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2. CRITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF EDUCATION

Theoretical Framework

> *The spatial turn is signaling what may turn out to be a profound sea change in all intellectual thought and philosophy, affecting every form of knowledge production from the abstract realms of ontological and epistemological debate to theory formation, empirical analysis, and practical application.*
>
> (Soja, 2010, p. 15)

Words fail. True in many ways, but particularly important as this volume takes up the question of what theories of critical geography might have to offer the study of contemporary education reform. In English, the terms space and place are used interchangeably and have multiple connotations from the specific to the abstract. This proves to be difficult as readers of the work are often unclear on important distinctions. Geographers, however, make an important distinction between the terms that proves to be a foundational starting point for the entire field of study. For these folks, one begins by conceiving of *space* as the physical, material attributes of the greater world that surrounds human experience or, perhaps more theoretically accurate, space represents the conjuncture of the spatial forces at work on people at any given time. While what most of us think of as geography has a distinct materiality—things like borders, capitals, mountain ranges, oceans, and rivers—an understanding of spatial forces also includes such socially constructed forces as economics, politics, and culture. A national border, for example, is certainly a spatial designation but, of course, represents nothing necessarily present in the natural world. It is a human construction that can change over time, may have varying levels of significance, and ultimately, holds different significance to different constituencies. We see then that space is both natural and man-made, holding both constraints and possibilities for the people that interact with it. As a result of this set of understandings and the failure of language, Shields (2013) proposes that it may be more useful to shift terms from space to "social spatialisation" in the hopes of highlighting the fluid and contested nature of spatial dynamics in theorizing and critical analysis. He suggests that particularly given the complications of how we make meaning of physical space, "it is not a concrete object, but a 'virtuality' or set of relations that are real but not actual" (p. 8). Emphasis here is again on the complexity of the interaction between people and spaces and provides a nuanced starting point for inquiry into the social.

N. Ares et al. (Eds.), Deterritorializing/Reterritorializing, 27–40.

The term *place*, on the other hand, has often been conflated with location but one can easily consider how various common usages trouble such a simple definition: "a place of one's own," "knowing your place", or "feeling out of place" for example. For geographers, the nature of place lies in a *localized* convergence of structural forces, experiential meaning-making, and a set of very real but often intangible relationships (see Shields, 2013, Helfenbein, 2015b). In this way, place can be characterized as a particular form of space—one in which meaning has been layered onto spatial characteristics and/or particular locations. Of course, this too is contested, subjective, and perhaps even contradictory as it is not difficult to think of particular places that bring forth special meaning to people for any number of reasons, both positive and negative. Theoretical work in geography and broader social theory—informed by parallel developments in marxist, feminist, and poststructural social theory—turns its attention to the processes involved in *space* becoming a *place* and the implications for the lived experience of the people involved in or excluded from that set of relations. Without question, any inquiry into such processes must consider issues of power and identity, socio-economic dynamics, and considerations of race, gender, ability, and sexuality (see this volume, Chapter 1); to take up social inquiry given these presuppositions is known as Critical Geography.

CRITICAL GEOGRAPHIES OF EDUCATION

In a growing body of scholarship, presenting geographic knowledge as scientific and objective—or perhaps more dangerously, that geography is somehow neutral or value-free—has been broadly challenged (Gregory, 1978; Harvey, 1973; Massey, 1994; Rose, 1993; Said, 1978; Willinsky, 1998). Insisting on the consideration of the ways in which humanly constructed discourse/s are impacted by and work to constitute the material world highlights that all forms of geography can either be reproductive, involve some form of negotiation, or potentially challenge particular formations of knowledge and/or identity (Helfenbein, 2015a).

