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Social and emotional learning is hegemonic miseducation: students deserve humanization instead

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ABSTRACT

The ahistorical objectives of social and emotional learning fall short of repairing the cultural contempt of hegemonic miseducation and does not address the primary social forces negatively impacting the health and wellness of communities of color – their colonial relationship with inequitable social systems. In this article, we posit humanization in place of social and emotional learning because SEL's inadequate analysis of intersecting oppressions justifies existing power relations in communities and schools. In essence, this article examines the pedagogy and psychology of humanization as a viable framework to confront systemically imposed self-hate, divide and conquer, and suboppression if it teaches students knowledge (and love) of self, solidarity, and self-determination.

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[N]o one colonizes innocently ... no one colonizes with impunity either ... a nation which colonizes ... a civilization which justifies colonization – and therefore force – is already a sick civilization, a civilization which is morally diseased ... (Césaire 2000, 39)

While the rise in social and emotional learning (SEL) (as well as other character-based and behavioral modification programs) in school district policies across the United States is a significant shift in local educational reform efforts, the ahistorical objectives of these pursuits fall short of repairing the colonial and hegemonic contempt of miseducation. There are five core competencies being incorporated among twenty partner districts in the Collaborative of Academic, Social and Emotional Learning's (CASEL): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship building, and responsible decision-making. These are certainly important measures in addressing the non-cognitive skills that students in all schools should learn. However, without a critique of social oppression, these efforts are more conformist than socially transformative (see Solorzano and Delgado-Bernal 2001). As another example, the Los Angeles Unified School District, are including growth mindset – 'the belief that one's abilities can grow with effort' – and self-efficacy, which can both be viewed as beneficial qualities for students to learn.

In spite of SEL's seemingly promising aim, its inadequate analysis of oppression justifies existing power relations in communities and schools. Although the above SEL concepts can be applied critically, research on schooling and teacher ideology suggests

that many educators are more likely to simply engage in social and emotional learning without addressing the implicit biases of their everyday lives (Watson 2019). Through this article, we disrupt the social amnesia that has prevented the projects of decolonization, liberation, and humanization to continue as central aims of our critical conversations.

It takes up the opportunity to define and demarcate the pedagogy and psychology of humanization even more deeply in the context of education as a practice of freedom. This proves itself to be invaluable during this current moment where the righteous indignation of people across all fifty US states and throughout the world is being ignited in response to the colonial oppression of anti-Black policing. The socially toxic stress from all forms of state-sanctioned dehumanization is further compounded by the Coronavirus global pandemic, inequitable access to health care and testing, and growing wealth inequality. To disrupt the hegemony of SEL in this context and beyond, this article argues that humanization confronts the systemically imposed, colonial, and dehumanizing consciousness that oftentimes manifests itself in students through manufactured self-hate, divide-and-conquer, and suboppression if it teaches students knowledge (and love) of self, solidarity, and self-determination. Humanization is anti-oppressive and counter-hegemonic, and in our analysis, we argue that the above SEL competencies fit into the framework in this way:

Knowledge (and love) of self:

- self-awareness
- self-efficacy

Solidarity:

- social awareness
- relationship building

Self-determination:

- responsible decision-making
- self-management
- growth mindset

Knowledge of self, solidarity, and self-determination do not easily fit into SEL's framework because they are much more socially robust, has a critique of social oppression, and is motivated by social justice in ways that SEL is not. Humanization, in this way, is counter-hegemonic because it ruptures the hegemony of ahistorical schooling and miseducation.

Hegemony of social and emotional miseducation

In *The Miseducation of the Filipino*, Renato Constantino (2002) wrote, 'The most effective means of subjugating a people is to capture their minds' (178). In other words, oppression makes it necessary to control how oppressed people think. In his

analysis of Kwame Nkruma's liberatory thought, Robert Owusu (2006) described hegemony in this way: 'People's responses to their discontents . . . are culturally conditioned by being made to accept uncritically, the values, norms, perceptions, and beliefs that support and define the structures of central authority' (59). Approaching social and emotional learning without this understanding focuses attention away from the primary social forces that negatively impact the health and wellness of communities of color – their colonial relationship with the existing social system. In the words of healing-centered scholar, Shawn Ginwright (2015), 'social emotional practices rarely focus building awareness, consciousness, and actions that address the social conditions that threaten social emotional health in the first place' (p. 8). In this way, hegemonic ideology is dominant, rarely questioned, and normalized as 'common sense' (Kumashiro 2015).

The hyper-focus on rote skill development, culturally hostile curricula, and community irrelevant assessment is a logical outcome of a history of miseducation (Woodson [1933] 2000) built on a willful ignorance of certain inconvenient truths: that the United States was founded on the genocide of indigenous people, the captivity and enslavement of Africans, the feudal exploitation of Asians, and the global theft of labor and resources from civilizations throughout the world (Yeshitela 2005). If dispossessed young people do not know how autonomous, resourceful, and abundant their civilizations were prior to their relationship to colonialism, then it becomes difficult for them to imagine something radically different than the material conditions they currently find themselves in. Further, if dispossessed young people do not know how their communities have historically resisted colonization, then it becomes difficult to imagine a world beyond colonial domination.

