to critically read maps as media produced from a specific perspective and set of interests. They then produced counterstory maps of their communities to speak back to their teachers' common (often racist) misperceptions of who they are. We used students' media as the organizing content and foundation for a subsequent week-long summer PD with STEM City teachers.

We first contextualize our study within critical race and decolonial theory. We explore two important themes that offer insights for supporting practicing teachers toward CSP. Students had sophisticated situated and dynamic theories of place and culture, while many teachers' were relatively static, hierarchized, and abstracted. Second, we explore how students' media supported teachers to problematize the school's imperative to "get out" (go to college) or "stay behind" (in their communities).

Our study ultimately illuminates the ways in which teachers at STEM City (and beyond) occupy a mediating position. They are accountable to uphold the school administration's disciplinary mandates that position Latinx students and students of Color as culturally deficient and disorderly. At the same time, through forming relationships with their students, teachers at STEM City formed counter-discourses that open up possibilities for resisting such mandates. Our sustained work with STEM City Charter School students and teachers offers insights into

understanding the limits and possibilities for growing White teachers' capacity for CSP.

Counterstories, Counter-mapping, and Critical Race Media Literacy

In recent decades, education scholars have shifted increased attention to understanding the significance of students' home cultures in academic learning. A significant body of literature that spans literacy, teacher education, curriculum, and cultural studies, among other areas, has developed theories of multicultural (Banks, 2013), culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 2014), and, more recently, culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012). Paris's constructive challenge to the broad field of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) argues that deficit approaches encoded in the achievement logic "viewed the languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being of many students and communities of color as deficiencies to be overcome in learning the demanded and legitimized dominant language, literacy, and cultural ways of schooling" (p. 93). Instead, Paris is "interested not in relevance or responsiveness, but in sustaining and extending the richness of our pluralist society" (p. 96).

Yet, Latinx Critical Race theory (LatCrit) scholar Delgado Bernal (2002) writes, "Although students of color are holders and creators of knowledge, they often feel as if their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages are devalued, misinterpreted, or omitted within formal educational settings" (p. 390). Empirical research has evidenced that curricula that treat students' home cultures and histories as legitimate ways of knowing significantly improve student engagement, academic achievement, and rates of college attendance (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Sleeter, 2011; Valenzuela, 2005). Despite irrefutable evidence that embracing students' cultural knowledges and creativity in classrooms is only beneficial to their learning, health, and well-being, the logic of White-washed standardization continues to proliferate.

Critical race theory (CRT) offers insights into why, in the face of such evidence, schools remain subtractive and assimilatory spaces. In their recent edited volume articulating issues in critical race methodologies in education, Parker, Deyhle, and Villenas (2019) write that CRT emerged from an effort to understand how the legal-juridical framework of the U.S. has always been premised on racial hierarchy:

> [Early critical race scholars] explained how formal legal equality in fact adopts the perspective of the perpetrator by requiring evidence of conscious racial animus in a discrete discriminatory act, and by ignoring those instances in which racism is built into the structure of social institutions. (p. 4)

As Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) describe in their history of school reform in American Indian education, the structures of schooling for Indigenous communities have historically been tied to normalizing the settler colonial status quo. For example, the creation and implementation of involuntary boarding and day schools

at the turn of the 20th century ran lockstep with federal land policy that stole tribal lands and divvied up many tribes' communal lands into private allotments. For Lomawaima and McCarty (2006), federal and missionary schools proscribed a "safety zone" of cultural difference, in which Native peoples could engage in cultural practices deemed non-threatening to the project of U.S. western expansion (p. 6). While the parameters of the safety zone have shifted over time and have been powerfully challenged by Indigenous-led movements for self-determination, school reform for Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and working class peoples remains tied to struggles over land, labor, and control of resources (cf. Buras, 2014; Ewing, 2018; Lipman, 2011).