> Seen this way, geography is inherently political and pedagogical, which provokes such questions as: what world does geography education make possible and intelligible, to whom, how, to what ends, and with what consequences? How does it position those it engages to inter/act (or abstain from it) in the world, at what scales, with what purposes? Who, in current societal arrangements, has the power to "name" the world and thus determine its meaning? What power arrangements underlie the discourses made available in geography education? Who does or does not get privileged by them? (Helfenbein, 2015b, p. 402)

The challenges presented here begin in questions of geography curriculum but additionally hold provocative potential for educational researchers writ large. As we question the categories and implications of geographic knowledge itself, the

burden then lies within a new array of questions about the geographies, scales, and implications of those decisions on our analyses of educational contexts.

Critical geographers (e.g., Gregory, 1978; Harvey, 1996; Lefebvre, 1970; Massey, 1994; Soja, 1996) have challenged the fixity of terms such as space and place, suggesting a much more interrelated, entangled understanding that highlights how they function as sets of relations (Rose et al., 1993. As such, spaces and places are expressive of ideologies and relationships of power, processes filled with living politics and ideologies that shape who we are as people. Considered as coming into being through (and as) the intersection of "social practices, and structures, norms and values, power and inequality, difference and distinction" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 468), space and place become "the focus of critical social analysis" (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 628). For educational researchers and for the purposes of this volume, this theoretical framework holds the potential to open possibilities for re-examining how space and place are engaged in the lived world of education, education policy, and what they might promote and/or exclude as well as how they might be otherwise. That is to say, underlying questions for this approach might be:

- What are the understandings underlying current uses of space/place and what kind of understanding do they help produce and/or mitigate among students, parents, teachers, and the community?
- To what degree, and how, do they allow students to think, imagine, and be in the world as they negotiate a "sense of place"?
- How are schools *educative spaces* acting on and with those that inhabit them? How are larger spatial forces such as globalized economic shifts affecting the lived experiences of schools? (see Helfenbein, 2015b, p. 403)

Certainly, a good deal of work has taken up questions related to the role geographic understandings and representations have played in the West's project of empire-building and colonialism (Bhabha, 1994; Gregory, 1978; Jackson, 1989; Pratt, 1992; Said, 1978; Willinsky, 1998). What we are only now beginning to see is empirical research regarding the ways in which the legacy of imperialism and the colonial project is still present in educative contexts today (see this volume, Chapter 4). Scholars taking up a Critical Geography approach in educational research are exploring the lingering colonial concepts sedimented within the education system, both globally and specifically, in Western systems. For example, this work privileges an interrogation of the effects of European-generated terms such as the Middle East, Far East, the Orient, or Dark Africa and their role in determining a Western sense of center and the relations of power, culture, and language that continue to support it.

> What do persisting European names of rivers, lakes, or mountains—ones appropriated and re-named in the effort to exploit, reconstruct, and control other lands (Crush, 1994; Edwards, 2001; Pahl, 1995)—both allow and inhibit in the construction of a "sense of place" (whose sense? whose place?) by

> different—say, European and aboriginal—students (Osborne, 1998)? Answers to such questions are important because how we divide and name the world within education has consequences for students' ways of seeing, for their mapping of identities and subjectivities, or the construction of their maps of meaning (Lambert, 2002) both inside and outside of the classroom. (Segall & Helfenbein, 2008, p. 273)

Here we see the implications of spatial representations within geography curriculum but, to carry the point further, rejecting the natural, or given-ness of these spatial categories and the processes that create them has additional impact in broader educational theorizing, research, and methodology.