By privileging the central authority of schooling, SEL is legitimizing dominant points of view that solidify existing race, class, and gendered social orders. Even with these well-intentioned efforts to address social and emotional learning, schools will continue to be institutions that mystify the colonial reality and place the onus of social and emotional health on the very young people whose social stressors have been shaped *because* of dispossession and marginalization. This miseducation is hegemonic because it treats students' personal frustrations and social discontent as something that needs to be remedied in them as individuals. In reality, though, the social and emotional health and well-being of communities of color and multiply-marginalized people have much more to do with their alienation from resources born off of their oppression. Interrelated forms of structural violence manifest itself today in the form of (a) institutional erasure of Indigenous peoples, (b) anti-Blackness, (c) xenophobia on migrant communities, (d) Islamophobia, (e) rape culture, (f) ableism, (g) anti-LGBTQIA+ heteronormativity, and more.

Of course, wherever oppression exists, it is often met with transformational resistance (Solorzano and Delgado-Bernal 2001) and problem-posing praxis (Freire [1970] 2000), all of which are inspired by people's community cultural wealth (Yosso 2005) and should be the basis upon which teachers build their classroom practices from. Any framework that focuses more on changing people's maladaptive social and emotional orientation to oppression – rather than aiming towards transforming oppressive social conditions itself – is hegemonic because it anesthetizes the political will of a people.

The role of dispossession for U.S. communities of color

The miseducation of communities of color in the United States began with the experience of dispossession, with what Marx ([1954] 1867) called ‘the primitive accumulation of capital.’ In Fanon’s (1967) words, ‘Europe is literally the creation of the Third World’ (102), meaning that the enslavements of Africans and the theft of the lands, resources, labor, and humanity of indigenous Americans and others enriched white capitalists and set the stage for the rapid growth of the U.S. economy. According to activist historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2014), ‘its ideological basis was madness’ (44). Historically known as ‘The White Man’s Burden,’ this phenomenon referred ‘to white people’s obligation to control, direct and “civilize” all those [white society] believed to be from inferior races ... for their own good, of course’ (DeGruy Leary 2017, 87–88). Communities of color serve as Third World people dominated in the United States in the form of internal colonialism, ‘The theory [that] compares dispossessed communities in the U.S. to underdeveloped countries ... made dependent upon the metropole to meet its needs, due to its systematic underdevelopment’ (Martinez, Valdez, and Cariaga 2016, 302). Indeed, those who did the dispossessing never intended to educate their victims.

There was certainly some form of ‘education’: the seasoning process for enslaved Africans, the indoctrination of Indigenous Americans in boarding schools, and the many other subjugation practices imposed on communities of color. These were part of a ‘civilizing mission,’ meant to both pacify potentially resistant people and train them to behave in servile ways, ultimately alienating them from ways of knowing, linguistic repertoires, and resources that are inherently theirs. This miseducation is part of the domestication process that controls the minds – and negatively impacts the social and emotional health – of children who are descendants of colonized people.

Hegemonic vs. critically conscious ideologies

Without the above analysis, social and emotional learning initiatives and other character education framings are essentially hegemonic policies offering more benign forms of miseducation. Hegemony in the form of miseducation enables teachers to overlook socially toxic conditions and prevent them from confronting the historical grief too often experienced by students in historically dispossessed communities. From a hegemonic, ahistorical perspective, genocide, slavery, feudal exploitation, and dispossession have taken place in the past, and thus, have no bearing on the present.

In contrast, critically conscious ideology understands how history is present in the moment and informs people’s resistance to colonization and oppression. In other words, historically oppressed and multiply-marginalized people are not simply victims of colonization, capitalism, cisheteronormativity, or ableism – they have agency and are always resisting subjugation. The knowledge production from these counter-hegemonic, aspirational, and fugitive spaces (Stovall 2017) informs this paper’s theory of humanization. Critical race theory, historical-materialism, and decolonizing analysis understand that the violence of the abovementioned domestication processes on communities of color continues to materialize in the lives of its descendants long after laws have been signed to legislate the end of the varying atrocities.

Even more, anti-oppressive mental health perspectives recognize that the brutal history withstood by oppressed people continues to plague their souls' generations after their ancestors experienced them (DeGruy Leary 2017; Duran 2006). The hegemony of social and emotional learning policy, as dignified as these efforts appear to be, continue to alienate historically dispossessed communities from a genuinely empowering, radically healing (Ginwright 2010), and anti-colonial education (de Los Ríos et al. 2019; Valdez 2018). From a critical point of view, we must consider the social and emotional health and well-being of people in relation to the social and material conditions of their lives (Oliver 2004; Watkins and Shulman 2008).

Humanization not SEL

Our purpose is not to offer a more culturally responsive, sustaining, or critical version of social and emotional learning. Centralizing SEL privileges 'imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy' (hooks 2010, 2). Moving SEL towards humanization joins it with the majority of the world who is seeking to reimagine possibilities, redistribute power, and recover from the vestiges of colonialism and its inherent, intersecting systems of oppression. That is to say, while SEL does not assure humanization, fulfilling the aims of humanization assuredly benefits the social and emotional health and well-being of historically oppressed and multiply-marginalized people. Too often, educators dichotomize between socio-political literacies, social and emotional learning, and meaningful academic learning. Educators can fulfill the aims of social and emotional learning, yet still reproduce dehumanization. In other words, SEL falls far short of transforming the dehumanizing structures that impose self-hate, divide-and-conquer, and suboppression and consequently harm the social and emotional health and well-being of historically oppressed and multiply-marginalized communities.

