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The Social Justice Contextualization of Society in the Schoolhouse: Reparative Curriculum

By

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Abstract

Curriculum in the United States is a standardization tool of power that requires critical study. As curriculum continues to evolve to reflect the growing needs of students, parents, teachers, and the nation, educational standards continue to become increasingly stratified across subject matter. This study aimed to study five curricular learning units: Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won, Facing History & Ourselves' Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust, the Pulitzer Center's 1619 Project's American Institutions, the College Board's African-American Studies course, and the Florida State Department of Education's African American History. Informed by critical race theory and cultural capital theory, this paper leveraged qualitative methods to identify thematic overlap between the studied curriculum. The findings of this paper posit that 1) the voices of marginalized groups are incorporated to create a discursive space in curricula, 2) historical consciousness is an analytical tool indicative of reparative curricula to reinforce students' learning, and 3) rights are contextualized as both civic and human rights through protection of the legal word and violation committed by institutional entities.

Introduction

Curriculum in the United States is shaping the future of democratic participation, civic engagement, and political organizing. Social science curricula is uniquely oriented to teach students about equality, democracy, and different structures within society (Labaree, 1997). Educational reformers have noted the transformative powers of schooling and thus have diversified curriculum in response (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Stanley, 2005). Reparative curricula is one dimension of social justice integration into the classroom. Curricula in the United States have become a battleground over society's values. Beginning as a site where students learn the practices of democracy and their place in society, schools cultivate the first instances of a social identity for students (Reay, 2010; Gee, 2000). Historically, curricula have acted as a proxy for political, economic, and social issues to be filtered through supposedly "objective" learning standards. Students learn about acceptable expressions of civic participation from institutions intending to maintain existing power relations. Yet, when there are instances of civic, racial, economic, political, and social inequities, it is crucial to provide students with necessary points of reference to become more informed citizens and practice agency.

This paper seeks to address the following aims through thematic analysis 1) how reparative curricula attempt to act as a proxy for social justice discourse in the classroom, 2) how reparative curricula challenges the traditional narrative of history and 3) how rights are secured and utilized within democratic practices. These three aims will provide the necessary investigative framework to answer the research question: in what ways do reparative curricula facilitate historical consciousness through changing narratives, contextualize rights and democratic practice, and define civic injustices in relation to institutions?

This paper hopes to contribute to the growing body of literature about reparative curricula. In particular, reparative curricula explicitly commits itself to restoring humanity and dignity to those who have been ostracized by dominant institutions (Zheng, 2022; Baer, 2018). There is limited research dedicated to reparative curricula in academia. Repartive curricula are a relatively new approach to teaching about institutional transgressions against marginalized peoples. Similar approaches to deconstructing dominant narratives are reminiscent of fugitive pedagogy (Givens, 2021). I conceptualize reparative curricula as a reconstruction of historical understandings of democratic participation and providing marginalized perspectives to ensure that students are able to contextualize how institutions operate in society. Contextualizing how institutions operate in society means articulating how institutions do not operate as neutral entities, but rather are responsive to one's corresponding place within society.

Background

The Socializing Scripts of Schools and Democratic Engagement

Schools, through their pupils, bring socializing projects into the home. When immigrants were unable to assimilate, for example, their children became their proxies for learning English, understanding American ways of being, and embodying the knowledge and scripts extended to them (Brown & Au, 2014; Adams, 1995; Tyack, 1974). Schools become mechanisms of assimilation. The process of assimilating students extends beyond historical fact and behavior, but to the point of exercising democratic values. Students refer to what is learned in schools as they become contributors of society. Thus, what students are socialized to in schools acclimated to certain places in society.

Curriculum is the primary guiding framework facilitating this path to assimilating to the dominant American culture. Valued understandings from curriculum become distributed to

students based on how well they portray the scripts prescribed to them. These understandings begin to shape how students understand the world and the way they govern themselves in their interactions. Learning standards thus create social norms. These social norms create pathways where students are expected to acclimate to authority and accept their corresponding responsibilities that are determined by their identity (Anyon, 1980). Students are instructed on how to resist authority, to organize in ways subservient to government, and are limited to one narrative supporting the nation. It is important to consider that schools are not neutral institutions, but rather agenda-oriented government institutions intending to standardize citizen behaviors. Nevertheless, as social movements become increasingly more accessible via media and integration into classroom activities, there is growing concern about what these curricula are standardizing.

Culture and political wars are embroiled in curricular policy. Curricular policy designates what is worthy or knowing and what is not. When designating what goes into a curriculum, there are serious implications for students. For example, students may recognize a disconnect between what they learn at home to be acceptable communication and at school (Morris, 2007). More crucially, civic participation is primarily taught within the schoolhouse. Students receive vetted examples of what acceptable forms of political discourse are (such as peaceful protests) and instances where institutions can be criticized (such as when the 13 colonies chose to reject the oppressive British crown with unfair taxing). Nevertheless, schools do not provide widespread coverage of the disenfranchisement of African Americans and its enduring impacts with police brutality and race-based discrimination (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022a; Chicago Public Schools, 2017). Students may learn from their experiences or their families about systemic discrimination, yet this may not be instructed within schools. In essence, what is

learned in schools can either supplement or contradict what is being learned at home. What is more problematic is students are not readily instructed how to address these inadequacies in institutions. Rather than feeling informed about interrogating authority, students are instructed that to be silent is to be patriotic (Hackman, 2005). Passive patriotism only maintains existing equities within a biased system. Seminal work on curriculum by Franklin Bobbit posits that the operative function of schooling differs across groups and what their desirable outcomes are (Bobbit, 1918). The justification for this passivity is often embedded in making school operative across different socioeconomic classes and social groups.

A Brief History of Curricula Debate: Progressives versus Essentialists

Culture war controversies are not a singular point in time. One salient example would be the theory of evolution being taught in schools. Concerns about evolution and fundamentalism led to legal battles defining what is appropriate for curriculum through the Scopes Trial. The Scopes Trial demonstrated how more than evolution was at the forefront of educational debate, but using curriculum as a mechanism to consider race and equality (Moran, 2003). Discourse regarding what curriculum should entail continues. As rejections of "woke indoctrination" lead to the banning curricula and the increased number of book bans, the battle of what qualifies as appropriate curricula continues (Office of the Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022). Curriculums like the 1619 Project and the College Board's African American Studies course have been referred to as divisive curriculum, teaching shame, and imposing "revisionist" indoctrination by conservatives, often mimicking the debates between progressives and essentialists (Office of the Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022, p. 1). Despite time passing, the concern about changing existing power structures continue to shape educational discourse. The maintenance of current order

through specific norms, behaviors, and shared knowledge through curriculum highlights the significance of what is being taught in public schools.

Historically, curricula operate at a crossroads between the essentialists and the progressives, where the former emphasize generalizable knowledge whereas the latter posits the importance of individual inquiry (Tyler, 1949). Similar to now when conservatives press for a reverence of institutions in curriculum, the generalizable knowledge maintains how pupils think of society and its corresponding structures through standard curriculum. Essentialists emphasize the importance of historical accomplishments to observe enduring patterns over time and aim to instill the cultural capital necessary to succeed. Essentialists also suggest that there is an inherent objectivity in curriculum grounded in the classics (Hirst & Peters, 1974). The classics are thought to be accessible and teach necessary conceptual understandings. Historical concerns regarding the classics often mean maintaining the status quo and what is colloquially understood to be accessible. The fundamentalists often found opposition to evolution because it meant challenging sacred texts like the Bible; a deeper analysis of this reveals that changing curriculum suggested changing the natural order of things (Moran, 2003). In contrast, progressives focus on changing the natural order of things to provide students crucial insights about how society works. Progressives call for learning to teach students how to impact their surrounding environments, rather than passive participants. In general, progressives argue that the boundaries between the schoolhouse and society should be eradicated to represent a more holistic education and socialization process (Tyler, 1949; Dewey, 1916). Progressives press for life-skills to be instructed within schools for the purpose of advancing student outcomes and addressing society's problems (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Progressives posit the need to have schools represent broader society and socialize students to what comes after their education is completed. These manifest

in different classroom practices, different subject matters studied, and post-educational outcomes such as professional versus vocational training.

External Agendas Impacting Education

Educational oversight continues to be an enduring concern of social groups in the modern day. Through the advent of Common Core, conservative groups clashed with educational policy (Whitman, 2015). The Common Core Standards, to conservatives, was an encroachment of what local school districts can inform students about. Furthermore, the call for Common Core standards suggested to conservatives that their schools were not up to par with other schooling systems. Schools reflect the communities they exist within. Thus, when educational reformers suggested new standards, it reflected an assessment of the communities these schools were housed in. Once again, the educational reform represented a disruption in the current status quo where one group was resistant to change while the other wanted more representative standards to make students more comparable across states. These opposing viewpoints represent an enduring problem within education: what is curriculum and what role should curriculum play in shaping student behaviors in regards to authority and institutions.

There are ideological differences that shape different forms of curricula: whether or not practicality is the focal point, what the learning outcomes are, and how pliable the boundaries between the schoolhouse and society are (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Determining what goes into the curriculum means choosing what scripts students will leverage into the future when engaging in authority and democratic discourse. Prior research posits that schools – and the tools of curriculum – operate to institute social orders and maintain power (Tyack & Hansot, 1981). Political agendas impacting education continue to shape how schools respond to social problems and the demands of different social groups. Historically, religious groups created their own

school networks when curricula did not provide adequate learning for their students (Tyack, 1974). In other words, when schools did not provide pupils with the transmitted values that religious groups wanted their children to acquire, they changed what was in the curriculum to address it. If they did not change the curriculum, they restructured the entire education system to dictate what knowledge was being distilled into their children. Curricula is more than learning objectives, but rather patterns of thinking when moving through different institutions and navigating society.