LatCrit emphasizes the ways in which racial, linguistic, cultural, sexual, national, immigrant, and gendered hierarchies are encoded into supposedly colorblind or meritocratic law and educational policy in ways that target and/or impact Latinx communities. Delgado Bernal (2002) argues, "[LatCrit] theorists acknowledge that educational structures, processes, and discourses operate in contradictory ways with their potential to oppress and marginalize and their potential to emancipate and empower" (p.109). In order to understand these contradictions, LatCrit scholars center and value the study of experiential knowledge in order to produce actionable insights into power and injustice.

Counterstories and testimonios are a foundational approach in LatCrit and CRT to identify, legitimize, collectivize, and make sense of supposedly color-blind or meritocratic institutional spaces and policies and the specific ways these may produce hierarchies of difference. Counterstories employ such analytic tools as cultural intuition, community knowledge traditions, and transdisciplinary methodological resources, like critical historical inquiry, autoethnography, and collective memory work among others, in order to unsettle racial and cultural hierarchy and to produce knowledge in the service of resistance (Delgado Bernal, 2013; Hernandez, 2013; Yosso, 2006). For Yosso (2006) and others, knowledge production via counterstorytelling is inherently relational and, in the context of education specifically, a pedagogical project to help students understand that the devaluation of their ways of knowing is part of broader social, historical, racial, and economic structures of exploitation and extraction (Kelly, 2017). As Atwood and López (2014) suggest, counterstories "do not seek to validate one story over another, but rather to complicate understanding of the truth" (p.1145).

As CRT, LatCrit, and decolonial studies illuminate the ways in which educational policy is shaped by the political economic interests of racialization, the history of cartography and counter-mapping offers further insights. Maps were a crucial cog in the bureaucratic machinery of colonial rule. First, they acted as advertisements, enticing potential settlers through the promise of available land covering a vast and fictitiously empty landscape (Kain & Baigent, 1992). Second, they were the "actual instruments of imperialism," simplifying and making the local situation legible to an outsider. Scott (1999) explains this necessity, saying that "no administrative system is capable of representing any existing social community except through a heroic and greatly schematized process of abstraction and simplification" (p. 22).

While frequently serving as tools of statecraft, maps are at their core a low cost and relatively accessible technology, and as such have played important roles in community attempts to describe and analyze themselves. From the work of William Bunge (2011), which blends historical geography and mapmaking to explore a single square mile area of Detroit, to more recent digital efforts (Graves, 2015; Lung-Amam & Dawkins, 2019), maps can tell a story against and beyond that of state-driven control. Decolonial theorist Mignolo (2011) suggests such stories are "geo- and body-politically constituted" within the matrix of global colonial relations of power (p. 112). For Mignolo, telling stories against and beyond the abstraction and simplification of colonial knowledge is a practice of decolonial thinking. For example, Halder and Michel's (2019) edited collection, *This is not an Atlas*, highlights maps from around the world as tools to counter cartography. Maps of anti-eviction struggles in San Francisco or of community defense of the commons in Mexico visualize resistance and other ways of seeing and understanding place. Counter-mapping can visualize "a culturally informed knowledge of place [that] takes account of different approaches to dwelling on the land, as well as the ability to listen to the keepers of community memory of past" (p.1).

Counterstories and counter-mapping have become an important methodological practice in which educators have engaged young people in making serious contributions to public knowledge (Cammarota & Fine, 2010; Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott, & Morrell, 2017; Green, Burke, & McKenna, 2019; Marciano & Warren, 2018). However, fewer studies examine the ways in which student-produced counterstories can serve as serious texts for teacher education. As Cook-Sather (2002) writes, authorizing students' perspectives in education is "a call to count students among those who have the knowledge and the position to shape what counts as education [and] to reconfigure power dynamics and discourse practices within existing realms of conversation about education" (p. 3).

In the following sections, we explore our work engaging students in critical race media literacy in order to produce critical race texts. We also offer an example for imagining how teacher educators who work with practicing teachers might seek to authorize students' perspectives in teacher education as we support teachers to, in turn, authorize students' perspectives in their own curriculum and pedagogy.