Humanization in education

Humanization does not assume a superior posture where one has an abundance of humanity to bestow on people who are not already human. Humanization is a concept that has emerged from traditions that recognize the importance of being fully human subjects in a world that seeks to subjugate people's humanity. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire ([1970] 2000) begins, 'Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization' (43). Humanization as a construct in education has long been an imperative that socially transformative efforts have accounted for but has been tacit in describing. Our revisiting of past principles, concepts, and frameworks is intended to further resurrect humanization and decolonization as projects that liberatory movements must still aim to fulfill.

It is important that our framing of humanization is not confused with simply humanizing relationships through cordial, reciprocal, and respectful interactions as is often the case. While care and consideration are certainly important elements to interpersonal dynamics, humanization as a response to colonial and intersectional dehumanization requires much more than ahistoric, interpersonal affection, empathy, and kindness. According to Freire ([1970] 2000), humanization support students' yearning 'for freedom and justice, and ... to struggle to recover their lost humanity' (44). For this

type of learning to happen, Patricia Hill Collins (2002) asserts, ‘Empowerment involves rejecting the dimensions of knowledge . . . that perpetuate objectification and dehumanization’ and instead argues for, ‘[understanding] and [using] those dimensions of our individual, group, and disciplinary ways of knowing that foster our humanity as fully human subjects’ (230).

Leonardo and Porter (2010) propose a pedagogy and politics of disruption so the learning for the ‘oppressed possesses a humanizing, life-affirming moment’ (146). To borrow from Paris and Winn (2013), teaching and learning (or, research in their case), ‘[means] always being mindful of how critically important it is to respect the humanity of the people who invite us into their worlds and help us answer questions about educational, social, and cultural justice’ (xv). Those engaging this work must be careful to not reproduce pathologies of historically oppressed people. Approaching education as a process of humanization is a reciprocal, mutually anti-oppressive process of self and collective care and development in the context of social transformation.

Humanization, intersectionality, & multiple-marginalities

We acknowledge how liberatory discourses have been binary and ableist, unwelcoming for queer and trans people of Color, as well as those who are atypically bodied, deaf, and mentally and physically diverse. Heteronormative structures have a history of foregrounding cis-gendered narratives from many liberatory movements. We also acknowledge how hetero-patriarchy has celebrated cisgender men in these liberation struggles by adorning them most of the recognition while so much of the labor has historically been done by people ascribed as female at birth.

We also acknowledge how these movements have made assumptions that everyone is physically the same, capable of moving, maneuvering, and navigating through the world similarly. We believe that these contradictions must be eradicated if we are to truly engage in the work of humanization. We are compelled to make clear that any analysis of humanization and dehumanization must account for all prisms of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1990) and multiple marginalities (Annamma 2017) so that compounded identities, positionalities, and lived experiences are captured and its implications are properly pursued in the quality of education people receive.

Pedagogical and psychological dialectics of humanization

Since humanization does not develop in a linear fashion, in this essay we offer an analysis of the following pedagogical dialectics: from self-hate to knowledge (and love) of self; divide and conquer to solidarity; and, suboppression (Freire [1970] 2000) to self-determination. Dialectical contradiction is a historical term referring to the tensions present in opposing ideas, or as Huey P. Newton (2009) describes, ‘the collision of social forces . . . trying to occupy the same space at the same time, both [become] transformed’ (25). Pedagogical dialectics are not binary, but spectrums, and while one may be strong at teaching or learning in some areas of social analysis does not mean they are as strong in others.

Kevin Kumashiro (2015) calls experiences like these, learning through crisis, a ‘disarming process that allow students to escape the uncritical, complacent repetition

of their prior knowledge and actions' (32). In Deborah Britzman's (1998) *Lost subjects, contested objects: Toward a psychoanalytic inquiry of learning*, she makes the argument that all learning involves an unlearning and the difficult knowledge learned as a result requires, 'a courage to explore the multi-dimensions of our desires and confront truths about ourselves and our world that can be very difficult to admit' (xxxviii). According to Pitt and Britzman (2010), this difficult knowledge 'references incommensurability, historical trauma, and social breakdown' (756).

In "Barbie," "Big Dicks," and "Faggots," Kumashiro (1999) argues that if unlearning leads students into a state of 'crisis' or paralysis (such as feeling emotionally upset), students will first need to work through the crisis before being able to act. Humanization, we argue, requires pedagogical dialectics (or collisions) where students essentially learn difficult knowledge through the crisis of unlearning contradictory prior knowledge. Despite the seemingly disparaging tone of the pedagogical and psychological dialectics of humanization, the experiences that come as a result of this type of learning should lead to experiences of joy, connection, and celebration that align with the needs of the learners involved.

From self-hate to knowledge and love of self

From a developmental perspective, people develop their sense of identity based on their interactions with the world (Sheets 1999) – with people, their caregivers, or lack thereof, with the feedback that they receive from their peers, and with the ideological apparatuses of media, education, and other socio-ecological systems of the West. For example, if people receive messages that they and their social groups are inferior, they commonly start to internalize that as part of their identity. This relationship between surveillance and personal self-regulation is referred to as 'the gaze' in critical theory, sociology, and psychology, and often happens with Eurocentric thought and the white and imperial gaze; patriarchy, sexual objectification, and the male gaze; or heteronormativity and internalized queer and transphobia.