Literature Review

Schools and Curricula Structuring Nation-Building Narratives and Democratic Participation

While curricula is the framework of educational classrooms, much of the existing literature extensively refers to schools and schooling. Throughout this literature, schools will be treated as the space where curricula operate. The content of schooling is defined through curriculum, such as what facts the students will learn and what narratives will be presented to them. At the forefront of curricula are nation-building narratives to materialize a pupil's patriotic consciousness (Hackman, 2005; Meyer, Ramirez, & Soysal, 1992; Funkenstein, 1989). Through the study of Latin American and European countries' development of public education systems, Paglayan argues that schools sought to preserve social, economic, and political stability (Paglayan, 2022). Schools became sites of mass information distribution in order to stabilize fragile governments. Curriculum became the template for schools to transmit nation-building messages to students. Paglayan claims that schools facilitated a pliant population through the mass standardization of routines, promoted centralization of communities through schools, and shaping the "values and the behavior of future citizens" (Paglayan, 2022, p. 1245). Groups in

power recognize the transformative power of schools, particularly in how ideological frameworks can be produced for students to navigate and mold their own thought processes into.

Public schools incorporated nation-building frameworks into classroom curriculum by serving groups that were not typically in power. Other research suggests a similar centralizing mechanism in the United States where public schools maintain existing power structures (Tyack & Hansot, 1981). The process of maintaining power through schooling is achieved by framing institutions as benefactors. Students are instructed to see institutions as benevolent at all times and minimize representation of institutional faults. Thus, students become socialized to see nations (and their corresponding institutions) as distributors of rights and rarely as oppressors of rights. These nation-building narratives often designate institutions as embodiments of stability and objectivity. Furthermore, these institutions are perceived to extend rights and protective policies to serve the people. Institutions become the centerpiece of democratic participation and distribute positive rights, rather than providing instances of institutional transgressions.

The schoolhouse is a site of citizen construction and the standardization of engagement behaviors between governments and its respective constituents. Prior research illustrates how schools prepare students for democratic participation by teaching civics and instruction about government entities (Stanley, 2005; Labaree, 1997). While teaching civics, rigid binaries are constructed for students to navigate. More often than not, civics is limited to forms of protest, organizing, and voting without depicting how other forms of protest are sometimes necessary when the marginalized go unheard. Prior research argues how these limited vignettes of democratic practice create lacking understandings of democratic participation (Hackman, 2005). Democratic participation is associated with silence in order to maintain existing power structures and limit critical discourse (Hackman, 2005). When pressing the need for social justice oriented

education, Hackman calls for a disruption of silence as patriotic when discussing how little representation and discourse is instructed within curriculum (Hackman, 2005, p. 106). When schools (and curriculum) are enacting citizen construction, they are predisposing students to limited discourse. Rather than consider how the examples of citizenship participation and engagement are malleable to identity, schools present them as race, class, and gender neutral when they are not.

Labaree posits that schools advance society by preparing students for how to be future citizens through “citizenship training”, “equal treatment”, and “equal access” (Labaree, 1997, p. 44). Through literature and curriculum, students learn about different approaches towards democratic participation practices. These practices are typically instructed within the context of the classroom, often through historical events in order to construct a narrative for students to conceptualize democratic participation. Democratic participation manifests in several ways: voting in local, state, and federal elections, (typically peaceful) protesting, participating in boycotts or sit-ins, signing petitions, or lobbying. The aforementioned approaches are unfortunately pacifist in nature to maintain existing power structures. It denies students the opportunity to critically assess unfair environments. To some extent, schools are sites of indoctrination (Paglayan, 2022). The resonating sentiment is that schools construct limiting understandings of citizenship with curriculum as the evaluating framework.

Prior literature emphasizes that education (particularly schools) creates spaces for indoctrination but also re-education (Paglayan, 2022; Stanley, 2005; Freire, 1970). There are ascribed identities to students by schools in perpetuating class stratification (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). When students are given an ascribed identity, they are socialized to think that certain behaviors are deemed acceptable to them while others are not. In terms of how this translates to

democratic participation, those from marginalized perspectives may not feel as supported when organizing for change.

Historical Narratives as Limiting and Oppressive

Schools forge identity by establishing a unilateral narrative (Paglayan, 2022; Tawil & Harley, 2004). Some scholars argue that curricula is the framework distributing these unilateral narratives (Brown & Au, 2014). The unilateral narrative weaves the nation's pupils into the national framework in order to instill scripts of complacency and solidarity through selected narratives (Meyer, Ramirez, & Soysal, 1992). Pupils are provided templates for what democratic participation and civic engagement look like without the potential to negotiate power structures. Left unquestioned, power structures are interwoven into the unilateral narrative. These unilateral narratives rarely posit rights as an action. Instead, rights are framed as an extension of the institution.

By framing rights as an extension of the institution, students become susceptible to the misguided imagery of limited historical narrative. These historical narratives often translate to a national identity forged within the classroom (Tawil & Harley, 2004). The process of constructing a national identity requires a standardized narrative that students can resonate with. Furthermore, a collective memory is forged in order to solidify the dominant narrative and maintain existing structures (Funkenstein, 1989). Through the rigid binary of victors and losers, the us-versus-them dichotomy, and the erasure of the marginalized, a collective identity could be formed. Oftentimes, nations actively construct a common history for both dominant and marginalized groups (Brown & Au, 2014; Freire, 1970). The common history begins to write stories of compliance within democracy so as to preserve the existing power structures within institutions. Furthermore, historical narratives manifest in shaping future social, political, and

economic action (Pagalayan, 2022). It is crucial to understand the implication of these narratives for different groups.

For different groups, these narratives are oppressive in nature and reproduce their oppressed status (Freire, 1970). These narratives archetype the oppressed into pre-set categories with corresponding behaviors that do not facilitate active democratic participation. According to Freire, the oppressed are unaware of their status (Freire, 1970). In their ignorance of their oppressed status, the oppressed are unable to improve their status. Freire also posits that it is not enough for the oppressed to be aware of their status, but also to teach their oppressors of their wrongdoings in order to truly change a society (Freire, 1970). This process of educating both the oppressed and oppressed are reminiscent of social movements like the Civil Rights Movement actively bringing awareness to their systematic oppression caused by institutions and historical disenfranchisement.

The construction of national narrative has serious implications for marginalized groups. Historically, education was an assimilating mechanism for groups designated as perpetual others such as African Americans, indigenous peoples, and immigrants (Mirel, 2010; Wilinsky, 1998; Adams, 1995). Processes of assimilation through schools institute unquestionable power structures. Using a banking model of education where students are mere vessels for knowledge to be dispensed into them, the governing group – the oppressors – maintain their power dynamics by limiting students' critical consciousness and rejecting experimental education (Freire, 1970, pp. 72-74). Students are evaluated more than on the work they produce, but also how well they follow norms. There is a hidden curriculum evaluating how well students assimilate into their ascribed roles (Anyon, 1980). Students who are more receptive to these norms, the more they flourish within the classroom and society (Freire, 1970). Other scholars agree that education –

and by extension, schools – acclimate students to their prospective roles within society (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). The sorting of students into socially constructed roles is a product of the nation-building narrative. There are set characters in the story of how a nation was constructed. Everyone has a role to play and a corresponding behavior when it comes to democratic practice.

One example of prescribed roles would be for marginalized peoples. For example, colonial education actively sought to assimilate marginalized groups into the national framework (Willinsky, 1998). Assimilation meant marginalizing their presence into the dominant framework. Marginalized peoples were seen as the subaltern and subservient to the benevolent colonizers in the dominant narrative. The writing of dominant narratives with oppressed groups often paint institutions as benevolent and giving to bestow rights. The "oppressed" are misled about their status by the oppressors; "the oppressed are not marginal[s]", but rather existing entities within the structure of society (Freire, 1970, p. 74). The marginalized exercise their agency in predetermined templates set by the institution. The oppressed are led to believe that they are integrated within society; that they are able to construct their own relative dynamics with authorities of power as autonomous beings (Freire, 1970, p. 74). Formative dialogue about power structures are shaped by the examples extended to the oppressed. Nevertheless, the education system that they navigate through implicitly instructs them of their subjective status by not providing the oppressed with alternative perspectives of the historical nation-making narrative given to them.

Power Structures Maintained through Curriculum

The productive power of schools relies on what is being instructed within schools. Schools provide students "legitimation of ideologies of freedom, individualism, and meritocratic equality" (Apple, Au & Gandin, 2009, p. 8). The process of legitimation involves contextualizing

these concepts through a specific narrative: the dominant narrative. The dominant narrative (also known as the master narrative according to Brown and Au) designates what perspectives are of value and what values are not (Brown & Au, 2014). Perspectives that are valued tend to reflect the government's desired principles within its peoples. Narratives that could complicate a national consciousness (such as stories of resistance, rebellion, and rejections of authority) or weaken its integration (such as the detailed accounts of marginalized peoples) illustrate flaws within the governmental framework. Therefore, it is imperative that schools provide carefully curated examples for students to internalize as appropriate behaviors. These behaviors eventually transcribe to desirable democratic participations that allow power structures to exist within schools.

Power structures are maintained through compartmentalized knowledge. Compartmentalized knowledge – including master narratives – are more easily distributed over the general populace. The social science curriculum is the embodiment of this compartmentalized knowledge through historical facts, prescribed narrative, learning objectives, standards, and analytical tasks. The aforementioned are key components of academic rationalism. The dominant approach to curriculum in the United States is academic rationalism. Academic rationalism is the normative teachings of western culture (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Eisner & Vallance, 1974). Scholars advocating for academic rationalism state that there is inherent objectivity in curricula that allows students to integrate seamlessly from institution to institution because of the colloquially accepted understandings of events, patterns, concepts, and theories (Hirst & Peters, 1974). The objectivity of the curriculum is considered absolute and indisputable. The distributor of curriculum relies on schools.

Opponents to curriculum posits that compartmentalizing curriculum does not allow for its transferable skills to be actualized across disciplines (Beauchamp, 1975). Rather than academic rationalism reflecting objectivity, instead the traditional form of curriculum creates a "tolerance-based" perspective where students merely accept what is presented to them (Hackman, 2005). The traditional form of curriculum – academic rationalism – is resistant to critical analysis of existing knowledge. This passive approach does not provide students the ability to think critically about the material instead of them, but rather creates prescriptive outputs for students to replicate.