Methodology: Mobilizing a Critical Race Theory of Change

Our project began when we were tasked by our college administration to develop professional learning opportunities for STEM City teachers. In the spring of 2018, a focus group of 13 teachers indicated a desire to better understand how to connect to their students' cultural interests. Through in-depth interviews with nine teachers and regular two-hour classroom observations with 13, we developed a tailored week-long summer professional development for 20 Stem City teachers themed on CSP. They spent significant time in grade-level working groups re-tooling their curriculum.

The following academic year, as nearly half of the educators we worked with previously had left the school, we found that we had to undertake a new wave of relationship-building and conducted further interviews and one-off professional developments. In addition, throughout the spring of 2019, Erin spent one day a week at the school engaging in classroom visits, formally and informally interviewing teachers, helping out in classrooms, subbing on occasion, and visiting with students. Throughout this time, teachers continued to articulate a desire to connect with students' cultures and interests as a significant challenge. While some of the educators we had worked with previously had employed their retooled curriculum, others slipped back into old habits, and others left before the end of the year due to the school's difficult working conditions.

Throughout our time, we realized that students' specific perspectives had not shaped our facilitation of educators' learning up to that point, and, even with other challenges, this limited our capacity to meet the desires of educators. So, we shifted gears. Erin and Kevin collaborated with Mr. Richard to develop a two-week counterstory mapping project with 90 STEM City high school students at the end of the spring 2019 semester. At the end of the project, these maps served as the foundation for a subsequent week-long summer PD for 14 teachers. We catered food from restaurants students identified on their maps and invited community facilitators from local community-based organizations and student leaders from the STEM City Hispanic Student Association (HSA), one of whom participated in our counterstory mapping project. We incorporated the students' counterstory maps as content for teachers to study.

Engaging decolonial and critical race frameworks, our analysis focuses on understanding teachers' (mis)perceptions of students via students' counterstory maps as well as teachers' sense-making of the counterstory maps in our PD. Our methodology emerged with responsiveness to our time spent learning with and from students and teachers (cf. Weis & Fine, 2004; 2012). Further, our analytic approach zooms in on teachers as well as the wider disciplinary context of the school. Inspired by Tuck and Yang (2014), we are attentive to and orient our gaze to power. Rather than casting students' counterstory maps as academic data or objects of study, they serve as our analytic lens.

Counterstory Maps as Critical Race Media in Teacher Professional Development

Many STEM City teachers' perspectives of students arise from their ambivalent relationship to the school's assimilatory mission as enforcers of school policies they do not have a say in creating. The school is well known in the area for its emphasis on strict discipline and orderliness. Like many small operation charter schools, it struggles for funding, often finding temporary grants to get by, and operates with little oversight from its students' communities or most of its employees. It is highly sought after, and boasts an astounding waiting list each year.

Teachers have significant autonomy over their curriculum yet have few resources. Teachers are predominantly White and monolingual, and many rely on multilingual students for support. Teachers are surveilled a number of ways by the administration to ensure that their curriculum is standards-based, including via submitting daily lesson plans to instructional administrators. While the school allowed us to provide PDs on student-centered pedagogy, in practice, audio-visual surveillance cameras and one-way mirrors in each classroom create a panopticon-like environment in which teachers feel like they need to limit students' collaborations in order to appear orderly and on task. Many teachers noted the punitive ways these surveillance systems were often used to "catch" them without offering substantive support for developing their instruction.

It is likely that this surveillance context contributed to Mr. Richard's intense anxiety toward our facilitation of small group discussion and collaboration throughout the counterstory mapping unit. At one point he joked we were "going to give him a heart attack," as he paced the room worrying over the state of students' productivity. Often, during group work time, students would take turns guiding groupmates on Google Maps tours of their neighborhoods, joyfully discovering shared childhood parks or that they lived nearby one another. Even though it was the last two weeks of the academic year, many students did not previously know each others' names. Mr. Richard did not always read these moments as "educative," though they were crucial research moments supporting students' identification and development of counterstory themes.