Miseducation for communities who have experienced imperial domination came through military and missionary forces, with the effect being to assault their belief systems. As cultural theorist Stuart Hall (2006) proclaimed, '[The West] had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as "Other"' (436). The messaging, or indoctrination, that communities of color and other marginalized people typically have imposed on them by the American schooling system is designed to undermine their identity and substitute their perspectives with another lens through which to view the world that is directly at odds with the existence and history of oppressed people (see Spring 2016).

When students are not the focus – or subjects – of their own studies, they do not understand themselves from their own points of view. If they are not provided opportunities to understand themselves in life-affirming ways, students often fear the humanity of those who they do not understand, even when it is their own (see DeGruy Leary 2017). Thus, students of color and multiply-marginalized people are ostensibly taught to hate exactly what they fear – themselves. This self-hate is compounded by historical trauma that impacts many oppressed people today (Estrada 2009; Ramirez and Hammack 2014) but is neglected by public policies and institutions. Again, where this and other forms of oppression exists, the responses differentiate (not all people respond exactly the same to

these social structures), and the varying, counter-hegemonic forms of social resistance to this inform the problem and solution dialectic in our analysis.

Mystifying the historical and systemic root causes of these relationships frequently results in negative psychological effects (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin, and Kelly 2006). Since these historical traumas are neglected and not counteracted, one can conclude that they combine with societal stereotypes and oppressive messaging to become internalized as a deficit rather than recognize the cultural assets that had prompted attacks (Bailey et al. 2011). In other words, being deprived of opportunities to understand the world from their perspective is compounded by the hyper-exposure to negative narratives about one's own intersecting communities, which leads many students of color and other multiply-marginalized people to question the validity of their lived experiences, language practices, and social paradigms – when in reality, if these assets were not valuable aspects of their humanity, it would not prompt a need for them to be demonized by the dominant society.

From a Black Studies' perspective, these are thought of as cultural de/centeredness (Asante 2006). Cultural de/centeredness stems from the African psychological tradition that refers to people not being able to incorporate their ethnic identities or cultural traditions because of the misinformation they have been given about their cultural heritage and group. From this perspective, students of color are deprived of accurate historical knowledge about the resources and assets of their cultural groups (see Schiele 2000). As a result of cultural de/centeredness, people's lives become complex and difficult because they are unable to make connections between themselves and their own cultural history and community. Consequently, self-hate and cultural de/centeredness generally lead to low self-esteem, according to psychologists, and internalized oppression, as discussed among racial identity theorists (Tappan 2006).

This *self-hate* is perpetuated through a banking method of education where 'students are not called upon to know, but to memorize the contents narrated by the teacher' (Freire [1970] 2000, 80). Yet what students generally learn about themselves formally is often limited to what the ideological apparatus of schools and corporate media will teach them. In other words, what children learn about minoritized people (Gillborn 2012) in schools – and beyond – is governed by what the oppressive curriculum teaches them about oppressed people and oppressor communities.

Knowledge of self as a step towards self-love

hooks (1993) states, 'personal power really begins with care of the self' (89) then asks, 'Where are the spaces in our lives where we are able to acknowledge our pain and express grief?' (104). The first step towards self-love is to develop in students a *knowledge of self*, respecting the position that, 'The education of any people should begin with the people themselves' (Duncan-Andrade, Reyes, and Morrell 2008, 32). Knowledge of self refers to the state-of-mind where students come to know their own personal and cultural identity, history, and place in society. Research on positive ethnic identity development is useful here in that it simultaneously recognizes historically marginalized social groups in a racist, sexist, and homophobic society and explores culturally affirming navigation strategies inside of the existing social system (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin, and Kelly 2006). Positive ethnic identity work looks to counteract the stereotypes by naming them.

As a result, people are aware of and resist internalizing the negative messaging (Sue 2010). Similarly, Arredondo's (1999) research on developing a positive cultural identity focuses on the importance of analyzing negative cultural messages as a strategy for people of color to see their own strengths, learn about their cultural traditions, the legacy of their ancestors, where their communities come from, and have pride in their cultural identity in light of broader social and historical context. Learning to examine, explain, and interpret the world as subjects of their own studies, students critically make sense of their own humanity, experiences, needs, limitations, and potential. If students learn to become the subjects of their own analysis rather than the object of miseducation, they begin to engage in a socially transformative struggle by articulating their own interpretation of themselves and the world around them. This knowledge prioritizes the *reclamation* of cultural and historical traditions and healing practices.

Beyond identity politics, however, teaching students to develop knowledge of self is also about resisting what they are conditioned to believe about themselves and their cultures. Liberation psychologist Martín-Baró (1994) refers to this as capturing 'historical memory,' where 'one's own identity and the pride of belonging to a people but also a reliance on a tradition and a culture, and above all, with rescuing aspects of identity which served yesterday, and will serve today, for liberation' (30). In this way, teachers must help students unlearn various oppressive ideologies that have become normalized in their identities.