Curriculum is the substance of public education (Ladson-Billings, 2016; Dreeben, 1968). Curriculum is leveraged as an instrument of power used by the dominant group. The compartmentalized knowledge embedded within curricula are specifically selected entities meant to construct a shared consciousness (Funkenstein, 1989). This shared consciousness manifests itself in a generally complacent populace with some exceptions. The exceptions are perceived as outliers not representative of the dominant framework and thus become a marginalized group within society (Freire, 1970). When groups are designated as others, curricula instruct pupils to reject the significance of their actions. Furthermore, their methodologies – particularly their patterns of resistance – are deemed incompatible with meaningful democratic practices.

Schools as sites of legitimization pervade scholarly literature (Dill & Hunter, 2010; Apple, Au & Gandin, 2009; Giroux, 1979; Bowles & Gintis, 1976). As schools construct narratives, they actively predict foresight of the future behavior of citizens by providing frames of reference to students. The process of setting classroom norms, deriving knowledge from prescribed learning objectives, and evaluating students on how well they receive these norms has prompted some scholars to question the degree of critical consciousness that is being cultivated

within students (Kandemir, 2021; Freire, 1970). Shaping a shared consciousness represents the need to maintain power structures. The unique positionality of schools provides students structured spaces to learn and engage in discourse. Education reform through the curriculum emerged in response.

Alternative Pedagogical Practice

Pedagogies intending to challenge the traditional form of curriculum – academic rationalism – often focused on multiculturalism and the inclusion of marginalized peoples to think critically about the role of history, curriculum, a dominant narrative, and institutions (Hackman, 2005; Pinar et. al. 1995). Multiculturalism can represent a more nuanced understanding of historical events and colloquially understood events, such as democracy, freedom, liberty, equality, and democratic practice. Givens provides examples of how African American teachers often used fugitive pedagogical tools, like African American produced textbooks, to diversify curriculum that did not reflect students (Givens, 2021) The process of fugitive pedagogy often meant integrating counternarratives into the existing curriculum to provide students a more holistic account of systems of oppression and muted accounts of resistance-based advocacy. The integration of marginalized accounts actively means broadening the perspective of the dominant narrative. Rejecting the dominant narrative involves providing a platform for marginalized groups in order to foster critical analysis of authoritative power and institutional inaction.

The existing pedagogical approach in social science curricula is limiting. Academic rationalism does not facilitate the necessary discourse to critique institutions and policy decisions. Instead, it creates a complacency mindset amongst students (Hackman, 2005). This traditional approach exists within the broader framework of public education. In particular,

public school education often works through a limited discourse framework. The banking model of education is limited in scope and little dialogue is facilitated (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Freire, 1970). As a result, alternative pedagogical practices have sought to complicate the inherently neutral traditional curriculum: academic rationalism. The fault of academic rationalism is that it does not provide alternative perspectives to colloquially understood events. Alternative pedagogical practices call for a more nuanced understanding of history, a broader depiction of society, and democratic engagement. These alternative pedagogical practices borrow from the concept of social reconstruction theory.

Social reconstructionist theory – the leading alternative pedagogical practice – is the understanding that schools have the necessary tools to address societal problems (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Eisner & Vallance, 1974; Apple, Au, & Gandin, 2009; Kandemir, 2021; Dill & Hunter, 2010). An implicit understanding embedded in social reconstruction theory is that the current curriculum approach – banking through academic rationalism – is limited and does not prepare students for critical discourse. Educational scholars have recognized education's legitimization effects and thus called for social reconstructionist theory. The distinction between social reconstruction theory and academic rationalism is that social reconstruction facilitates discourse regarding institutions, norms, and inequities amongst social, political, and economic factors whereas academic rationalism intends to share cultural heritage (Tyler, 1949). Social reconstructionist's theory to focus on the evolutive nature of society and to provide necessary remedies through education illustrates an ideological shift in the purpose of schools from nation-building to assessing equity.

In light of social movements being integrated more into the classroom as pedagogical tools of reference, social reconstructionist theory's values have lent itself to reparative curricula.

Reparative curricula is a restorative practice now taking place in educational spaces (Tarc, 2011). To some extent, reparative curricula has acted as a "pedagogical mourning space" to reconcile the mistreatment perpetuated by institutions against marginalized peoples (Tarc, 2011, p. 360). Past institutional transgressions are brought to light and contextualized through the voices of the marginalized to provide a critical view of how power manifests from institutions. These institutional transgressions can be interrogated through social justice discourse. Social justice discourse within curricula requires attention to how systems may oppress groups and facilitate conversations within the classroom (Storms, 2012). Brown and Au's discourse on alternative narratives and the rejection of master narratives describes how the departure from dominant narratives provides students necessary insight previously inaccessible to them (Brown & Au, 2014). In that vein, reparative curricula actively deconstructs the dominant narrative articulating consensus over erasure. Attempts to deconstruct national narratives are a form of resistance that is actively present in reparative curricula. There is a reframing of what counts as democratic participation and interrogating institutional power (Chicago Public Schools, 2017; The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022a). Instances of civil disobedience, manifested in slave rebellions, community-oriented justice initiatives, and institutional inactions, are analyzed through reparative curricula.

There are gaps in the literature regarding reparative curricula. This research hopes to contribute to a growing body of literature of curriculum interrogating government and institutional transgressions against marginalized groups. Prior research on reparative curricula deconstructs normative understandings of history through the lens of the oppressed group (Tarc, 2011; Baer, 2018; Popa, 2022). Yet, there is an increasing countermovement rejecting more inclusive reparative curricula, such as the College Board's AP African American Studies and the

Pulitzer Center's 1619 Project in conservative states, like Florida (Office of the Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022). Considering the growing integration of social movements as pedagogical tools into the classroom, it is crucial to understand how these alternative narratives can impact democratic practice and be integrated into restorative education policies.

Theoretical Framework

Social Reconstruction Theory

The predominant framework is social reconstruction theory, or the notion that schools have the ability to address social issues given their wide audience and fostered learning environments (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Kandemir, 2021; Dill & Hunter, 2010; Apple, Au, & Gandin, 2009; Eisner & Vallance, 1974). In recognizing the transformative power of schooling rather than focusing on the transmission dimension, schools become powerful sites of social change. Prior research acknowledges that schools have transformative qualities, particularly when defining evolutive concepts like democracy (Stanley, 2005). This paper proceeds with the understanding that schools can mitigate some social issues by providing students the necessary points of reference to think critically about institutions and responsive practices.

The two supplemental theories this paper leverages are Bourdieu's cultural capital theory and Ladson-Billings's critical race theory. The two are complementary where Bourdieu posits the reproductive mechanisms that schools and institutions leverage cultural capital whilst critical race theory discusses how inequities manifest because of inherently biased structures in American society. This paper posits that curriculum is both the embodied and objectified instances of cultural capital; the designation of important knowledge – such as theories, historical events, patterns of thinking – are designated by one group in order to distribute information deemed culturally significant (Bourdieu, 1986; Tyler, 1949). Given schools' ability to address

social issues, it is also crucial to understand how issues of inequity may emerge because of capital. The topical selection of culturally significant events unfortunately produces discrepancies in the representation of marginalized groups. At the expense of appearing objective, structural barriers to equity for non-dominant groups are not analyzed in traditional curricula academic rationalism. Instead, institutions are thought to be equal and responsive to the needs of its constituents without critical inputs by students. The implicit assumption is that these institutions are instituting worthy values that reflect specific social groups and their corresponding capital.

Cultural Capital Theory

Schools are arbiters of cultural capital with curriculum acting as forms of cultural embodiment for students to acquire as they move between institution to institution (Bourdieu, 1986; Tyler, 1949). Cultural capital is the by-product of someone's class status and their position within society. As students become socialized to different forms of capital, they are predisposed to respond differently depending on their immediate school environment. For example, middle-class students were encouraged to be more independent, assertive, whereas being agreeable and conceding to authority were characteristic of working class students (Calarco, 2018; Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Students were effectively tracked into different groups in order to maintain existing discrepancies within society. In turn, those who were more privileged were encouraged to take more action compared to those who were less privileged (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). As a result, their corresponding behaviors and attempts to impact society would have different points of reference to consider. Beyond cultural milestones are certain ways of being that are exchanged through the hidden curriculum (Anyon, 1980). Behavioral norms and desirable traits determine future complacency to exercises of authority (Bowles & Gintis,

1976).When it comes to democratic participation, schools continue to distribute one narrative of how responses to authority work without providing necessary context of institutional biases. The drawback of this unilateral narrative would be that less privileged groups do not have a more robust understanding of alternative organizing efforts, such as the need to protest, boycott, or sit-ins for disruption in democratic participation.

The embodiment of cultural milestones are distributed through curriculum for the purpose of pupils navigating through future pathways. Furthermore, the most significant form of knowledge is delivered through the social sciences focusing primarily on western civilization, the triumphs of citizenship, and a shared national narrative (Freire, 1970). Students are primed towards complacency to maintain existing structures. These structures continue to permit limitations where marginalized peoples are not provided the necessary support and the future of these marginalized groups do not have a holistic understanding of how these institutions perpetuate inequalities.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory posits that American society has normalized racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical race theory is especially salient within education policy discourse. Regarding the two of the curricula studied in this paper, Reparations Won, 1619 Project, they explicitly acknowledge racism shaping American institutions and social, political, and economic inequities. To contrast, the Florida African American Studies course meant to reject the "woke indoctrination" embedded in critical race theory that institutions are inherently racist (Office of the Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022, p. 1). Ongoing debate regarding critical race theory highlights the need to bring awareness in order to stop reproducing these inequalities. Ladson-Billing posits that curriculum operates as one mechanism impacting how race is shaped in schools

(Ladson-Billings, 2018). As schools teach students about hallmarks of the western canon, they are subtly informing students that other cultures do not have the same level of merit and do not warrant coverage in traditional social science curricula. These traditional curricula are limited in scope, just as the institutions that design and distribute them to maintain inequitable power structures. Prior research by Gloria Ladson-Billings, the leading critical race theorist, posits that there is a constructed association of African American students and deficiency within classroom instruction (Ladson-Billings, 1998). These negative associations of racial identity in regards to broader institutions) exposes students to broader patterns in society. It is of crucial note that schools are the most public-facing government entities (Tyack & Hansot, 1981). Schools represent one instance of how institutions view students when they classify them. Students begin to learn about inequities without necessary tools to address them in the current traditional curriculum. Marginalization is further exacerbated for double-minorities, as articulated through Kimberlé Crenshaw's articulation of intersectionality positing that both race and gender can have implications for how one is treated within society (Crenshaw, 1991). The reason for this is due to the post-racial American society that grounds itself as progressive without considering the existing inequities.