The first week of the two-week unit was spent primarily on developing a shared language and understanding around official stories/counterstories and how stories (and counterstories) are told about places via maps and other media with specific interests in doing so. We engaged and critically read examples to practice our skills toward these ends. One example juxtaposed real estate maps touting "urban renewal" in Hyde Park, Chicago, a map of displacement pressure in the area, and hip hop artist Vic Mensa's storytelling about his disappearing Hyde Park community, including a video in which he narrates how the energy, culture, and people of a specific street in the neighborhood created his musical style.[1]

We then shifted our examples locally. Students created one large map during the course of all six periods to display their knowledge of the city. This activity illuminated students' sophisticated and intimate knowledge of racial, class, and cultural segregation, including formal and informal borders. They critically read these maps alongside other maps and stories (i.e., from real estate and tourism Web sites) of places in their city. Through this work, and framed as an opportunity for students to speak back to their teachers (they knew from the beginning that the maps would be used in the PD with their permission), students developed themes related to the city's and students' cultural and linguistic diversity, places they like to hang out with friends and family, and, for many (and perhaps inspired by our work with Vic Mensa), counterstories that revolved around a specific southside street that serves as a cultural hub of community-based businesses significant in the city's Latinx communities.

Challenging Teachers' Misperceptions of Students' Cultures

In our early conversations with, even veteran, teachers, they commonly described students as "lacking experiences" afforded to wealthier adolescents. In an interview, Mr. Beers, a veteran teacher, said:

> I guess for example, I would, I wouldn't say that a lot of our kids have been to the zoo. I wouldn't say a lot of them have been to um very many places of interest, they don't have family vacations, they don't get to kind of have these experiences in the world. A lot, for a lot of them, their parents are working two jobs, so they're probably at home most of the time, you know, maybe even babysitting their little siblings. Even sixth graders, you know, that's their job. Some of them actually have jobs like on the weekend working, maybe it's mowing lawns or doing some construction with their parents.

This framing animated some teachers' curricular decisions to remediate student learning in order to compensate for their "lack of experiences." For example, Erin observed a mid-year unit in Mr. Beers' 6th grade Language Arts class in which students were tasked with creating their own children's storybooks. The main unit concepts included identifying setting, plot, and aspects of a story arc. While many students enjoyed the creative task, the concepts are often undertaken in early elementary grades. Such assumptions about students' lack of experience devalued their homes, their families' small businesses, or their work experience as uneducative instead of important funds of knowledge (e.g., González, Moll, & Amanti, 2009).

As students' maps suggested, not only were teachers devaluing other sites of students' lives as educative, but students believed teachers did not understand that they, in fact, do participate in diverse cultural activities in the city. Four groups totaling around 20 students chose to thematize their counterstory maps by describing places where they liked to spend time. As an illustrative example, see this introduction from one map:

> The purpose of this story map: To describe and explain the places we enjoy and spend time at. Some of these places have been with us since childhood, while others are just recent. These places are some of our favorites to hang out. Places include: movie theaters, malls, amusement parks, et cetera. We are showing these places because they hold special memories in our lives. For example, in the zoo Jesús got chased by a peacock and that makes the zoo a special place for him.

In each of the maps, students narrated common hangout spots (including the zoo, the science museum, nature parks, and more), and suggested that they "might not even like some of these places but still go anyways to have fun with friends and family." All of the maps described joyful memories and the rich, often humorous, experiences students had with family and friends. Further, they suggested that these were important places in the city where they could go to find an ethnically and culturally diverse mix of people -- they are places where "everyone" goes.

In an interview, veteran STEM City educator Mr. Taylor articulated another common perception that teachers held: that aspects of STEM City's disciplinary and curricular structures are problematically subtractive of students' cultural ways of being:

> I just don't understand why this is such a big deal. I don't understand why we are so constrictive. I mean, it's almost like the Americanization of Native Americans. You know, like sending them away to boarding school, and then saying, "You can't learn anything but English. And if you learn any, if you can't speak another language, this is it." You know, we've lost a lot of culture because of our mechanization. And we do lose a lot of culture here.