Feminist geographers have also raised similar questions and taken up corrective analyses. Massey (1991) and Deutsche (1990), among others, highlight traditional geography's patriarchal view of the world. In an important work, Rose (1993) turns a feminist critique on Western spatial representation to note the existence of two types of masculinity in geographic knowledge: social scientific masculinity, which is characterized by a quest for abstraction—a detached objectivity which seeks to mask its value-ladenness—and, aesthetic masculinity, an assertion of male sensibilities to the human experience of place. Exploring the relationship between socially constructed gender relations and the social construction and perceptions of environments, feminist geographers have challenged the privileging of public over private spaces (Cope, 1997; Hanson & Pratt, 1995; Massey, 1994) the exclusion of the body as a scale of analysis (Butler, 1993) as well as a variety of binaries in geography such as man vs. nature, mind vs. body, male vs. female. Feminist geographers have stated that spacialities are both constructed and maintained by a variety of ideas about appropriate gendered behavior and values and that built environments are not only almost always surveyed, planned, designed and built by men, but that patriarchal assumptions about gendered identities are articulated through them. This, however, ecofeminists have argued, is not restricted to the built environment. Our notions of nature, they add, are also embedded in gendered relations, pointing out the relationship between the references to and treatment of women and nature under patriarchy and colonialism (Anzaldúa, 1999).

Similar issues pertain to race and the legacy of colonialism. While we have already touched upon how geography education operates in the division of "us" and "them," often along racial categories both in terms and representations used in geography and its education, attention to race also needs to become grounded in the racialized ideas and lives of students and how geography maintains and/or challenges them. This is because through the construction of race (as is true of gender and class), differences occur and are saturated in specific places, take shape over space, and "create spaces of inequality, fear, powerlessness, and discrimination" (Cope, 1997, p. 96). Issues to examine include how our conceptions of borders—both physical and imagined—work to separate groups, keeping some invisible as they are marked and stereotyped (Anzaldúa, 1999). In addition, we might re-examine how the places

learned about within school curricula as well those in which students live (including their own school) are carved up along racial lines and how different groups construct identities (sometimes oppositional ones) within such places as they get "used." Similarly, attention should be paid to the role of landscapes as a "racial project" (Omi & Winant, 1994). That is, to how the "material quality of landscape—the tangible, visible scene/seen—makes it an ideal medium for making real and immediate abstract ideas in general, including ideas about race and racism" and the degree to which their use in geography education writ large "serves to either naturalize, or make normal, or provide the means to challenge racial formations and racist practices" (Schein, 1999, p. 189). In other words, educators make choices every day regarding the how places are represented, from whose perspective, and who gets left out.

In areas pertaining to the intersections of race and gender, possibilities lie in inquiry into "how gender, race, and other categories of difference are produced and reproduced through dominant understandings of what places and people are or should be and how ideas about nature, landscape and the built environment produce and reproduce difference" (Rose et al., 1997, cited in Segall & Helfenbein, 2008, p. 274). That is, critical geographies of education precipitate research on how education systems and the educators within them can either perpetuate or work against inequality based on race, gender, or other difference (De Oliver, 1998). Furthermore, as a critical approach takes as given the notion that cultural landscapes are formed and maintained by the views and interests of those in power to do so, sociological work emphasizing the way minority and marginalized cultures use, alter, and manipulate landscapes in order to express their own identities within the larger cultural landscape remains fertile ground for continued analyses.

SCALE AS SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

In consideration of contemporary education reform, the question of scale often appears to be obscured amidst political rhetoric and lack of specificity. With the passage of federal legislation such as No Child Left Behind (ESEA) in 2002 and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, one can infer that that the scale of education reform functions on a national level but, certainly, the burden of implementation falls to the states. An ongoing complication of U.S. federalism, education policy in general lies within the tension of federal and state control and compliance. Complicated by the historical notions of local control in education, the water is muddied further. For example, as part of the effort to train "highly effective teachers" and fill teaching vacancies in high-need areas, numerous alternative teacher education programs have emerged. Often proposed with global competitiveness as its rationale and with a national model that is presumed to be applicable in any context, one might see a college student in suburban Virginia recruited to Teach for America who is then trained in metropolitan Arizona to begin teaching at an urban school in Indianapolis. The implication of such a scenario is clear: context does not matter and the particularities of schools and communities

are, at best, to be learned on the job and, at worst, not important at all. As part of a critical project, the assumptions that a national scale reform such as this one can be questioned along with the attendant considerations of who benefits, and in what ways, as well as what gets left out along the way. This leads us to consider scale as a concept and the ways in which it is socially constructed as well as constitutive of social space.

