DISPOSITIONS OF DISRUPTION

the critical teaching work of modeling critical content in (for)teacher learning and unlearning

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LEVERAGING SUBJECT-MATTER LEARNING FOR DECOLONIZING TEACHING PRACTICES

- Weaving the High Leverage Practices of the Work of Teaching into Critical Framings of Educating and Education

- High Leverage Practice: 'Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development in a subject-area domain'

- Three key components:
  - Diagnosing
  - Patterns of conceptualizing teaching
  - Examples of this HLP in my instruction

THREE INTERSECTIONS

- Examining the power of a high-leverage practice inside a critical framing of teacher education affords me three themes I'd like to try convey today

  - An examination of the domain of teacher education as subject matter for our collective learning, and interpretations of patterns of learning within it
  - Schools by definition are tools of the colonial project, and therefore we as educators are complicit in that historic oppression while simultaneously working here – today, even – to dismantle that structure through the construction of decolonizing pedagogies at the macro and interpersonal levels
  - Teacher learning within these high-leverage equity practices and critical pedagogies hinges on two constructs:
    - Ability to maintain core teacher identity and critical professional stance in light of complicity for the mitigating possibilities, and a long-haul vision (Horton)
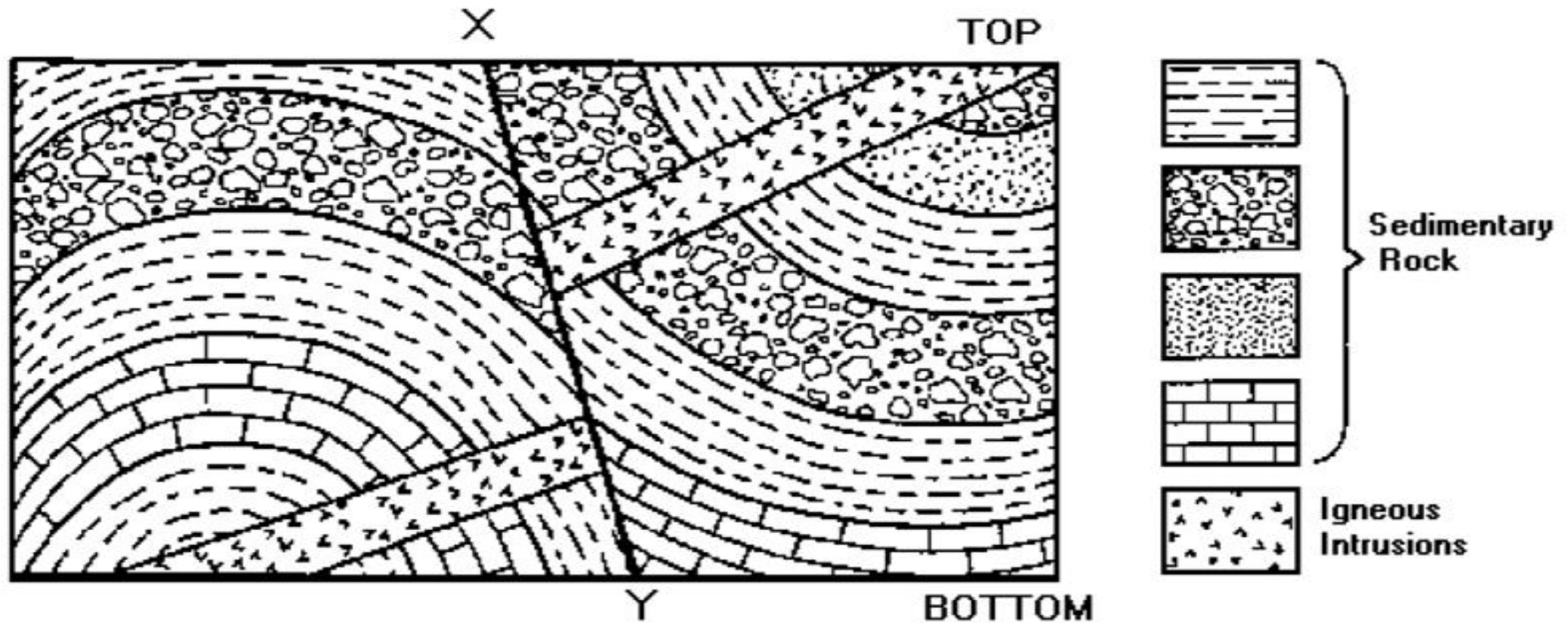   - To value the framing of education as subject matter for learning