Existing inequities go unaddressed if schools do not provide students holistic accounts of previous transgressions. For instance, Ladson-Billings posits that schools – and specifically curriculum – construct understandings of race despite seemingly race-neutral policies (Ladson-Billings, 2018). Color-blind approaches to educational policy do not address race-based inequities rooted in education. For example, academic tracking continues to disproportionately impact black and brown students where these students are exposed to lower quality of curriculum, less experienced teachers, and less rigorous coursework (Gamoran, 2009).

Ladson-Billings goes further to assert that schools are sites of social funding where schooling is a public good that tries to construct color-blind understandings in a country that persists to reproduce racial inequities; social stratification persists through curriculum instruction (Ladson-Billings, 2018). When students are already typecasted, there are preset behaviors to how they engage with authority. Historically, schools addressed social issues through curriculum as authoritative entities (Dill & Hunter, 2010; Tyack & Hansot, 1981). Clauses of morality became embedded in schools to maintain existing power and political structures. Inherently political issues began to dominate curriculum given school's ability to legitimize normative understandings (Labaree, 1997; Dill & Hunter, 2010). Attempts to address this in a way that critiques institutions has been done through reparative curricula in order to address racism (Sriprakash et al., 2020). Reparative curricula borrows theoretical framing from critical race theory. As critical race theory acknowledges schools' propensity to impact and reproduce conceptions of institutional neutrality, critical race theory calls for a more critical perspective on institutional action in response to different groups. Reparative curricula is one instance in how critical race theory is leveraged as a guiding framework to critique institutional behaviors in a structured academic setting.

Data & Methods

Selection of Data Sources

Four out of the five curricula selected for this study were chosen because they recognize the roles institutions have in perpetuating systems and acts of oppression against marginalized groups. The Facing History & Ourselves curriculum teaches students about Jewish resistance during the Holocaust as a form of culturally responsive pedagogy in order to leverage key points of identity in a culturally sustaining manner (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018; Paris & Alim,

2014). In particular, the Facing History & Ourselves articulates the systemic denial of rights of Jewish nationals within the Nazi regime. The Chicago Public Schools's Reparations Won curriculum was selected because it was part of the Reparations Ordinance passed by the city of Chicago (Baer, 2018). Additionally, the Reparations Won curriculum actively interrogates institutional inaction and the importance of community-based organization spearheaded by marginalized peoples. The curriculum also includes primary documents from police torture victims and a social justice activist group that helped secure the ordinance (Chicago Public Schools, 2017). Another organization-based curriculum informed by social justice initiatives, The 1619 Project's American Institutions unit was selected for study for two reasons: 1) it was created in tandem with Chicago Public Schools teachers and 2) is aimed at similar grade levels (eighth and tenth grade). The 1619 Project also is considered at the forefront of deconstructing narratives of oppression and power committed by institutions. The 1619 Project's deconstruction of neutral normativity within curricula supplements student knowledge to make students more informed about inequities within society. The 1619 Project also directly uses critical race theory. Yet, concerns over teaching racism have led to the 1619 Project and the Advanced Placement African American studies courses to be banned in Florida (Luse, 2023). These bannings represent the essentialist and conservative perspectives to maintain the status quo and to deny students critical frames of reference when it comes to institutions and their prescribed behaviors for engaging with democracy.

As a counterfactual to reparative curricula, Florida's African American History curricula was selected. Florida has previously positioned itself as rejecting "woke doctrination" and expanded offerings to the curriculum in order to address the need for a more representative curriculum (Office of Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022, p. 1). The curriculum thus acts as a

counterfactual in which reparative curriculum themes do not exist: assessing institutional impact through racism. This rejection of “woke indoctrination” in Florida manifested in the banning of critical race theory and the Advanced Placement African American studies course (Office of Governor Ron DeSantis, 2022, p. 1). The Advanced Placement African American Studies course actively engages in identity work by providing a rich and comprehensive perspective of the past, present, and future of black experience. Reminiscent of Gee and Reay’s articulation of schools complicating learner and social identities, the Advanced Placement African American Studies course hopes to provide students a richer account and history of black identity shaping patterns of resilience and identity (College Board, 2023; Reay, 2010; Gee, 2000). The reason for selecting the Advanced Placement African American Studies curriculum in particular was meant to put the curriculum in dialogue with other curricula focused on marginalized communities. Moreover, the Advanced Placement African American studies course extends over the course of a year as opposed to the learning units in Reparations Won, the 1619 Project, and the Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust Movement. In essence, the Advanced Placement African Studies Course provided a more robust curriculum to analyze in the context of academic learning standards and analytical tasks for students to engage with.

Justification of Qualitative Methodology using Thematic Analysis

Since all five curricula were rooted in the social sciences, I selected qualitative methods in order to analyze the content thematically. Qualitative methods were the optimal approach to understanding the themes expressed within the learning objectives. While quantitative methods can inform the breadth and depth of data for a majority of research projects, this project did not fall into that category. There are numerous nuances existing within the language choices of the curricula – such as providing a positive and a negative adjective in a guiding question – to

interrogate policy and legislation by institutions as opposed to more neutral language. At best, there were overlapping understandings (such as the explicit goal of certain events being instructed about and perspectives to be taught) but it would not be meaningful to distill them down into numbers. Thus, this paper is informed through a qualitative method.

In this paper, I used qualitative coding in order to analyze the five curricula. Informed by Johnny Saldaña's coding process, descriptive and value coding were primarily utilized in this study when assessing learning objectives and curricula content. Descriptive coding refers to the process of describing a particular topic or opinion, whereas values coding nods to broader themes that are meant to instruct a particular attitude or perception of something (Saldaña, 2021). Descriptive coding helped me to understand what context was being articulated to the students. To contrast, values coding referred to the thematic understandings. Over the course of first round analysis, I did my best to summarize the content by using both lumped and line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2014). I took a hybrid approach because it allowed me to ground myself closer to the data. In particular, lumped coding allowed for me to recognize broader themes within course content. In contrast, line-by-line coding allowed me to analyze content more closely. I was able to dissect more complex ideas condensed into learning objectives through line-by-line coding.

I created a codebook to store all of the data across the four different curricula and learning standards. The codebook includes the initial codes, code frequency, attached memos, categories, description of categories, and themes for each curriculum. I also created overall themes for what I found especially salient across the different curricula. The process of moving from the incremental units of study (curricula) to recognizing patterns across curricula proved complicated due to their varying subject matter. Subject matter often differed in how much coverage was for specific historical time periods. As a result, I coded through two instances: first

round coding and second round coding. The first round of coding was for analytical purposes whereas the second round of coding was for synthesis (Saldaña, 2021). I began with first grounding myself in the data by annotating the curricular units. I often utilized in vivo coding for the purpose of capturing the data as it was originally stated. In vivo coding facilitated for more direct understanding of the data. Saldaña posits that coding is a process of linkage (Saldaña, 2009, p. 8). When grouping different codes together, I considered how they would fit together if they shared a common phrase, concept, or idea.

Beginning with the real data (such as initial and exemplar codes), I moved to the abstract to create categories as informed by Saldaña's elemental theory process (Saldaña, 2021, pp. 348-350). I reviewed the individual codes and considered what similarities exist across them. I first focused on identifying similarities within the initial codes before grouping them into sub-categories. Once sub-categories were established, I considered how the codes related to one another before condensing the sub-categories into larger categories. As a result, the categories became significantly broader in order to account for the versatility of the subject matter. When writing the descriptions of categories and including exemplar codes, I considered what taxonomies existed within the coding. Saldaña posits taxonomy as a way to group and identify within code (Saldaña, 2021). Some codes held greater weight than others due to their frequency, the complexity of their subject matter, or their degree of compliance to learning objectives. This process of seeing the relative importance of different codes (such as more broad coded encapsulating concepts compared to analytical tasks providing concrete directions) made the synthesis process easier.

Moving from categories and themes posed greater difficulty. Linking the content together allowed me to recognize patterns within the codes and consistencies enduring across the difficult

curricula (Saldaña, 2009). When moving from the themes to a broader theory, I tried to understand what potential abstractions could be made from the context of these events being taught within schools. In particular, reflecting on existing theories – such as a critical race theory, cultural capital theory, and social reconstruction theory in the field of education – allowed me to consider broader principles emerging from the data (Saldaña, 2009). According to qualitative methods, grounded theory allows for a continuous feedback mechanism when engaging with data as one progresses through codes, to categories, and eventually to abstract theories (Charmaz, 2014). As I reached a saturation point with each curriculum, I recognized one overarching theme: social science curricula are shaped by narratives. Grounded theory helped me focus explicitly on what trends emerged in the data until I reached a saturation point. I focused primarily on how historical events were contextualized. Historical events – particularly ones that are colloquially understood – were evaluated by paying close attention to the language and connotations associated with the learning materials provided. Furthermore, I also focused on to what extent historically marginalized or disadvantaged groups were positioned in relation to the normative understanding of the historical event. These materials were put in context with critical race theory as a guiding theoretical framework to understand how these diverse perspectives provide pivotal insights into how institutions demonstrate biases.