In geographical theorizing and research, scale has often played a prominent role and has been the subject of some debate, evidencing a tension between perspectives which highlight structural forces and those that focus on agency and human practice (see McCann, 2003; Martin, McCann, & Purcell, 2003). At its most fundamental level, scale refers to a form of measurement in the production of maps and spatial analysis—often referred to as resolution, marked from coarse to fine (Marston, 2000). Cartographic scale is similar in that it denotes the spatial bounds of the object of analysis and again often refers to spatial representation, while operational scale extends focuses on processes, relations, and interactions (Marston, 2000). Historically, scale as a spatial concept has been treated as not only given but immutable (i.e. a city is a city, a region is a region, etc.). In contemporary theorizing, notably with increased attention to forces of globalization, scale has been rethought in terms of social construction and rejected as an "ontologically given category" (Marston, 2000, p. 220). Brenner (2001) suggests:

> traditional Euclidian, Cartesian and Westphalian notions of geographic scale as a fixed, bounded, self-enclosed and pregiven container are currently being superseded—at least within the parameter of critical geographical theory and research—by a highly productive emphasis on process, evolution, dynamism and sociopolitical contestation. (p. 592)

Marston (2000) suggests that scale consists of three necessarily interrelated components: size, level, and relation. Coming from the perspective of social construction, her conception rejects the oversimplified consideration of size (e.g. census tract, zip code, county, etc.) and level (e.g. district, county, state, etc…) and emphasizes scale as relational within the complexity of space, place, and environment (pp. 220–221). This approach to the concept of scale then begins with three propositions: (1) there is no ontological given to scalar concepts as it is a human heuristic used to describe phenomena; (2) the stakes of the use of these heuristics have experiential and material impact on people—in other words, scale matters; and (3) these heuristics, as they are socially constructed, are complex, contested, and open to change over time. Marston suggests then that we come to understand scale in our analyses as rooted within a global capitalist set of relations. Again we see the turn toward complexity within a critical geography that recognizes that the study of the places we inhabit involves attention to forces at play, interactions, and the simultaneous blending of the discursive—meaning the way in which language provides the tools for social construction of spatial categories—and the material.

Certainly, Marxist approaches to spatial analysis have played an important role in the development of critical geography. Scholars such as David Harvey, Doreen Massey, and Edward Soja (while unique in project) all consider global capitalism to be the primary force with which to consider and reconsider spatial relations. A foundational body of work, Henri Lefebvre's theorization around the spatial within changing socio-economic conditions of post-Fordist globalism provides a way into understanding the connection of state power to the spaces of everyday life—in effect, applying a multi-scalar analysis that focuses on sets of relations. Lefebvre (1970) offers that as late capitalism coevolves with urbanization, social relations become more entangled, increasingly complex, and operating at multiple scales. He states "this space is occupied by interrelated networks, relationships that are defined by interference. Its homogeneity corresponds to intentions, unified strategies, and systematized logics, on the one hand, and reductive, and consequentially simplifying, representations on the other" (p. 167). For Lefebvre, this complexification results in increasing conflict for those left out of a social system only concerned with economic growth and the need for rethinking how these "interrelated networks" function. Operating merely at the macro-level scales creates the obscuration of lived impacts of such logics; which is to say, that marginalization and inequity persist outside of the analysis.

Brenner (2000) further summarizes the work of Lefebvre on state power and its integration with the construction of scale by delineating three strategies: (1) through regulation, planning and policy, and financial investment, "states operate to *mobilize space as a productive force*"; (2) in service of capitalist growth, the state serves as the "the most crucial *institutional mediator of uneven geographical development*" and intervenes at multiple scales; and (3) various types of state intervention by states serve to "*hierarchize social relations* upon different scales," creating a spatial logic around its practices (emphasis in original, pp. 370–371). As these processes become largely obscured, scalar categories tend to be seen as given rather than open to reconceptualization, ultimately limiting political agency. Interestingly, here lies the apparent contradiction and ultimate utility in the contradiction between both reifying scalar conceptions and embracing new forms in the service of state aims. Central to the analysis of the prescient Lefebvre and those that follow in this work is that, as globalized forces of capital expansion proliferate, state-based forms of power have been able to adapt and redefine the scale at which they operate.