TEPOTZOTLAN, MEXICO

Site of my torpification

Learning to teach

NEED FOR PATTERNS OF EXCAVATING

CALL FOR A DECOLONIZING FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (THE PROBLEM)

- My years as a public teacher educator, afforded me lengthy possibilities to observe the successes and pitfalls in shaping a teaching practice for equity and justice

- Students eager, committed, even abandoning other careers – aspirational for leveraging classroom spaces toward more equity and justice in society at large

- Assumptions of benevolence of schooling, and the role of schools as failure in delivery of equal opportunities

- Comprehensions of the work of teaching and the delivery of intellectual equity in partner classrooms; HLP implementation and cross-curriculum planning

- Synthesizing culturally-relevant pedagogies with development of classroom spaces; connections with families and community organizations/networks

- Bewilderment, fatigue, confusion in early teaching years

DECOLONIZING RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

- Recogntion that schooling connected the colonial project of subjugation and oppression for purposes of hypercapitalism

- Scholarship in education has roots in feminism/womanism (Anzaldua); research methodologies (Tuhiwai-Smith); socio-political analyses of race construction (Fanon); indigenous scholarship (Spring; Tuck); and policy studies (Tuck and Yang)

- Investment in discipline-based research outside the formal parameters of education as a field, including humanities content and other disciplines within the social sciences

- Frontloading of importance of humanities at different levels of P-20 education, after era of neoliberalism has marginalized social studies in K-12 learning simultaneously to the elimination of foundations standards for teacher education across regions

- Call for post-standardization framings of research on teaching

PARALLEL TRAJECTORY OF EQUITY FRAMING IN TEACHER EDUCATION (THE CONVERSATION)

- Sleeter and Grant

- Ladson-Billings

- Gorski

- Cochran-Smith and Zeichner

- Darling-Hammond

- Noddings

- Valenzuela (and who is that standardized-test Linda?

- Ayers

- Pollock

CONSTRUCTS FROM DECOLONIAL SCHOLARS THAT SURFACE IN TEACHER EDUCATION (ECHO)

- Spring – Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality:

- Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth, 1961*

- Tuck and Yang, 2014, – Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor

EXPANDING CONTENT WITH WHITENESS STUDIES

- Key scholarship and analyses of racism and education help synthesize these two conversations in the naming of whiteness as the presence of historied racism, and the dimensions of racism that surface in schooling and teacher education:

- Joe Feagin's scholarship on the White Racial Frame helps surface the values and violence enforced in educational enterprises

- Zeus Leonardo offers frameworks that build access to race discourses in education and provide avenues of disruption

- Cheryl Matias breaks down the multiple dimensions of whiteness as enacted in settings of education and teacher education, with intersectional insights.

- Sleeter helps us position critical examinations of whiteness in teacher education, despite decades of efforts to instrumentalize classroom spaces for more social justice.

NEED FOR FRAMINGS AS CONTENT FOR TEACHER LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

- Resilience and retention issues of activist teachers

- As noted earlier, our teacher education programming based in equity and racial justice was profoundly appreciated by students and their data from their early years demonstrated success in implementing CRP and CSP… Frustration and fatigue in face of the wholeness – and tenacity and force – of the colonial project they were now a part of

- Attrition (Nieto, Santoro, MaWhinney) plagues teachers with critical pedagogies (McLaren, Apple), despite their overwhelming commitment to justice at at beginning, middle, and end of teacher education programming.

- We need to support a critical framing to reflexive teacher practice, and support students' understandings of the scope of framings with which they interact

TENSION, HOWEVER

- Supporting students in the learning of decolonial theories places them in the middle of an intellectual, political, and practitioner crisis.

- Fanonian theories of colonial violence, Spring's analysis of schooling as instrumental in cultural genocide, Sleeter's and Matias's analysis of the impermeable and unforgiving female whiteness of US education – all of these mandate complete transformation at the structural and systemic level.

- Built into that is the recognition that to participate in schooling, especially as it wields historic and contemporary coloniality, is to be complicit in its perpetuation

- And yet, individual students of teaching have little access to facilitating the structural change – and if they are working outside of schooling to instrumentalize those notions, the schools remain in operation, and the students remain inside

- This is possibly a chronological tension – mitigate on inside while waiting for complete upheaval – but it is also philosophical for new teachers

THE FEAR: DISRUPTIVE DISPOSITIONS?