Students can then deconstruct their lived experience in order to humanize themselves from the conditioning they have grown up with. Young people, then, pursue knowledge of self and heal from socially imposed self-hate. hooks (1994) expresses:

Whenever . . . oppressed groups dare to critically interrogate our locations, the identities and allegiances that inform how we live our lives, we begin the process of decolonization. If we discover in ourselves self-hatred, low self-esteem, or internalized white supremacist thinking and we face it, we can begin to heal. (248)

Thus, we must embed opportunities for students to engage in an individual internal struggle to become conscious of their own mental, cultural, and philosophical conditioning and state. What we can potentially find is that '[young] people [will] develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; [and] they [will] come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation' (Freire 1970/2000, 83). This means that we allow students to interrogate their own discourses, circumstances, and realities so that they are the subjects of their own studies, and subjects of their own realities, rather than simply objects of a culturally hostile curriculum and world.

From divide and conquer to solidarity

One of the strongest predictors of positive well-being and mental health is social support or social connections (Kawachi and Berkman 2001). At the same time, one of the primary factors that puts a person most at risk is symptoms of isolation – depression, anxiety, and social withdrawal – all of which gets worse with isolation (American Psychiatric Association 2000). If people are isolated, they cannot have the conversations necessary to form relationships that are positive, with peers, mentors,

elders, family, or community members occupying a cultural group. This leads to difficulty in developing positive relationships with people in their cultural community (DeGruy Leary 2017). Dialogue is necessary for people to feel connected, critically process collectively, and believe in their collective sense of agency. Many indigenous models of wellness conceptualize mental health, mental health problems, and illness to disconnection, or disharmony, as the fundamental problems in a people's psychological well-being (Chino and DeBruyn 2006). Outlining folk, mystical, religious, and medical traditions in China, Japan, and India to frame an Asian indigenous psychology, Das (1987) argues that the disconnection from loved ones, family members, or ones cultural roots contributes to a disharmony in the body, which then leads to psychological problems. Some African-centered psychological traditions argue that disconnection with ancestors leads to psychological problems (Graham 2005). Divide and conquer, thus, is an effective strategy of colonial oppression because it disconnects people from their historical roots, ancestors and traditions, and culture.

When oppressed people generally hate themselves, they typically distrust people who look just like them or remind them of their own suffering, projecting a sense of inferiority onto people they should most identify with. As organisational psychologist Sean Ruth (1988) states in 'Understanding Oppression and Liberation,' 'We come to be ashamed of one another, to mistreat one another, to be very critical of one another, to be unable to unite in a common cause, to feel hopeless about one another' (436). This hate can materialize with how students interact with each other in schools and engage one another in classrooms. Freire ([1970] 2000) suggested that this was done as a result of the maladapted frustrations oppressed people have towards oppression: 'Because the oppressor exists within their oppressed comrades ... when they attack, those comrades [the oppressed] are indirectly attacking the oppressor as well' (48).

Instead of harnessing their social dissatisfaction against social systems that undermine their humanity, marginalized and dispossessed youth often internalize high levels of pent-up, displaced anger that they hold onto and too often unleash on members of their own community and communities also vulnerable to these oppressive social systems. From a psychiatric, philosophical, and revolutionary perspective, Frantz Fanon ([1963] 1990) described this horizontal violence as follows:

The colonized ... will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in [their] bones against [their] own people ... While the settler or the policeman has the right ... to strike the native, to insult him ... you will see the native reaching for his knife at the slightest hostile or aggressive glance cast on him by another native. (52)

In other words, oppressed communities are systemically divided and conquered as a result of not joining in struggle against the social forces responsible for their oppression. Instead, they often fight each other; ignore each other; disrespect each other; and distrust one another (see Camangian 2010, 2015). They often have tensions inside their own oppressed communities, and between oppressed communities, because colonial miseducation teaches them to believe their only outlets for their frustration are each other, when they should really be discontent with the dominant society.

Towards solidarity: ideological clarity, community, and a common purpose

To build solidarity, we must develop our students' ideological clarity, a sense of community, and hold each other accountable to a common purpose. Solidarity is not an end goal that promises everlasting peace, but an ongoing, 'uneasy, reserved, and unsettled matter that neither reconciles present grievances nor forecloses future conflict' (Tuck and Yang 2012, 3). According to Bartolomé (1994), ideological clarity 'refers to the process by which individuals achieve a deepening awareness of the sociopolitical and economic realities that shape their lives and capacity to recreate them' (178). Teachers must help students understand how history is present in the moment – how the vestiges of colonialism and systems of oppression persist today *and* how they can critically understand how power works. While '[t]he danger lies in ranking the oppressions' (Moraga 1983, 52), San Juan Jr (1998) suggested that to build solidarity, 'Recognition of material power differences, then, is the prime desideratum of solidarity and practicable alliance' (16). Along these lines, there is an important move toward differentiating Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to honor the specific experiences people racialized as Black have (see Dumas and Ross 2016), as well as recognize how the seemingly innocent erasure of Indigenous people's reality is a manufactured outcome of people not acknowledging their existence (see Tuck and Yang 2012). This move toward BIPOC is a difficult reality for many non-Black and Indigenous people to acknowledge, but an important (albeit incommensurable) part of seeing one another's humanity.