Mr. Taylor makes a strong critique of the school's epistemically violent English-only policy, likening the policy to the history of state-sanctioned cultural genocide of Native Americans.

Yet teachers' understandings of culture, in particular their students' cultures, tended to suggest that culture was something static that one has and can lose. As Mr. Taylor goes on to describe:

> One of the things that I've really struggled with is that we have a Latin class and we don't have any Spanish classes. And they're like, "Well, you know, everybody already speaks Spanish." Yeah, but they don't know how to speak proper Spanish, like, I'll speak Spanish with them, proper Spanish, and they're like, "What are you talking about?" You know, and I'm like, That's how you speak in Spanish, like proper Spanish. They have no idea. They seriously are just like, no, that's not how you say it. So I'll pull out my Spanish books. And I'm like, No, I'm telling you, I took 13 hours of this at [university]. And I took 10 hours in high school. And I went to a bilingual church.

As Ngo (2010) suggests, such understandings are enabled by predominating institutional discourses of multiculturalism and diversity in education that essentialize culture as a set of discrete traits or characteristics of talk, dress, eating, and art.

Mr. Taylor understands, as Ngo (2010) argues, that institutional discourses of multiculturalism are inattentive to differences in power -- he suggests students are "losing" their culture via STEM City's "Americanization" of students. His antidote, however, is to teach students "proper" (authentic) Spanish. In other conversations, Mr. Taylor stated that students "don't even know their culture," recounting an experience when he asked a student about the history of quinceañeras and she did not answer.

Students illuminated their understanding of culture more complexly as fluid, hybrid, and situated, ascribing value based on the capacity for culture to connect them to one another and across distance (cf. Ibrahim, 2008). A group of eight Latinx and Asian American women articulated a counterstory map themed on beloved restaurants. They wrote:

These restaurants were selected to show the multiple food cultures around [the city]. Through these places, foods around the world are represented and connect others through them. Restaurants can connect you to another place in the world through food. The reason we like going to these places could be because they represent our own cultures or because we feel a connection to other cultures through them.

The map described how some restaurants transport them to family members' homes and neighborhoods they visit each summer in Mexico or help them to learn about their friends from different cultural backgrounds. Many other students who developed counterstories themed on food highlighted fast food restaurants (e.g., Taco Bell), criticizing their appropriation of Mexican culture to sell "disgusting," cheap food, and described (often humorously) how White people might falsely believe such restaurants are representative. They also described how sometimes these fast food restaurants become culturally significant because of where they are and how they are used. One group described a surprisingly widely shared phenomenon at a southside McDonalds that "everyone goes to": the drive-through area is home to a black cat to whom everyone pays a french fry tithe upon receiving their food. Only those insiders to the community know to look for and feed the cat.

As we read and discussed students' counterstory maps, teachers engaged their misperceptions that students either do not experience (White, middle class) culture because "they are working all the time" or that "students are losing their authentic culture." The first major response as we studied counterstory maps in small groups and came together for discussion was that teachers really did not know anything about the places or streets that students mapped. Since many of the maps recounted funny, creative stories (e.g., the McDonalds cat), there was much laughter and joy in reading the maps. In particular, no one (except for one teacher) had physically travelled to or knew about South Street, an important economic, cultural, and entertainment hub that stretches a few blocks. Many students lived in this neighborhood, and many students who lived elsewhere in the city had strong community ties to South Street. As one group wrote, "Many people underestimate the potential of this street. You have the chance to interact with new people every now and then while enjoying delicious foods." Another wrote, "South Street is full of culture and history that should be embraced and shown to all, in order to rid it of its great misunderstandings. Misunderstandings like it's a bad and run down place."

We take up teachers' responses to students' story maps in more depth below by examining closely conversations in which teachers, upon understanding better how students' viewed their communities, discussed the purpose of education and the temporal frames through which education should operate.