The urban revolution

> Cities happen to be problems in complexity, like the life sciences. They present situations in which a half-dozen or even several dozen quantities are all varying simultaneously and in subtly interconnected ways. Cities, again like the life sciences, do not exhibit one problem in organized complexity, which if understood explains all. They can be analyzed into many such problems or segments which, as in the case of the life sciences, are also related with

> one another. The variables are many, but they are not helter-skelter; they are interrelated into an organic whole. (Jacobs, 1961, p. 433, original emphasis)

Nowhere are the aforementioned processes more visible than in the urban context. Some theorists are intending to mobilize the urban—or perhaps, less problematically, the city as a productive unit of analysis. Certainly, the urban has been a historically important site for sociological work (i.e. Simmel, Weber, Benjamin, Park & Wirth) but it can argued that thinkers such as Foucault, de Certeau, and more contemporary critical geographers such as Massey, Harvey, and Soja consider urban space to be the frame within which to take on the study of broader social shifts and challenges. Sociologist Saskia Sassen (2011) has offered that we might consider the city as heuristic, or in other words, an analytic tool that enables a broader insight into much larger conditions. She, too recognizes the strategic inquiry into urban spaces as windows into the social, but intends to draw a much clearer line between urban processes and the state of a larger global capital. From issues ranging from housing and gentrification, access to finance capital, and political economy itself, she suggests that the political struggles of communities within cities are critical to understand, and represent, the risk/opportunities for people to participate in the shaping of the urban social fabric. However, urban spaces quickly become coded with the less theoretically efficacious study of social problems, noted clearly in the continued categorical struggle between urban and poverty, urban and economy, urban and globalization, etc. (Buendía, 2010). Once again, these obscurations provide cover for the actions of larger political forces and serve to limit possibilities for a broader public agency. Strategically taking up the city as an object of analysis—a move termed "toward the concrete" (Helfenbein, 2015a)—offers new understandings of the ways in which our social spaces are continually growing more deeply entwined in the process of being re/mapped and how material experiences are impacted by forces of the social, technological, economic, and political. Again, Sassen (2011) suggests an analytical approach to trends in this project,

> Among these trends are globalization, the rise of the new information technologies, the intensifying of transnational and translocal dynamics, growing inequality, and the strengthening presence and voice of specific types of socio-cultural diversity. Each one of these trends has its own specific sources, contents and consequences. The city is one stop in often complex trajectories that have many non-urban stops, and can in fact be global trajectories. But that urban moment is one where each of these trends (whether economic, technological, social or cultural) interacts with the others in distinct, often complex manners, in a way they do not in just about any other place. In that sense the city makes legible some of the most complex issues we confront. We can learn by just standing at a bus stop. (Sassen, 2011, n.p.; See also Sassen, 2010)

Suggesting not only an increasing level of attention to urban contexts but also a qualitative methodology that privileges the personal as well as the local, Sassen

reminds researchers of the earlier calls offered by scholars such as DeCerteau, Lefebvre, and ethnography writ large.