- Worth noting that scholars have long chronicled individual instantiations of this tension, and the realities that interrupt teacher development toward equity and justice:

  - Santoro posits that schools drive out their most principled change agents, as the structures of oppression in schools become untenable. Principled leavers, she suggests, are a window into the pervasive aspects of inequities
  - Au's standpoint curriculum theory posits that the necessary truth 'underneath' curriculum is threatened in the whiteness of classroom spaces
  - Nieto's narratives of teacher attrition and turnover speak to the sheer volume of required labor in teaching, but also to the additional labor of experiencing conflicting values
  - This can be read not as evidence of the tensions as individually felt, but more as the extent of the power of the colonial project – to facilitate disengagement

THE HOPE: DISPOSITIONS OF DISRUPTION

- The tension emerging teachers of critical pedagogy experience can also be seen as geographic/spatial.

- There are possibilities, given the aforementioned histories of curriculum, pedagogy, and community development to create micro-spaces against coloniality

- These micro-spaces can be seen in classrooms, in partnerships with communities, and sometimes in schools.

- Telpochcalli, founded in 1994, was one such attempt.

- That the social engine of coloniality is untouched perhaps places us as facilitators of its ongoing. But the legacy of the 9 years inside that environment - for many students – might be necessary when larger transformation begins

- Recognizing that teachers (candidates) can internally navigate these conflicts is essential from our position in higher education

THE CALL: TEACHING DISPOSITIONS OF DISRUPTION

- So lastly, how to build for this – constructing a framing, while also facilitating complex identity development, and positioning emerging teachers within a system in which they will need to make professional decisions about compliance and resistance

- Responding to the learning patterns of students, we interrupt their initial fieldwork practicum experience with a tri-part series of lessons –

  - An Essential Question activity focused on the interpretation of schools as tools of the colonial project;
  - An analysis of a critique of schooling for Black children from 1963; and
  - A rotation through Telpochcalli, and other Chicago examples of decolonial teaching

MODELING/PARALLEL: CHIEF PROTECTOR

- Students read Joel Spring's Deculturalization chapters and parallel histories of different marginalized and racially oppressed groups across international contexts, and even centuries.

- Jigalong, Australia, 1931: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWjGteDg9VE

- Spring, 2006: "..there have been different educational approaches to the intersection of cultures resulting from globalization [and colonization]." Educational methods of colonization include Cultural Genocide, Deculturalization, Assimilation, Cultural Pluralism, Denial of Education, and Hybridity. His analysis posits the use of different educational methods of colonization for different minoritized groups, connected to specific histories of intersecting with white Anglo-Saxon beliefs of superiority in the Americas.

- Analysis extends beyond this comparison to current day fieldwork in schools.

THE ACTIVITY: COLONIALITY AND TODAY

Micro-scenes	Emotional response	Connection to current day FW
S1: Instruction, Assessment		
S1: Data collection		
S2: Bureaucratic Accountability		
S3: Open conversation		
S3: Mandatory Depot Exchange		
S3: Tools of Extraction		
S4: Socialization project of schools		
S4: Contradictory purposing of schools		

- **Decolonial Framings of Equity Work for Teaching**

- **Theory and Practice Integration: ED 350 – ED 351**

- **Leveraging Our ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS OF PRACTICE:**

- **The Unanswerable and Collectively-Considered Conundrum of Teacher Education in Critical Times**

- Framing the Metaphor

- Hiding Idols: Participation in Oppression

- Essential Question:

- How do practitioners mitigate the oppressive nature of public institutions of education and effect change inside socially-forward work, all despite the system's push to make them complicit in the hegemony of American schools?

- Origin of the question:

- My early years of teaching were with immigrant students, most consistently in ESL instruction in bilingual classrooms or in my own pull-out program. While immediately gratifying, and incredibly complex, I could not completely appease the gnawing doubt that the drive to assimilate my students – overtly in the form of transitional bilingual education and covertly in the form of curricular omissions and biased storytelling across content areas – was an endeavor I was complicit in, despite my personal mission of advocacy for children in culturally-relevant pedagogy.

- As I pondered this issue throughout my practice, I turned to historical analyses that illuminated different elements of the question. One of the texts I found is the movie 'Rabbit-Proof Fence', a clip from which you will see during this discussion.

- Discussion Questions:

- What oppositions to schooling exist in your classroom?

- Whose norms are employed in your classroom?

- What doubts do you encounter about curriculum content?

- Whose definition of success is enacted in your classroom?

- What version of 'Chief Protector' do students experience?

- What hopes and beliefs might not be visible to you – and how would you begin to know this?