The False Binary of "Getting Out" Vs. "Staying Behind"

Within the conflicted space of both disciplining and resisting disciplining students according to the school's strict policies (e.g., Mr. Taylor's and many others' resistance to the English-only policy), teachers also engaged in

conversations around how to understand the purpose of education, conversations which the counterstory maps and HSA student facilitators, Julia and Michael, productively complicated. We further paired our discussions by reading the introduction to Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade's and Ernest Morrell's (2009) *The Art of Critical Pedagogy*, which outlines a critique of the logic of schooling as assimilation and the politics of urban education.

Our discussions illuminated that the counterstory maps helped teachers to understand that the school's discourse on college- and career-readiness masked a presumption that students should desire to "get out" of their neighborhoods and aspire to upward social mobility (according to White cultural norms). As so many of the counterstory maps recounted narratives of community elders and business owners who worked to deepen cultural connections on the southside — for example, a community elder who uses her popular sweet bread bakery to teach people about the food traditions of Oaxaca, highlighted on five counterstory maps — teachers grappled with students' connections and commitments to their homeplaces and communities.

One discussion interaction centered on what futures school should prepare students for. As a proud military veteran, Mr. Washington suggested that he disliked how Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2009) connect military, prison, and manual or low-skill labor together as "bad." Others pointed out that the authors were not suggesting these were "bad" but that they were exploitative, low- or, in the case of prison labor, nearly unwaged work.

> *Ms. Hans, pushing back on the authors along with Mr. Washington*: I think, as teachers, we should prepare [students] with whatever avenue they want to take. If they want to go into their family's landscaping business, we should be preparing them for that.

> *Mr. Taylor, responding to Mr. Washington*: But this is society's views and not the authors' views that these kinds of work are bad. Students fall back on "Oh, I don't know what to do, so I'll join the army." But you should have a calling to join the military and defend. This helps me to see that I need to change the narrative of how I see these jobs as well.

> *Ms. Roster*: We know this is an unfair society. As teachers, let's see how we can make an impact and make the most of it. In our work with students, we need to eliminate the myth of meritocracy and the myth of equal opportunity.

> *Ms. Lori*: Yes. We need to change the definition of success. It isn't just about making money. This is not about the kids from poor communities saying this is the life I want, but they don't know what they want.

As the conversation continues, a tenuous consensus emerges among most of the teachers (with Mr. Washington as an exception) that social and cultural processes construct our understandings of success. At the same time, teachers are entrenched in a discourse that students do not "know what they want" or do things without knowing the significance of the job (i.e., the military).

One of two African American teachers in the room, Ms. Jones further added to the discussion: "Culture builds their view of society. Sometimes girls are brought up to think they have to get married and have kids [right away after high school]. So, there is nothing wrong with that, but we need to help them see there are other opportunities available, they have so much possibility." She further clarifies that what she means by "possibility" is much more than "White culture's definitions of success" and that "how success is defined in White culture is not how it might be defined in other cultures." The conversation eventually wraps up with Ms. Lord's comment: "I tell my kids, 'The world isn't set for you to win.' How do I acknowledge the inequalities but then how do I help them understand to overcome it? I tell them the truth and inspire them. With my identity as an African American woman, I understand this**."**

As teachers grappled with broadening their understandings of "success" while maintaining high expectations, Julia and Michael facilitated a portion of the last day of the PD, sharing the work that STEM City's largest student organization, the HSA, had been doing the previous year to build a cultural community among students and to engage in activities to do good works in the community, e.g., fundraising for local organizations and food drives. Given the opportunity to have their teachers' attention for an hour, they shared many grievances, including that they want more say in what they study. Challenging Ms. Lori's and others' comments that students "don't know what they want," Julia and Michael passionately described how students "want to learn about the issues facing our communities! We want to study this!", where "this" included issues of immigration and documentation, food and housing insecurity, and Latinx history and art.