Positionality

My positionality as an African American woman who has navigated educational spaces did impact my understanding of some curricula. In particular, the Florida African American studies course required me to consider at length what the neutral language was stating and what the broader implications were. This process resulted in me writing analytical memos to check for potential biases that could emerge during the process of my coding. For curricula that did not

personally align with my own perspectives, the analytical memos were exceptionally helpful to ensure that I was interpreting the content in an theoretically-informed manner.

Findings

The Reparations Won Curriculum had a total of 215 initial codes, 13 categories, 4 themes. The themes for Reparations Won place explicit emphasis on the role of racism shaping institutional reaction to bureaucratic transgressions, such as seen through the primary documents from reporters and torture justice survivors. Analyzing this data aligned extensively with Ladson-Billings critical race theory of how racism is normalized within American society (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The language of this curriculum pivoted between first-person narratives of the survivors to including third-person omniscient voice when reviewing mission statements and official readings from legislative documents. The power of shifting perspectives provides students the opportunity to empathize and engage in practices of historical consciousness. The contrast between the two were accounted for at both the categorical and thematic level of understanding how significant the role of vocabulary plays in shaping academic discourse. Grounded theory and saturation were pivotal to data analysis within this curriculum.

Theoretical framing through critical race theory and cultural capital was most salient for the 1619 Project's American Institutions learning unit (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Bourdieu, 1986). The 1619 Project's American Institutions featured 137 codes, 12 categories, and four themes. The learning unit was robust in its language, learning objectives, and guiding questions requiring greater segmentation compared to other units. In particular, scaffolding academic discourse through analytical tasks resulted in the initial codes defined as: assigning analytical tasks, identifying causes and effects, and focus on primary documents (See appendix for codebook I). The theoretical framework emphasized the evolutive nature of democracy as both expansive and

limiting depending on one's identity. Initial codes included "changing definition of citizenship", "designating American identity as dynamic", and "focusing from people-focused-group to class-state-based identities" (See appendix I). The higher level of cognitive skills demanded of students resulted in more abstract and less in vivo codes.

Facing History & Ourselves's Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust unit had a total of 30 initial codes and 3 emergent categories, and one theme. The overarching theme was how resistance was malleable in both spiritual and physical instances. The two most salient categories were resistance as a market of advocacy and how Jewish perseverance facilitated resistance. These categories derived naturally from the data. Initial codes include "recognizing resistance literature", "recognizing spiritual resistance", and "interrogate the narrative of Jewish complacency to illustrate action against oppression" (See appendix IV). Compared to the other curriculum studied, this one most explicitly complicated normative understandings of an oppressed people rather than a specific institution.

This study studied the first two units of The Advanced Placement African American Studies course units: "Origins of the African Diaspora" and "Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance" (College Board, 2023). There were 57 initial codes, 8 categories, and 4 emergent themes. Compared to other studied curricula, the initial codes included more abstract concepts like resilience and identity that greatly defined the categories and themes. The Advanced Placement African American studies course actively emphasizes ideological differences to translate into historical analysis. While resistance was a core theme, the initial codes ground the data of contextualizing events.

The Florida African American history curriculum had 144 initial codes, 9 categories, and 2 emergent themes: recognizing social, economic, and political factors impact historical and

modern African American lives and discourse regarding objective reporting of slavery in different dimensions. The Florida curriculum frames the social, economic, and political factors as extensions of global society to provide supposedly objective reporting of slavery. More salient categories were conducted through descriptive coding and in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2021). The Florida African American history curriculum's language tended to be the most neutral in tone, resulting in a greater number of analytical memos during the coding process.

Discussion & Analysis

Curricula are not a neutral entity that passively imparts knowledge onto students. Instead, curricula are a reflection of codified units of knowledge deemed worthy of understanding. Four of the five curricula challenged colloquial understandings of specific historical events. The Pulitzer Center's 1619 Project, Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won Curriculum, Facing History & Ourselves' Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust, and the College Board's African American Studies course actively sought to reject traditionally taught understandings of history. The Pulitzer Center's 1619 Project rejects the neutrality of institutions. The Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won Curriculum acknowledges police torture committed by the Chicago Police Department when the government previously silenced survivors and ignored community efforts. Facing History & Ourselves rejects the association of passivity with Holocaust survivors. AP African American Studies reframes slave rebellions as acts of resilience.

Curricula Changing the Dominant Narrative

The practice of changing colloquial understandings is rooted in rejecting the dominant narrative. The 1619 Project explicitly labels "Is America Really the Land of the Free?" as an "enduring understanding" in its American Institutions unit (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022a, p. 1). The rhetorical question of "Is America Really the Land of the Free"

counters the connotations of America as an unbiased country with ample opportunity for those who welcome it. Instead, the question postulates that America is not a land of equal opportunity. As a result, students can now think critically about institutions and what are alternative pathways they may have to consider when interacting with authority. This thematic goal acts a precursor to several lesson foci addressing the incremental accessibility of democracy for women, indigenous peoples, African Americans, and people of color (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022a). Institutions are no longer seen as positive rights distributors, but instead require active engagement on behalf of students. This translates to a new conceptualization of how rights are distributed to individuals. While legally these rights are protections, institutions do not always provide the necessary scaffolding. Protections do not always lead to effective implementation and accessibility. In turn, students are provided the analytical toolkits to recognize these patterns in institutional behavior to actually make change. Making change operates incrementally. First, to recognize the patterns through the presentation of marginalized perspectives in a way that the oppressed are informing others of their oppressed status (Freire, 1970). The learning standard, "SS.H.7.9-12: Identify the role of individuals, groups, and institutions in people's struggle for safety, freedom, equality, and justice" facilitates an integrative task between perspectives of the marginalized and the dominant narrative (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022, p. 11). Students are instructed to consider what incongruencies exist between the experiences of marginalized groups and non-marginalized peoples. Within these incongruencies, the curriculum hopes to inform students of how democracy takes on different forms dependent on one's identity.

An individual's positionality impacts their understanding of a historical event and the actions that occurred during that event. The 1619 Project includes a "Hook" as a framer for the lesson where one question is "How did personal experiences influence people's understanding of

the Revolution?" in regards to the American Revolution (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022a, pp. 6-7). Personal experiences refers to interactions in social, political, and economic dimensions. These personal experiences are closely tied to one's contextual identity – whether it is to be a woman, indigenous person, enslaved person, African Americans – and how they were able to operate in a settler and colonized society. The nuances reflect how institutions do not provide rights in a protective manner, but often are secured by the active engagement of citizens. When citizens reflect on their personal experiences, they may consider their own relationships with institutions. These personal experiences intend to address how different perspectives shaped one's understanding of democracy and the values imbued. The course materials – 1619 Project refers to them as "Perspectives of Democracy" – include primary and secondary accounts from Native Americans, Women, and African Americans from 1773 to 1780 discussing the American Revolution in the fight for independence. A more nuanced depiction of the Revolution is painted where not everyone supported independent American colonies. For example, the 1619 Project's Perspectives of Democracy set includes Native American chief Thayendanegea's letter to the British officials asserts solidarity with the British crown given American settlers' tendency to encroach on Indigenous land (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022b, pp. 1-2 ; Brant, 1776). Similar primary accounts illustrate how some enslaved persons saw the British crown as an opportunity to freedom whereas other enslaved persons supported the American colonists assuming they would be afforded freedoms (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022b, pp. 12-14; Nash, 2008). A letter by Abigail Adams is cited to illustrate how American male colonists wanted to fight oppression but did not consider how marginalized peoples would not have the same rights as them (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022b, pp. 6-7; Adams, 1776). While the normative curriculum does provide different perspectives, explicitly connecting analytical

tasks to these documents in order to interrogate the concept of democracy as limiting is unique to the 1619 Project.

The Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won curriculum goes beyond being merely a mandated aspect of a reparations bill; Reparations Won actively interrogates how institutions fail marginalized communities. At the center of the curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on how community activism can overcome institutional action as a distributor of justice. There also are likened parallels between critical race theory and how racism pervades institutions (Chicago Public Schools, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2016). The process of socializing students to alternative perspectives of institutions are crucial to providing students instances when to interrogate institutions. Reparations Won takes a similar approach when presenting survivor interviews, survivor family testimonies, and "found poetry" for students to contextualize (Chicago Public Schools, 2017, pp. 30-31). The found poetry consists of testimonies from survivors and families, including descriptions of bodily torture and snippets from conversations shared amongst torture survivors (Chicago Public Schools, 2017, p. 38). One stanza of the found poetry states "Still a thorn in Chicago's side / As long as they're silent / We're fighting a giant" , illuminating how the city's neutral behavior towards torture represents the institutional racism impacting relations with African Americans (Chicago Public Schools, 2017, p. 38). These institutions are traditionally painted as being neutral and color-blind, but these policies manifest in subtle ways. Institutions continue to distribute a narrative of neutrality when this neutrality is facilitating greater inequities across racial groups. The erasure of torture survivor narratives are addressed in how the media and government institutions co-opted this torture. John Conroy's anecdote is included in the curriculum stating "He's a product of the Chicago police system at the time… If the state's attorney were prosecuting people for engaging in misconduct of this kind…" (Chicago Public

Schools, 2017, p. 66). There is an inherent understanding of biased portrayals. This example illustrates how institutional neutrality facilitated inequities. When discussing rights, the Reparations Won curriculum illustrates a need for proactive acquisition of rights by describing severe violations caused by institutions.