MODELING/PARALLEL: 'TALK TO TEACHERS'

James Baldwin, 1963:

"Let's begin by saying that we are living through a very dangerous time. Everyone in this room is in one way or another aware of that. We are in a revolutionary situation, no matter how unpopular that word has become in this country. The society in which we live is desperately menaced, not by Khrushchev, but from within. To any citizen of this country who figures himself as responsible – and particularly those of you who deal with the minds and hearts of young people – must be prepared to "go for broke." Or to put it another way, you must understand that in the attempt to correct so many generations of bad faith and cruelty, when it is operating not only in the classroom but in society, you will meet the most fantastic, the most brutal, and the most determined resistance. There is no point in pretending that this won't happen."

Baldwin addressing the need for identity construction – the role of the individual teacher's purposing of the self, against great odds.

AND BALDWIN: STRUCTURAL CRITIQUE

- "Since I am talking to schoolteachers and I am not a teacher myself, and in some ways am fairly easily intimidated, I beg you to let me leave that and go back to what I think to be the entire purpose of education in the first place. It would seem to me that when a child is born, if I'm the child's parent, it is my obligation and my high duty to civilize that child. Man is a social animal. He cannot exist without a society. A society, in turn, depends on certain things which everyone within that society takes for granted. Now the crucial paradox which confronts us here is that the whole process of education occurs within a social framework and is designed to perpetuate the aims of society. Thus, for example, the boys and girls who were born during the era of the Third Reich, when educated to the purposes of the Third Reich, became barbarians. The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity. But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If a society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it – at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change."

- There is a haunting truth here, that the continuity of the message over the decades might elicit in us a deep awareness – that the work has always been categorically larger than we imagined…

DIFFERENTIATING BALDWIN LESSON

- Students not resisting the terrible realizations that despite all learning science and curriculum development and equity aspirations, talk could be delivered truthfully today:

  - Imagine Baldwin here today. What specifics would he name that would directly connect to his frustrations with Black education.
  - Develop a proposal for a middle-school unit in honor of Baldwin

- Students for whom there is some resistance, or apprehension:

  - Imagine you are the teachers in this audience. What questions might teachers want to ask of someone challenging their ability to provide quality education to Black children?
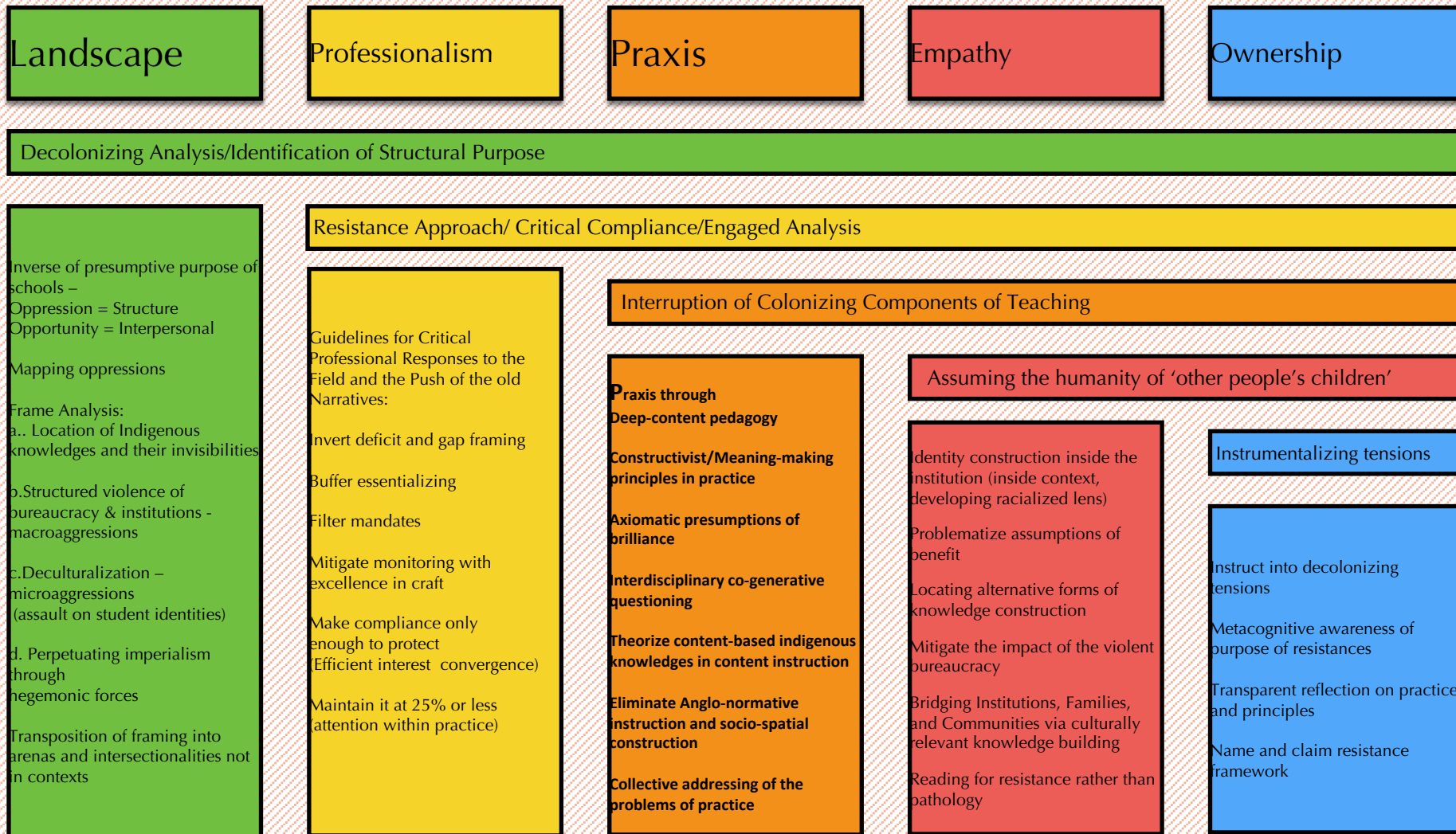
MODELING/ PARALLEL: TELPOCHCALLI:

Students spend 3 weeks in different neighborhood schools, rotating with mini cohorts, recording field data,

These data include observations about curriculum, language and communication, articulation of values throughout spatial domains, and the authorship of learning experiences.

(Telpochcalli means House of Youth in Nahautl and was founded in 1994.)

Landscape	Professionalism	Praxis	Empathy	Ownership

Decolonizing Analysis/Identification of Structural Purpose

Resistance Approach/ Critical Compliance/Engaged Analysis

Interruption of Colonizing Components of Teaching

Assuming the humanity of 'other people's children'

Instrumentalizing tensions

Landscape

Inverse of presumptive purpose of schools –
Oppression = Structure
Opportunity = Interpersonal

Mapping oppressions

Frame Analysis:
a.. Location of Indigenous knowledges and their invisibilities

b.Structured violence of bureaucracy & institutions - macroaggressions

c.Deculturalization – microaggressions
(assault on student identities)

d. Perpetuating imperialism through
hegemonic forces

Transposition of framing into arenas and intersectionalities not in contexts

Professionalism

Guidelines for Critical Professional Responses to the Field and the Push of the old Narratives:

Invert deficit and gap framing

Buffer essentializing

Filter mandates

Mitigate monitoring with excellence in craft

Make compliance only enough to protect
(Efficient interest convergence)

Maintain it at 25% or less (attention within practice)

Praxis

**Praxis through
Deep-content pedagogy**

Constructivist/Meaning-making principles in practice

Axiomatic presumptions of brilliance

Interdisciplinary co-generative questioning

Theorize content-based indigenous knowledges in content instruction

Eliminate Anglo-normative instruction and socio-spatial construction

Collective addressing of the problems of practice

Empathy

Identity construction inside the institution (inside context, developing racialized lens)

Problematize assumptions of benefit

Locating alternative forms of knowledge construction

Mitigate the impact of the violent bureaucracy

Bridging Institutions, Families, and Communities via culturally relevant knowledge building

Reading for resistance rather than pathology

Ownership

Instruct into decolonizing tensions

Metacognitive awareness of purpose of resistances

Transparent reflection on practice and principles

Name and claim resistance framework

Decolonizing Teacher Preparation Framework

Trinder, 10 -14

IMPLICATIONS: URGENCY OF NOW

- Establishing the connectivity and synergies between critical foundations of education and teacher education is increasing in scholarship

  - Anti-colonial approaches to teacher education developing in multiple spaces
  - Examinations of whiteness and the impact of its different tentacles in teacher education
  - Critical ethnic studies curricula once targeted, now expanding
  - Teacher identity and intersectional positioning heralded at policy level

- Need for decolonial practice articulation inside diverse content domains

- Need for longitudinal studies of students in critical teacher education programs in terms of identity construction and deconstruction; curricular resistance; and re-humanizing protocols and practices in anti-colonial classroom spaces

AND POSSIBILITIES: THE CHILDREN LEAD US

THANK YOU!

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