By the end of the PD, in the process of reflection, Mr. Taylor suggested, "I used to think they were just being lazy, but now I realize that they just don't care about the stuff that I do. I need to be more responsible in what I am teaching." He also suggested that he used think he had to get students to connect with him, but now he saw "that I need to connect to *them*." Many others used words like "accountability," "responsibility," "student ownership," and "real relationships." Ms. Brach described learning about how to be more accountable to students and how to involve students more in her curriculum-making. Ms. Latter suggested she learned that she has to focus on "building an actual relationship instead of just teaching." Ms. Roster stated: "My takeaway is about fostering ownership. Keeping their culture alive [in the classroom] as well as broadening their horizons. I really appreciated the piece on [bringing students' home languages into the classroom]. We are told one thing [English-only by administrators], but then there is wiggle room, and we have to be there for them."

As Ms. Roster suggests, a significant part of their work as teachers entails being "told one thing" by administrators and finding and making use of the "wiggle room" when they can to create spaces that allow students to build meaningful community with one another and their teachers, that allow students to speak and use their home languages, and that support students and teachers to challenge and remake the school's and society's narrow visions of success as White middle class assimilation.

Challenges, Possibilities, and the Work Ahead

Ms. Roster's notion of "wiggle room" perhaps articulates the space where two in-tension visions for the purpose of education meet. From the perspective of the school's administration (and legislators and other powerful stakeholders in the state's education), the purpose of education is to assimilate students into White, middle class ways of behaving and knowing. The school implemented this vision by engaging such tactics as enforcing standards and measurement-oriented definitions of achievement, a strict dress code, and an English-only policy on campus. The school operated on a temporal frame in which education is oriented to students' eventual participation in the "real world" and "adulthood." Alternatively, we worked with teachers to imagine, if tenuously, a vision of education in which knowledge is proliferated from the ground up and situated in the contemporary landscape of students' lives and communities. To do so, we mobilized students' counterstories and counter-mapping and the building of meaningful relationships among teachers and students as tactics toward this vision. Our temporal frame, responsive to students' desires, was oriented to understanding the historical conditions of our work and the notion that students already live in and are agents of knowledge- and change-making in the real world.

While the authors' experiences working with teachers and students were meaningful and productive in many ways, a key administrative ally at the school who facilitated our ability to conduct this work left her position. In turn, our relationship with the upper administration became fraught after teachers collectively raised questions about the legality of the English-only policy. Erin, Jinan, and a few university colleagues simultaneously pressured the administration by presenting decades of research illuminating the harm of exclusionary language policies to students' education (never mind their humanness). It has become more difficult to gain access to the school using our previous channels. Again, after our final PD, teachers turned over in significant numbers; a third of those who attended our PD did not return or left mid-year, including Mr. Richard, with whom we hoped to continue to the counterstory mapping project.

Yet a veteran core of around seven teachers and enthusiastic participants in our two years of PD efforts remain at the school, supporting HSA leaders, mentoring new teachers, and becoming allies and accomplices to students in the classroom and beyond. Our study suggests the limits and possibilities of growing teachers' capacity for CSP, and in line with decolonial and critical race theories, the necessity of understanding the material interests in maintaining these limits. As Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) suggest, busting out of the safety zone is not without consequences or risk. Teacher educators can support teachers to understand the significance of exploding the safety zone by authorizing students' perspectives in their classrooms and PD efforts. Further, they can support teachers in their efforts to understand and manage risk via creating opportunities for them to build relationships and spaces of collective study to clarify their desires to connect with students and hold one another accountable to these aspirations.

Notes

1. We read "Mapping Displacement Pressure in Chicago, 2018" **https://www.housingstudies.org/releases/mapping-displacement-pressure-chicago-project-2018/** alongside a video story in *The Chicago Reader* in collaboration with *The TRiiBE* following Vic Mensa as he revisited his "vanishing" home neighborhood in Hyde Park, **https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/vic-mensa-hyde-park-records-triibe-block-beat/Content?oid=41155223**.

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