Exercising Resistance to Secure Rights

Resistance operates in multiple dimensions within the Facing History & Ourselves and the Advanced Placement African American Studies curriculums. The non-physical dimensions of resistance manifest within existential and physical resistance. This paper conceptualizes existential resistance as the practice of resisting external stimuli by grounding oneself deeper into their ascribed identity. Spiritual resistance – particularly informed by the Facing History & Ourselves's Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust learning unit – demonstrates how practicing one's religion is an instance of religion when religious-based discrimination and genocide targeted Jewish people (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018). Religious-based identity allowed for Jewish people to preserve their resilience by leveraging their social identity and rejecting an institutionally imposed identity (Reay, 2010). Identity work is a form of resistance rejecting institutionally imposed identities. Gee describes how the process of othering impacts one's perception of oneself and their behaviors (Gee, 2000). The College Board finds a similar phenomena within the Advanced Placement African American Studies course for enslaved persons; the practice of blending African-based religions with Christianity allowed for resistance work to manifest and provide necessary support when navigating systems of oppression (College Board, 2023). This section discusses how resistance becomes a focal point to access basic human and civil rights and how one responds to the violation of those rights.

By analyzing a severe violation of human and civil rights, Facing History & Ourselves's Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust curriculum illustrates how multiplicative forms of resistance are utilized in response to oppression. Facing History & Ourselves focuses on rejecting associations of passivity with Holocaust survivors. While the Holocaust is instructed in schools, narratives of resistance are not as widely distributed. The Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust learning unit analyzes Abba Kovner's manifesto proclaiming "Let us not go as sheep to the slaughter" as a key focal point in how Jewish Resistance was presented (Facing History & Ourselves, 2020, p. 1; Kovner, 1947). Resistance operated to reject passivity of one's determined fate. Instead, Jewish resistance fighters actively engaged in what this paper conceptualizes as existential resistance. The practices of resistance through education, the teachings of Torah, continuing to engage in self-maintenance for Jewish people during the Holocaust are instances of existential resistance. Beyond the Facing History & Ourselves unit, other accounts of survival during the Holocaust such as Primo Levi's Survival in Auschwitz discusses how self-preservation maintained their humanity in the midst of active dehumanization efforts by German Nazis (Levi, 1995). Resistance is instructed within the context of a violation of rights, rather than the protection of rights led by institutions that is often scaffolded in American social science courses.

Resistance is not one-dimensional. Jewish Resistance in the curriculum operates in "physical" and "spiritual resistance." (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018, p. 4). Spiritual resistance was maintained by education, rebel magazines produced by Holocaust survivors, and keeping one "out of the ghetto spiritually" (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018, p. 2). Despite their faiths being condemned, Jewish resistance efforts continued to instruct children and facilitated an environment where they would not allow their "hearts to be hardened by hatred and

anger" but rather to set their "highest aim shall be love for our fellow men, and contempt for racial, religious, and nationalist strife." (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018; We are Children Just the Same: Vedem, the Secret Magazine by the Boys of Terezín, 1994). Spiritual resistance often manifested in adhering to one's internal values and morals to fight systems of oppressing. The practice of continuing one's morality in the face of adversity was integral to Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

Resistance is typically associated with physicality. Physical resistance is also presented in Facing History & Ourselves to provide awareness about resistance efforts by Jewish people. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising course material explains how Jewish resistance fighters actively resisted by preparing weapons to defend themselves (Facing History & Ourselves, 2016). The course material details how they retaliated with violence when German troops attempted to complete the slaughter of Jewish people. Physical resistance here is treated as an act of agency and freedom that derives from individuals, not institutions. Resistance becomes a mechanism of which rights are secured. Primary accounts from Jewish resistance fighters detail how their acts of resistance did not anticipate success, but that they intended on living as an act of resistance. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising posits that "resistance was a choice with how to live in the moments before we died." (Facing History & Ourselves, 2016, p. 3). Agency becomes integral to rejecting oppressive institutions. Associations with resistance are expanded. Rather than violent associations, resistance is an enduring effort through smaller, minute actions that resonate with one's identity rather than their immediate actions.

Resistance as a continuing effort through both small and large instances are represented in the Facing History & Ourselves and the College Board's curricula. The Facing History & Ourselves posits it was spiritual resistance through continued faith in daily activities (such as

education, singing, and writing) (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018). The mere act of living constituted an act of resistance. Daily efforts of resistance are also embodied within the Essential Knowledge EK 2.13.B.5 standard stating "religion inspired resistance to slavery in the form of rebellions" (College Board, 2023, p. 103). In this vein, religion facilitates more disruptive engagement with institutions because the circumstances necessitated rebellion. Traditional curricula rarely provides rich detail about how circumstances impacting marginalized peoples may warrant more disruptive forms of democratic participation. The reason for not including accounts of disruptive democratic participation (like rebellions) means providing students examples of institutional wrongdoings. Exposing students to these institutional wrongdoings rejects the notion of institutions as benevolent forms of power. Furthermore, the future citizens – students – may begin to notice patterns in institutional behaviors that warrant further analysis. Nevertheless, it is crucial that curricula like the College Board's African American Studies are made accessible to students for them to recognize patterns of systemic oppression and provide them necessary frames of reference.

The College Board's African American Studies curriculum also provides examples of how spirituality facilitated resistance and enslaved peoples cope with systems of oppression. Spiritual resistance is posited as a response to structural oppression, albeit in different circumstances. The Essential Knowledge Standard 2.13.A.3, describes how churches became key centers for communities where resistance efforts were "galvaniz[ed]" (College Board, 2023, p. 102). Resistance efforts were facilitated by religion because of its ideological effects, rather than physicality. Given the restrictions of their circumstances, religion allowed for internal resistance (such as an ideological rejection of their circumstances) rather than an external resistance.

Domestic resistance is contextualized beyond physical violence. Essential Knowledge standards EK 1.7.A.1-2 use one instructional period to address how the practice of blending religions allowed for enslaved Africans to maintain their heritage (College Board, 2023, p. 38). Emboldening one's religion allowed for spiritual resistance to act as a precursor to physical resistance. The curriculum goes further to explain how early practices of rebellions were preceded by "spiritual ceremonies of these syncretic faiths to strengthen themselves before leading revolts." (College Board, 2023, p. 39). Within Advanced Placement African American Studies, resistance becomes multidimensional where one does not exist without the other. Instead, the religion supplements the necessary morale to engage in more disruptive practice.

Resistance also does not have to manifest within one large instance, but rather can be a daily act. One Essential Knowledge standard (EK 2.13.A.1) posits that "Enslaved people continually resisted their enslavement by slowing work, breaking tools, stealing food, or attempting to run away" (College Board, 2023, p. 102). This likely would allow for students to reflect on how they can resist systems of oppression in their daily life. The curriculum seeks to present how forms of resistance were not always physical violence, but minute actions constituting a growing culture of resistance. The growing undercurrent provided the necessary resilience and community building for enslaved peoples to continue living despite their dehumanized status. Furthermore, their resistance efforts are contextualized in securing future rights and freedom. Rather than institutions extending citizens their owed rights, marginalized peoples are tasked with securing their rights through alternative methods.

Resistance in the AP African American Studies course contextualizes resistance as both international and domestic. The purpose of demonstrating both international and domestic occurrences of resistance addresses a unifying culture of resistance against oppression

reminiscent of those within the African diaspora. The construction of a shared identity allows for greater resonance with resistance efforts. The curriculum also disrupts the traditional narrative by allowing students to reject arbitrary understandings of identity. The source note for the Haitian Constitution addresses how all citizens were designated as "Black" to illustrate the emergence of "Black as an identity that signified citizenship and belonging." (College Board, 2023, p. 100). Unit 2 of the curriculum, "Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance" details resistance over time and geographical location (College Board, 2023). The process of demonstrating different forms of resistance represents different frames of reference students may consider when they are engaging with institutions. Art detailing the Haitian Revolution portrays acts of resistance; these acts of resistance illustrate how freedom fighters were reacting to their immediate circumstances (See appendix VII for image). Systemic oppression required alternative methodologies to secure rights. The image is coupled with the Learning Objective LO.2.12.C "Explain the impacts of the Haitian Revolution on African diasporic communities and Black political thought" (College Board, 2023, p. 99). Asking students to assess the Haitian Revolution in the context of other communities encourages historical consciousness where students construct their understanding across different geographical groups. In turn, this results in students being able to recognize how resistance efforts are transferable across different contexts. Furthermore, Advanced Placement African American history postulates the Haitian Revolution's impact as "a symbol of Black freedom and sovereignty" (College Board, 2023, p. 99). Creating a mosaic of marginalized perspectives allows students to consider institutions in both a global and domestic context and broadens the repertoire of resistance strategies. Accounts of domestic and international resistance are corroborated to present a broader framework of resistance.

Discourses on rebellion as a disruptive or constructive process are outlined differently in the curriculum. The AP African American Studies, the 1619 Project, the Facing History & Ourselves' Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust frame rebellion as a necessity to achieve freedom. The 1619 Project outlines one course objective as "Students will examine how rebellion informs the narrative of democracy." (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022, p. 16). Situating rebellion as a way to inform democracy suggests a constructive process emerges with rebellion. In the context of slave rebellions, slaves often used violence to engage in democratic discourse because other forms of civil disobedience were inaccessible to them given their secondary status within the colonies. When groups are not afforded rights distributed by the institutions, it is necessary for citizens to be proactive in securing those rights. The AP African American Studies curriculum also frames the Haitian Revolution as an instance where rebellion demonstrated existing inequities in American society given that EK. 2.12.C.1., "For some African Americans, Haiti's independence and abolition of slavery highlighted the unfulfilled promises of the American Revolution" with lasting impacts of "Black political thinking." (College Board, 2023, p. 99). Democracy was promised but not afforded to all participants advocating for American independence. The Haitian Revolution also became a reference point for Black autonomous thought. The significance of the Haitian Revolution – a country born out of slave rebellions and strategic military strategy to rid members of the African diaspora of their oppressors – illustrate that alternative measures are sometimes necessary in the face of oppressive governments.