When individuals discover they have allies, their connections with others confirm the experiences they are having individually as part of a collective phenomenon. As LGBT and postcolonial psychologist Geraldine Moane (2011) argues, 'Liberation will only be attained when all of the groups who are involved in oppression recognize the interconnections of different oppressions and participate in the liberation process' (105). From a critical trans pedagogy perspective, Keenan (2017) teaches us that, 'We need pedagogies that deeply examine how our current gender system confines us all and how that interacts with other systems, like race, class, and ability' (553), which, 'requires an active unscripting process, one resisting any sort of crystallized definition (of gender)' (549).

Solidarity requires that people are able to do the difficult work of relinquishing various privileges so that those who are participating in the community space can unpack tensions, learn from dialogue, and reimagine a future that is inclusive of poor and working-class communities; gender fluid, queer, and trans people; and differently abled, atypically bodied, and deaf communities of color and allies within and across varying ethnic and social groups. Bettina Love (2019) calls for allies to be co-conspirators, going beyond empathy and concern and for those with the privilege to risk much more of it to disrupt the harm reproduced by oppressive systems and majoritarian groups. These interactions help to establish trust between multiply-marginalized people and people of privilege when the latter are more willing to sacrifice, step-up, or step-aside on behalf of those most vulnerable in the moment when called upon to do so.

Recognizing these phenomena as part of one another's humanity allows young people to identify how members of their community exist in relation to social forces shaping their humanity, and being conscious of this opens up the space to radically heal (Ginwright 2010) while holding each other collectively accountable in ways that they feel understood and supported. The point is not to adopt a false notion that we are all the

same, in an ahistoric, heteronormative, ableist way. Instead, honor Gaztambide-Fernández's (2012) insight that 'solidarity in relationship to decolonization ... is about imagining human relations that are premised on the relationship between difference and interdependency, rather than similarity and a rational calculation of self-interest' (49).

By connecting student learning across all subject areas and grade levels to a larger social struggle, our pedagogy 'introduces into each [student's] consciousness the idea of a common cause ... and of a collective history' (Fanon [1963] 1990, 210). With this understanding in mind, students are more informed to communicate through their differences. In Martín-Baró's (1994) vision of *el pueblo* (the people), he describes 'an opening toward the other, a readiness to let oneself be questioned by the other, as a separate being, to listen to [their] words, in dialogue; to conform reality in relationship to and with (but not over) [one another]' (183).

If students do not have the opportunity to communicate in ways that break down barriers, the social tensions informing the various interpersonal and cultural divisions will spiral further. Building solidarity, essentially, requires engaging in open and honest conversations where young people get at the essential questions most concerning them so that they can identify intersecting systems of oppression, have an authentic dialogue with one another, and process these conversations in ways that unite them toward a common, anti-oppressive purpose.

From suboppression to self-determination

Suboppression happens when oppressed communities behave in the oppressor's interests because the 'very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete ... situation by which they were shaped' (Freire [1970] 2000, 45). At a very base psychological level, when a person defines themselves by a paradigm not in line with their own standard, it represents a loss of self. Developmental theory, as well as a lot of base psychological understandings, are problematic because the premise of their framework centers self-esteem without critiquing privilege, access, and a capacity to make choices. This hegemonic understanding does not account for colonialism and other vehicles of dispossession and oppression that shape the psyche of historically oppressed and multiply-marginalized people. From a racial identity perspective, assimilation can be understood as a coping strategy in response to deculturalization and happens when people of color identify with a white oppressor as a way to protect themselves from racism (Pérez-Gualdrón and Yeh 2014). This is also known as invisibility syndrome (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin, and Kelly 2006).

In these instances, the oppressed uses the oppressor's 'model of humanity' and the 'perception of [them]selves as oppressed is impaired by [their] submersion in the reality of oppression [and their] perception of [them]selves as opposites of the oppressor does not yet signify engagement in a struggle to overcome the contradictions' (Freire [1970] 2000, 2). When young people practice suboppression in this way, they do not have their own worldview because they are instead experiencing their oppressor's psychological violence in the most intimate of ways, conforming to their oppression, as embodied in how they move through the world on a day-to-day, minute-to-minute basis. Analyzing the psychology of colonized people in a colonial context, Fanon (1967) argued, '[I]n the [person] of colour, there is a constant effort to run away from [their] own individuality.

To annihilate [their] own presence' (60). In the case of school, academic disinvestment is even internalized, rationalized, and reproduced as the only viable forms of agency to act against a schooling culture set against their validation. A willed refusal to learn can be 'a strategy that made it possible for [students] to function on the margins of society instead of falling into madness or total despair' (Kohl 1994, 10). Far too often, teachers do not like the solutions that children and youth in their classes are coming up with. As socially conscious elders, if teachers do not come up with a socially transformative analysis that joins them with oppressed people in changing their future with oppression, then dispossessed, historically oppressed, and multiply-marginalized children and youth will come to their own, sometimes false, conclusions.

Self-determination as the highest form of democracy

The highest form of democracy is self-determination – collective control over a community's lives. Self-determination begins with purpose-driven praxis, 'the authentic union of action and reflection' (Freire [1970] 2000, 48). This, in Memmi's (1967) words, becomes 'self-assertion, born out of protest' (139). The basis of this type of transformative resistance is establishing positive feelings about the social group an individual most identifies with in the form of cultural or collective self-esteem. According to cultural psychologist William Cross' fifth stage of Racial Identity Development (1995), this would be internalization-commitment. Internalization-commitment happens when individuals translate their own sense of racial pride into a plan of action or general sense of commitment to their racial group long term.