The urban revolution then can be thought of as a shift in analytical focus as well as a descriptor for fast moving forces of global capital. It would seem that with this focus we can see the potential for identifying new capacities for the critical project of making the invisible visible, pointing to opportunities to build coalitions in response to these trends, and perhaps explore "leaky spaces" (Roy, 2003) and work towards new "spaces of possibility" (Helfenbein, 2009; Smith & Helfenbein, 2009). However, it remains important to recognize the function of much of contemporary urban policy (and perhaps even analysis) to obscure race and class relations within a structure of uneven development, the raced and classed underpinning and historical sedimentation of these forces, and to note the basis of its cartography in the scarcity required of the neoliberal order. In other words, take as *a priori* Fiske's (1991) descriptor of "the city is a mix of freedom and constraint" (p. 204) as well as Sassen's maxim: "the city talks back…[highlighting] the incompleteness of the city" (Sassen, 2011, n.p.). The urban then can be seen as:

> constituted by opposing forces: on the one hand, there is the physical infrastructure of the city (streets, buildings, etc.) and on the other hand, there are the lived qualities of the urban experience that cannot be reduced to plans or maps. Making this (Bergsonian) distinction between quantities and qualities allows the thinker to recapture the very essence of city life: multidimensionality, unpredictability, irreducibility. (Fraser, 2009, p. 381)

For our purposes in this volume then, "Urban" as a term refers to more than a simple geographic category, it is "an elaboration, a search…a practice, *urban practice*" (Lefevbre, 1970/2003, p. 5). Certainly, some scholars have taken up this approach in educational research in various ways. A few examples would include: Tate's (2008) exploration of "geographies of opportunity" to explore racial disparity in K-12 education; Buendía and Ares' (2006) deconstruction of the ways "geographies of difference" are employed to both define schools and children as well obscure racial inequity in schools and cities; Haymes (1995) discussion of Black social movements and urban restructuring; and Fataar's (2013) examination the ways in which poor, Black schoolchildren in South Africa "carve" out strategies to navigate the social and educative spaces of the post-apartheid city. The implications of such moves lie not only in the theoretical but also in terms of the methodological as we consider projects within the changing formations of global capitalism. This claim however does not simply dismiss the ways in which the term urban is and continues to be racially coded; to ignore this reality runs the risk of further inscribing a social analysis that obscures the ways in race is foundational in the social construction of space itself (see this volume, Chapters 5, 8 and 11). This process also operates for other social constructions of difference including class, gender, sexuality, and ability/disability, although perhaps less explicitly than a deeply historical racial politics.

Globalization processes move through the process of disorientation (or deterritorialization), reorientation (reterritorialization), and mapping. For example, this volume offers that forces of globalization are at work on educative spaces—particularly urban ones—and the people that inhabit those spaces in new and consequential ways. Globalization can be seen as the pulsing extension of the contradictory processes of capital throughout the spatial realm. By offering the descriptor "pulsing" we suggest that these forces extend and retract—what Lefebvre calls the "incessant to-and-fro"—in the hopes of new markets, the reinscription of old ones, and the extraction of markets where there once were none, a point explicitly important to the connection to public education. Lefebvre (1970/2003) argues that fundamentally these processes follow the broadly conceived characteristics of urbanization. As these processes extend through the spatial, we see—sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly—the urbanization of everything (Helfenbein, 2011). This is to say, via Lefebvre, that the processes of global capital follow this trajectory in spaces that would not be considered cities *per se* but, as sets of relations become increasingly pervasive, finding spaces outside of those relations becomes difficult or ultimately impossible. Indeed, what is compellingly argued by Sassen (2014) is that we are increasingly seeing people and places expelled from access to economic systems as a result of new predatory formations within late capitalism. This expulsion results from the convergence of economic elites and the systemic structures—all originating in the urban centers of power—that enable them to determine who is "in" and who is "out" (see also Tsing, 2005). What then is at hand is indeed an urban revolution—both in terms of the intensity in which material experience is impacted by the convergence of global forces but also in the necessity for new analytics to make those dynamics visible.