Marginalized perspectives are the guiding framework for all curricula referenced except for Florida's African American History course. Attributes of marginalized perspectives refer to analytical tasks requiring perspective-taking. One desired student skill leveraged in the 1619

Project is "Identify and explain how marginalized groups have engaged in struggle to experience the benefits of American democracy." (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022, p. 2) The aforementioned learning standard addresses how institutions must distribute these benefits to people, rather than groups embodying these rights as existing. Yet, institutions do not always protect the rights it is supposed to grant to its people. Thus, this student skill seeks to provide students the necessary tools to analyze how malleable the concept of democracy is. Democracy, through the lens of the marginalized peoples, is not equal opportunity. Instead, democracy is incrementally accessible given one's identity. The 1619 Project also has a learning objective for "Examine the impact of the American Revolution on marginalized groups" (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022, p. 6). Instilling a more holistic understanding of democracy is done through analytical tasks. The process of considering the American Revolution of marginalized groups demonstrates how institutions are not the sole sources of rights accessibility. Instead, through the lens of multiple groups, it demonstrates how the British crown to the 13 states continued to oppress groups despite calls for freedom and revolution. Rather than finding institutions to solve inequalities, marginalized peoples continue to be oppressed. The curriculum then supplements through rebellions and resistance to illustrate how the proactive attitude and mechanisms used by oppressed peoples enable them to secure their rights.

The Traditional Notion: Neutrality within Curricula in Florida

The one curriculum that did not depict historical events through the eyes of marginalized groups would be the Florida African American History standards. Compared to the marginalized perspectives, the Florida African American History standards frame these historical contexts through a supposedly neutral lens. Setting neutrality operates in two ways. The first way is to deny slavery as a uniquely American institution. African American History Strand

SS.68.AA.1.1. States "Identify Afro-Eurasian trade routes and methods prior to the development of the Atlantic slave trade" with a clarification stating "Instruction includes how slavery was utilized in Asian, European and African cultures." (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 5). The Florida African American History curriculum actively distances American institutions from the enduring presence of slavery and its after effects within the United States. Slavery, in the Florida African American History curriculum, is contextualized as a broader global phenomenon without considering how the justifications and conditions of this slavery differed compared to American chattel slavery. The curriculum also draws comparisons between indentured servitude and slavery in SS.912.AA.1.2. where the history strand posits "Analyze the development of labor systems using indentured servitude contracts with English settlers and Africans in Jamestown, Virginia." (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 8). Continuous comparison between slavery and indentured servitudes intend to focus on the economic dimensions rather than the dehumanizing aspects of both. This process of comparing indentured servitude and slavery frames slavery as an extension of indentured servitude without race-based discrimination. Positing slavery as a byproduct of economics attempts to lessen the responsibility American institutions had in impacting slavery. Neutrality in tone forges a narrative of passivity because of greater forces like economics.

This motif of neutrality in the curriculum continues. The social science standard, SS.68.AA.2.3 asserts "Examine the various duties and trades performed by slaves" with an accompanying clarification stating "Instruction includes how slaves developed skills which, in some instances, could be applied for their personal benefit." (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 6). There is no explicit example in the curriculum to illustrate how slaves could use their developed skills for their personal benefit. The phrasing "personal benefit" suggests an exchange

of services where slaves are the primary receivers of the fruits of their labor (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 6). The clarification suggests that slaves were acting as rational actors in a free-market economy when that was not the case. The curriculum is incorrectly insinuating that slaves were owners of their own labor suggests slavery as a voluntary economic phenomenon. It does not recognize that slavery was an imposed status by institutional racism passed onto members of the African diaspora in the United States, Brazil, and the Americas at large.

Another source of contention across the different curricula would be the Reconstruction Era. The 1619 Project illustrates how restrictionist policies pervaded Reconstruction. One essential question posited by the 1619 Project is "To what extent did Reconstruction extend or undermine democracy in the United States?" (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022, p. 18). The posturing of "extend or undermine" provides the possibility for students to critically analyze the benefits and the repercussions of the Reconstruction era. There is a connotation that Reconstruction could have negatively impacted one's ability to exercise democratic values. Instead of contextualizing the Reconstruction Era as a progressive feat for African Americans following the Civil War, the 1619 Project allows for a discursive space to address misalignment in policy and implementation. Well-intentioned amendments – such as the 13th, 14th, and 15th – did not provide the necessary legal protections that African Americans needed. The 1619 Project beckons students to consider more than the policy aspirations and the fine print.

Institutions within the Florida Department of Education do not acknowledge how institutional passivity led to racial violence and inequities. The Florida Department of Education's African American History strand, SS.912.AA.3.6., states "Describe the emergence, growth, destruction, and rebuilding of black communities during Reconstruction and beyond." when contextualizing tension between racial groups following the Civil War (Florida Department

of Education, 2023, p. 17). The “emergence, growth, destruction, and rebuilding” addresses the cyclical nature of developing African American communities in a country that did not provide sufficient policies to protect them (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 17). Furthermore, the Florida Department of Education’s curriculum produces a tolerance-based understanding of curricula by using seemingly neutral language without prompting analytical inquiry as to why destruction occurred or why rebuilding was necessary. Instead, this color-blind approach does not address how institutional ambivalence towards the question of race allowed for these racist acts to persist.

The curriculum continues to use neutral language to maintain reverence for institutions. Despite the Florida African American History curriculum attempting to address these nuances, the second clarification states “Instruction includes acts of violence perpetrated against and by African Americans.” (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 17). The curriculum explicitly names African Americans as perpetrators of violence but does not acknowledge how white people also participated in these acts of violence. In these nuances of language, the curriculum is displacing responsibility from white Americans and how institutions allowed racial inequality during this time period.

Rather than addressing institutions perpetrating these inequalities, the Floridian curriculum instead places the responsibility on non-institutional entities. Neutral language details how systemic discrimination was through organizations and not institutions, such as stated in SS.912.AA.4.6. “Examine organizational approaches to resisting equality in America” with the clarification “Instruction includes different methods used by coalitions (e.g., white primaries, acts of violence, unjust laws such as poll taxes, literacy tests, sundown laws, anti-miscegenation laws).” (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 136). The curriculum does not acknowledge

these barriers to democratic participation were often instituted through discriminatory policies. Using language focused on “coalitions" and “organizational approaches” do not address how these were policies enacted by government institutions at the local level (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 136). The curriculum is actively seeking to reject institutional responsibility in how these instances of disenfranchisement are clearly a reflection of responsibilities. The clarifications revealing the true intentions of these strands (such as distancing both race and institutions from inaccessibility to democracy and legal protections) is a recurring theme.

The Floridian curriculum goes further to posit American slavery as a continuation of global and historical practices. Positing American slavery as a product of global trade, the Florida African American History curriculum states in SS.68.AA.1.2 to “Describe the contact of European explorers with systematic slave trading in Africa.” (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 70). The “systematic slave trading in Africa” postulates that there was existing slavery in Africa that reflects America’s race-based slavery. This is an incorrect conflation of American chattel slavery with other forms of slavery. This standard explicitly removes the United States and its corresponding institutions as a perpetrator of slavery. It also creates an us-versus-them framework where Americans are not the creators of slavery, but rather received this practice as a way to advance the economy. Several strands within the curriculum discuss how cash crops benefited the curriculum; for example, SS.912.AA.2.4 explains “Explain how the rise of cash crops accelerated the growth of the domestic slave trade in the United States.” (Florida Department of Education, 2023, p. 14). This stand is attempting to separate the race-based chattel slavery that extended beyond economics, but also about subjugating a class of people to become second-class citizens.

Reparative curriculum leverages the perspectives of marginalized peoples to address incongruencies in historical events. Curriculums like AP African American History Studies, Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust, the 1619 Project and Reparations Won depict how institutions and authoritative entities did not provide sufficient protections of their liberties. Marginalized peoples often had to construct their own paths of advocacy and resistance in order to attain greater equity than allotted to them in the past. The reparative curriculum purposely defers to these communities to deconstruct normative understandings of historical events and critically evaluate institutions. Outlier curriculum, like the Florida African American History curriculum, lessens the responsibility of institutions. Lessening responsibility translates to removing race from institutional inequities.

This survey had several limitations. One primary limitation would be that these curricula were not observed within a classroom setting. Prior research posits that teachers largely shape how curriculum is taught (Ladson-Billings, 2018). Furthermore, some teachers may integrate these learning units into existing curricula or may teach it as a free-standing entity. The variation may lead to differing levels of success within the classroom. Another limitation of the study would be that the curricula covered different grades. Different grade levels translate to different degrees of breadth and depth made accessible to students. This resulted in some content, particularly the Advanced Placement's African American Studies course, where it was a year-long college-level course compared to the 1619 Project that has multiple learning units intending to be integrated into existing curriculum. Furthermore, the Florida African American History did not have an up to date learning unit to reference analytical tasks for students. Future research should consider the analytical tasks and implementation of these curriculum within the classroom.

Conclusion

This research conducted a thematic analysis on five social science curricula. Using qualitative methods, I went through two cycles of coding moving from categories to broader themes. The process of code refinement allowed me to recognize patterns emergent from the data. First, reparative curricula leverages the perspective of marginalized people for critical analysis of institutions. Secondly, critical analysis of institutions translated to the discursive practices of historical consciousness to be used in the classroom to recognize enduring patterns across social groups and over time. This reaffirms existing literature about dialogue and communication surrounding incongruencies in treatment for different social groups, allows for a more robust curriculum and creates a space for social justice discourse (Joseph, 2011). Thirdly, the traditional embodiment of curriculum presses for passivity and tolerance based understandings of rights. Rights are therefore multifaceted and require different approaches to acquisition dependent on what group a citizen is a part of. Reparative curricula presses for an active practice of democratic participation through forms of resistance. The traditional curriculum – as seen as the Florida Department of Education's African American studies course – posits rights as an extension of institutional protection. The reparative curriculum posits rights (particularly in regards to democratic participation) as an evolutive responsibility that must be used, managed, and sought after proactively.

The Incorporation of Marginalized Perspectives Facilitates Social Justice Discourse

Following literature focusing on social reconstruction, I examined how curricula defined historical narratives through the lens of marginalized peoples, defined democratic practices, and how institutions are depicted. I find that reparative curricula operate as a social justice proxy within the classroom. Reparative curricula actively seeks to restore narratives that have

previously been silenced or erased (Tarc, 2011). While reparative curricula operate to address institutional transgressions acknowledged by the nation-state, the practice of critiquing institutional action remains prevalent across the reparative curriculum. The reparative element requires marginalized voices to be the focal point. As a result, students are provided the necessary points of reference to critically examine institutional action.