The process of self-determination requires a strong sense of individual identity, cultural pride, and intersectional and intercommunity commitment to the collective liberation of multiply-oppressed people. Native Hawai'iian nationalist and political scientist Haunani Kay-Trask (1999) defines decolonization as, 'collective resistance to colonialism, including cultural assertions, [and] efforts toward self-determination' (251). According to hooks (1993), 'No level of individual self-actualization alone can sustain the marginalized and oppressed. We must be linked to collective struggle, to communities of resistance that move outward into the world' (162). Further, these collective forms of self-determination must not be limited to the liberation of social groups in and of themselves. This must also be translated into organized, socially transformative action and, as important, reflection on the activism as lessons to improve these processes for sharper analysis and critically compassionate practice moving forward.

Teachers focused on teaching self-determination must create curricular interventions that adhere to traditional learning expectations teachers are accountable to professionally while also, and maybe more importantly, honoring the community cultural wealth (Yosso 2005) and articulated needs of students present at their schools. Giroux and McLaren (1986) explain:

[T]he issue of teaching and learning is linked to the more political goal of educating students to take risks and to struggle within ongoing relations of power in order to alter the oppressive conditions in which life is lived [E]ducators need to specify the political and moral referents for the authority they assume in teaching particular forms of knowledge, in taking stands against forms of oppression, and in treating students as if they ought also to be concerned about social justice and political action. (226)

Learning academic ‘rules for participating in power’ (Delpit 1988, 282) in the interests of their own communities helps students develop this proud sense of agency as it ‘counteracts the alienation and powerlessness that is experienced under oppression and is essential for a sense of agency, which is the opposite of alienation and powerlessness’ (Moane 2011, 115). To develop self-determination in the classroom, educators can begin by conceptualizing what transformative intellectualism looks like in their discipline, subject areas, and/or grade level, then plan their course so that students move towards demonstrating this capacity throughout the curriculum. This might require assessing students on the ‘codes of power’ (Delpit 1988) but more importantly, the constructive criticality, social compassion, and leadership skills necessary to transform unjust social conditions.

Following Paulo Freire’s problem-posing education (Freire [1970] 2000), such non-conformist teaching ‘frees human consciousness, thought, and imagination for new potentialities’ (Bakhtin 1965, 49). Even though teachers with liberatory politics may find themselves involved in hyper-academic climates, responding to the needs of oppressed communities must be their ultimate aim so that the very people they are trying to teach can see a future beyond the ones schools have been proposing through its truncated visions. Teachers, in this way, must learn from legacies of social resistance, community activism, and revolutionary movements to create meaningful learning for their students. This allows them to understand what social transformation looks and feels like when it is grounded in the histories, realities, and subjectivities of those who are most impacted by systems of oppression locally and globally. Teachers who studied socially just content in college often derive their own notions of social change that make sense for their classroom independent of the efforts of local community and larger social movements. Community organizers and larger social movements have visions of justice in their praxis that do not involve teachers, students, and schools.

Teaching for self-determination happens when education, community activism, and legacies of liberation and humanization come together for students to learn from and participate in. As expressed by Darder (2009), ‘The capacity to imagine the world beyond our current social conditions with a confidence in our ability to enact change through individual and collective efforts is central to any transformative process’ (163). As socially transformative educators, it is irresponsible to work with children and communities that are suffering through oppression yet not make connections between what they teach in the classroom and the collective actions necessary to transform oppressive social conditions beyond it.

Implications for international educational contexts

According to the 2018 Global Peace Index, the U.S. ranks 121st in the world for the full standard measurement of peace and democracy in a society. The U.S. has to respond to the social, emotional, and mental health of its youth in a way that no other developed economies have to because of this. The developed nation of New Zealand is comparable to the U.S. because its remnants of colonialism are still directly affecting the health and wellness of Maori youth, yet New Zealand lacks domestic or educational policies around social and emotional learning because youth wellness is not deemed as significant an issue.

Milne's (2017) work as a principal and scholar in New Zealand is important because it examines Kia Aroha College as an exemplar of self-determination in the context of whitestream schooling. Instead of being complicit in ahistoric and colonial miseducation, Kia Aroha reclaimed educational sovereignty by providing indigenous Māori and Pasifika students a culturally located, bilingual learning model of education based on secure cultural identities, stable positive relationships, and *aroha* (authentic caring and love). Some would argue that Paulo Freire's critical pedagogical paradigms and his practices in Brazil's literacy campaign have been a central part of the Cuban National Literacy Campaign (Amorim et al. 2007), 'later followed by the Nicaraguan campaign, [constituting] one of the most important facts in the history of education in the twentieth century' (Freire, Pérez, and Martínez 1997, 15).

The above educational contexts have been much more about the critical consciousness, cultural empowerment, and civic participation of its children and youth, but less so about their social and emotional health and well-being. The U.S. has created a health crisis as a result of its social crisis and despite it being a developed economy, it is a really unhealthy place. Thus, the U.S. should not be considered a model. Instead, people should study and learn from the mistakes that the U.S. has made that requires trauma-informed, healing-centered, and social and emotional learning in the first place.