On Spatial Justice and Scale

> *that the geography of the world is intimately entwined with the most fundamental of political issues: with inequality, with recognition and the evasion of it, with class and democracy, with—what we inevitably live within and are constantly remaking—maps of power.* (Massey, 2007, p. 23)

Soja (2010) argues that the project of spatial justice requires a multi-scalar approach that encompasses at least three levels. First, the politics of spatial distribution through borders, boundaries, and other legal and political tools can be analyzed through the lens of justice, access, and equity. Second, the localized condition is influenced through individual actors or institutions that may exacerbate discriminatory or privileged practices. And third, regional assemblages can both perpetuate and potentially work against processes of uneven development, necessarily attentive to both the global and local (pp. 8–9). Recognizing the spatial as relational therefore impacts how one takes up questions of justice and equity and rejects the binary of local and global within such concerns. Massey (2007) suggests that, "what is needed

is a politics *of* place *beyond* place" (p. 15), intending to work on political projects that both recognize the contextual nature of the work while simultaneously seeing that context within sets of relations at other scales. She further states,

> Conceptually, it is important to recognize that the global is as much locally produced as vice versa, that an imaginary of big binaries of us and them (often aligned with local and global) is both politically disabling and exonerating of our own (and our local place's) implication. (Massey, 2007, p. 10)

Soja (1985) points to a critical social theory in which "being, consciousness, and action…[exist] not simply 'in' space but 'of' space as well. To be alive intrinsically and inescapably involves participation in the social production of space, shaping and being shaped by a constantly evolving spatiality" (Soja, 1985, p. 177). As Lefebvre (1970) observed, "we have forgotten or overlooked the social relationships (primarily relationships of production)" (p. 1) of urban contexts both historical and contemporary due to analytical work overly focused on time and history as opposed to space. By "spatializing" education research, the hope is to problematize, analyze, and address the contexts in which we work, hidden and otherwise, in new ways.

To return to education and education reform, two seemingly contradictory forces are at work in contemporary efforts at urban school reform that might be simply described as the global and the local. The global question in the discourse of reform is that of the global, or "21st Century", economy; in other words, how will students enter the workforce of the future? Pervasive to the current debate on schools and schooling is a rhetoric that revolves around the new conditions of a globalized economy and, although educational social theorists have commented on this for decades, that schools may be "behind the curve." Simultaneously, an increased rhetoric on teaching "urban kids" and, stated even more specifically, black and Hispanic students turns attention toward localized spaces and the particularities of certain populations. Small schools, community schools, a resurgence in vocational education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and charter schools are all offered as potential answers. Of course, education reform that embodies both an ear to the global workplace and the particular needs of the local community presents challenges that must be addressed by the "yes, and" as opposed to the "either or." In other words, the discussion presented here on critical geography and scale brings to light the failings of education reform analyses that choose the global over the local (or, less common, the local over the global) and resist the given-ness of such categories.

Critical geography—or, the geography of the "yes, and"—insists on the attention to both the global and the local but not only in the sense of assessing the needs of the future citizens and workers of communities, but also in the critical understanding of present conditions that students, teachers, and parents find themselves in. The localized context of job opportunities, obstacles to academic achievement, and even school funding are in no way separate from the responses to global economic forces by multiple levels of government and business interests. Urban settings provide the most condensed site for analyses of these processes and urban education reform exhibits

all of the characteristics of a changing spatial ordering and prioritization, as well as the impact of new demographic and socio-economic shifts. A Critical Geography approach to education research attempts to translate these geographical concepts of space, place, and scale into studies of educational and community reform—a process that certainly has research methodology implications. Interjecting notions of space as dynamic social constructions rather than static containers, this work

> comes from the perspective that in this 'late' neoliberal/post-modernization era of education and land use policy, critical inquiry into both the hegemony of and resistance to the spatial construction of schools is crucially important. Specifically, we highlight work that reveals hidden inequalities of race, class, ability, and gender (among others) as well as inequalities and underlying assumptions buried within often-used concepts such as community, identity, place, and space. Implications and consequences of policy responses that are quickly changing the landscape of educational and economic development across the US and other countries need to be unearthed to heighten awareness of and support action to counteract their potentially corrosive and oppressive effects. (Ares, this volume, Chapter 1)

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