Certainly, other nation states have youth trauma of varying degrees. When their youth are exposed to these varying traumas, it is good to have an awareness amongst their educators about how to create school climates, cultures, and curriculum that can support and nurture its youth holistically. Recently, South Africa has launched a national action plan to combat racism, racial and LGBTQ discrimination, xenophobia, and ethnic intolerance. In many international contexts – especially throughout Europe – there are a growing number of im/migrants, political refugees, and climate refugees from varying countries in Africa and the Middle East. These children are carrying a lot of trauma and social and emotional vulnerabilities, but unless their school systems are equipped to respond to their needs appropriately, their potentially shallow notions of social equality will move them to simply provide students with the same structures that they give white European children. This would most likely be Eurocentric, heteronormative, ableist, conformist, and hegemonic.

Internationally, these systems would do well to start thinking now about how their educational system is going to get ready for a shifting student demographic whose social and emotional health and well-being are going to be exposed to multiple negative stressors and no resources to cope. Culturally incongruent schools will not be prepared to support them in ways that they need. International educators can learn from the ways in which the U.S. did not create socially conscious policies and schools that have deepened the social divide. For these reasons, there are historical and policy lessons for nation states beyond the U.S. that are about to undergo similar shifts, and if they pay attention, they will not make the same mistakes the U.S. has.

Conclusion: towards a fully humanizing praxis

In 'A Poetics of Anticolonialism,' historian Robin D.G. Kelley (2000) states, 'the fact is, while colonialism in its formal sense might have been dismantled, the colonial state has not' (27). The colonial state relies on the institute of schooling, and the role of policies

and practices in maintaining hegemonic miseducation. Social and emotional learning (as well as other behavioral modification programs) lacks an analysis of colonialism and oppression. As a result of the implicit biases shaping teachers' misinterpretation of their students' articulated realities, they often silence them from fully sharing their experience of social alienation and systemic harm or even their culturally informed ideas of happiness and wellness. Silencing students because they do not discuss their experience with socially toxic stress or celebrate their complex identities in ways that placate the cultural sensitivities of those privileged enough to ignore colonial, intersectional oppression compounds the problem of multiply-marginalized students not feeling heard in spaces where they are already invisible.

Anti-colonial, intersectional analysis is nothing new. We synthesized important concepts from these traditions into a framework for learning and teaching we believe would lead to the type of educational and social transformation third world activism – and hopefully those queer and trans voices left out of heteronormative social movements – has long envisioned for historically oppressed, multiply-marginalized communities. The above pedagogical dialectics demonstrate that humanization centers radical transformation of self, relationships, and systems. While well intentioned at best, a de-contextualized social emotional learning practice risks reproducing and reinforcing the colonial violence and intersectional oppression humanization seeks to dismantle.

Educators seeking to align their teaching with the humanization of multiply-marginalized students must begin by asking themselves about purpose and outcomes: Are we teaching individual students to manage their emotions and behaviors simply for the sake of upward mobility, and therefore continuing to alienate dispossessed and historically subjugated peoples through an erasure of social resistance? Or are we teaching students to recognize and re-claim their emotions and relationships as fuel for political inquiry, radical healing, and social transformation? We know navigating the many contradictions in the schools and communities we seek to serve can at times be overwhelming, but we see those complexities as fertile ground to reimagine what is possible in collective struggle.

While this framework for humanization answers the education-for-what question, Tintiangco-Cubales et al.'s (2015) survey of research on effective practices teaching students of color provides the answer to the question of how. They argued that an ethnic studies pedagogy must center decolonization and anti-racism, be culturally and community responsive, and to do this effectively, must develop teachers' racial identity. To account for the complex, intersectional lives of multiply-marginalized students, we must also develop teachers' analysis around gender and sexual orientation, ableism, and class oppression. Empirical studies have proven that if a school/district uses Ethnic Studies to educate its students, positive results in achievement in and beyond the classroom are found (Cabrera et al. 2014; Dee and Penner 2017). Educators can look to Winn and Winn's (2019)'s recent special issue on transformative justice in education for intersectional approaches to teacher training and teaching across subject areas and grade levels. Humanization can also integrate interventions like meditation, dialogue, and vulnerability – what Cariaga (2019) calls pedagogies of bodymindspirit – in service to multiply marginalized and dispossessed communities.

Moving forward, research must explore what humanization looks like in all its messy, contradictory, and dynamic processes at the levels of classroom pedagogy and student

learning, teacher training, community organizing, and school district policy. San Francisco Unified School District's Board of Education Commissioners Alison M. Collins, Jenny Lam, Mark Sanchez and Student Delegates Betzabe Herrera and Jett Sandoval recently wrote resolution 196–25A1 to 'Implement Humanizing Learning Experiences for All Students PK-12' that their school board voted to accept as district-wide policy. This resolution aims to fulfill the humanization framework above.

Engaging students in full humanizing praxis implies that educators also do the work themselves of unlearning the colonial conditioning related to racial, class, gender, religious, im/migrant, and dis/ability status and building solidarity with like-minded and like-hearted peoples across transnational ethnic diasporas. A more fully humanizing praxis that holds individuals and community, teachers, and students, past and present must confront the socially toxic contempt of colonial miseducation that has historically harmed the social and emotional health and well-being of people of color, as manifested in practices of self-hate, divide and conquer, and suboppression. To truly heal from this colonial miseducation, educators must teach students intersectional knowledge and love of self, solidarity, and self-determination.

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