During the process of incorporating marginalized perspectives into the curriculum, reparative curricula facilitate active discourse for students. Students are able to corroborate accounts from the marginalized into their existing knowledge of events like the Holocaust, the American Revolutionary War, the Reconstruction era, and the post-Civil Rights Movement (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018; The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022; College Board, 2023). Through reparative curricula like Facing History & Ourselves's Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust, the Pulitzer Center's 1619 Project's American Institutions, the College Board's Advanced Placement African American Studies Course, and Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won, marginalized perspectives are incorporated to reconcile discrepancies in understandings between institutions and these groups and provide students necessary context to understand the ambivalence within institutions. Furthermore, analytical tasks often accompany these practices where students engage in perspective-taking activities to test student understanding through historical consciousness.

Historical Consciousness as a Discursive Analytical Tool

Historical consciousness is leveraged for students to recognize enduring patterns. Historical consciousness is implemented by having students engage in perspective-taking analytical tasks and socializing them to institutional inaction and wrongdoings within Reparations Won and the 1619 Project (Chicago Public Schools, 2017; The 1619 Project

Education Network, 2022). Through primary documents, students are able to hear the voices of the oppressed directly. Prior research posits that students are able to derive more from dialogue and interaction within the curriculum rather than passive dissemination of information (Popa, 2022; Joseph, 2011). Students also learn how identity results in demarcated accessibility to democracy and equality. By informing students of how democracy can be limited in scope and practice, students can understand the institutions that they must interact with in order to secure their rights. Democratic practice can be disruptive as well as evolutive. Reparative curricula (and social justice oriented curricula at large) complicate the perception of democratic practice.

Multifaceted Rights: Understanding Rights through Protection and Violation

The rights within the curricula studied are referenced both as civic and human rights. Civic rights, as presented within the 1619 Project, actively interrogate how institutions legally provided access to rights (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022). Nevertheless, in practice, exercising these rights were not accessible. While rights are afforded, these civil rights do not always allow marginalized groups the same affordance to engage in democratic practice. Alternative approaches (such as through grass roots and community-led initiatives) are necessary when securing one's rights.

Human rights are addressed through the Facing History & Ourselves's Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust unit and the Chicago Public Schools' Reparations Won curriculum (Facing History & Ourselves, 2018; Chicago Public Schools, 2017). When advocating for themselves, members of the Jewish resistance and advocates for the police torture survivors argued for a right to live because they are human.

Across the five curricula, rights are contextualized in two parts. The first part is that rights are conceptualized as positive and protective. Positive rights are extended to individuals

from their government and legal documents. Yet, the second way of understanding rights is through violations. The violation of rights are embodied in both the physical and legal dimensions. The physical dimension would be the torture committed by an institution-issued body: police (Chicago Public Schools, 2017). The legal dimension would be the systematic disenfranchisement of marginalized peoples (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022). Civic injustices emerge through rights-based discourse to show how rights are depicted and secured.

Policy Implications

Curricula should adequately reflect the students that study it as well as the institutions who impose it. When students are not equipped to facilitate dialogue or academic discourse regarding rights or institutions, schools are failing their students. Curricula need to deconstruct normative understandings of neutral institutions. When opposing viewpoints (often the oppressor and the marginalized) are put in tandem with one another, the nuanced behavior of institutions can be fully actualized. Evaluative discourse surrounding rights reflects the imperfections within the legal system. The curricula studied here – the 1619 Project and Reparations Won – illustrate how students can gain critical skills and relevant vocabulary for addressing and interrogating institutions. However, all of these merit a need for a critical lens. If schools are to be tasked with socializing students and shaping their future democratic participation, schools should expose students to the biased nature of institutions. Then, when students are able to evaluate the behavior of institutions, they can change them for the better.

Curricular policy has focused on addressing discrepancies in achievement standards. Many educational reforms have focused on identifying and addressing the achievement gap with varying degrees of success (Downey, 2020). Furthermore, educational policy intends to address greater inequities between marginalized groups. However, many of the problems that schools are

tasked to solve are inherently non-educational. Instead, schools have become sites to address social problems and advance political agendas (Tyack & Hansot, 1981). Many of the problems schools aim to address through social mobility (such as income inequality and racial inequality) are direct reflections of institutions inadequacies and limited scripts. If schools successfully cultivate critical discourse through reparative curricula, social inequities can be addressed.

Reparative curricula operate in two ways. First, reparative curricula provide historically oppressed groups the opportunity to reconcile and interrogate their relationship with institutions through structured discourse. Their analytical lens provides students integral frames of reference to address systems of oppression. Secondly, reparative curricula provide alternative examples of resistance and democratic practice to provide more representative accounts of community engagement, grassroots organizations, and people-driven change. In order to provide a more representative educational landscape, it is necessary to provide diverse accounts for students.

Recommendations

Curricular policy should integrate more perspective-taking into educational standards in order to increase student engagement and provide more direct structure for students to practice their critical thinking skills. Reparations Won and the 1619 Project use multiple perspectives in order to corroborate different perspectives of the same event (Chicago Public Schools, 2017; The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022). These analytical tasks would provide students the necessary tools to interrogate literature assigned to them. These tasks are feasible to integrate in curriculum, as was done through the formation of the American Institutions curriculum and was made in tandem with Chicago Public Schools high school teachers studied in this paper (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022). These curricula are discursive tools necessary to provide more meaning into the classroom. Furthermore, it allows students to consider how social

movements are more than contemporary events, but enduring patterns left unsolved from institutional inaction.

Secondly, curricular policy (particularly social science courses focused on government, politics, and civics) should include more diverse understandings of resistance and more disruptive forms of democratic participation. The 1619 Project and the Jewish Resistance in the Holocaust actively posit spiritual and existential resistance as ways to practice political agency that are not represented in most curricula when thinking about marginalized groups (The 1619 Project Education Network, 2022; Facing History & Ourselves, 2018). Rather than positing a rigid binary of good and bad forms of resistance, these curricula contextualize how one's circumstances determine what democratic participation works best when engaging with institutions.

Thirdly, curricular designs in more conservative states should assess neutral language used in learning objectives to ensure that neutrality does not equate to erasure of accurately described events. For the Florida Department of Education's curriculum in particular, there are misrepresentations of how much agency enslaved persons had. More opportunities of discourse should be welcomed in local school boards and state departments of education for parents, students, and educators to provide feedback about what is being taught. While some may support such ambiguous standards, curricula should not ignore the role institutions play in reproducing social, political, and economic equities across different groups. In states where conservatives dictate curricular standards, it is all the more crucial for national advocacy groups to work in conjunction with local schools and teachers through open forums, town halls, and policy talks. Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be a key focal point to provide students with the most robust accounts of historical and contemporary events.

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Appendix

I. *1619 Project's American Institutions Exemplar Codes*

Initial Codes	**Exemplar Codes**	**Exemplar Categories**	**Exemplar Themes**
Examining "how rebellion informs the	Differing understandings of	Shaping alternative forms of democratic	Democracy responsive to identity

narrative of democracy”	what it means to be American	participation through rebellion	/ incremental accessibility to democracy
Signifying how one’s positionality impacts their accessibility to safety, equality, and freedom	Considering American identity as exclusive	Utilizing historical consciousness	Integrating new accounts and perspectives into existing curriculum
Designating American identity as dynamic	Shifting from people-focused group to class-state-based identities	Broadening focus to include marginalized peoples	Reframing historical narratives through multiple perspectives

II. Florida’s African American History Course Exemplar Codes

Initial Codes	**Exemplar Categories**	**Exemplar Themes**
Emphasizing the “reciprocal” roles of the slave trade (Florida Department of Education, 8)	Framing American slavery in the broader global context	Describing causes and effects of slavery in the United States
Suggesting a benefit of unpaid labor of slaves through skill acquisition	Positing the economic dimensions of slavery	Recognizing factors that impacted past and current African American life
Addressing the “organizations that sought to resist achieving American equality” (Florida Department of Education, 20)	Neutral language to preserve objectivity in institutions	Distancing institutions from racism

III. AP African American History Studies Exemplar Codes

Initial Codes	**Exemplar Categories**	**Themes**
Introducing the African diaspora as an extension of identity	Framing and shaping identity	Forging a uniquely African Identity
Self-expression through identity reframing and resistance	Richer context about Africa / rejecting African cultures and countries as a monolith	Justification of African American studies course
Illustrating different forms of resistance	Practices of resilience and resistance as a product of	Rebellion and Resistance as Active Practices

	identity	

IV. Facing History & Ourselves' Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust

Initial Codes	**Exemplar Categories**	**Themes**
Defining resistance in terms of spiritual work (religious resistance)	Alternative understandings of resistance	Resistance against Oppression
Interrogating one-dimensional conceptions of resistance as purely physical	Providing awareness of key historical events	Significance of communication, language, and literature driving resistance efforts
Introducing the Vilna Ghetto Uprising	Identity as a tool for consensus	Identity as a form of perseverance

VI. Reparations Won Exemplar Codes

Initial Codes	**Exemplar Categories**	**Themes**
Discussing restorative justice approaches like talking circles and consensus building	Understanding how racism exists within institutions	Framing discourse to discuss institutional racism through language, background, and multiple perspectives
Seeking justice through alternative means	Pivoting between different perspectives	Contextualizing grassroots organizations, community-led justice within broader society
Introducing community-led groups seeking justice	Contextualizing the limitations of governments and institutions	Addressing different justice-seeking approaches to humanize oppressed groups and address institutional inequities

VII. "To Preserve their Freedom" by Jacob Lawrence sourced from Advanced Placement African American Studies Course

from the Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Image from the College Board's Advanced Placement African American Studies course's Unit 2: Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance. (College Board, 2023: 101).

Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance

"To Preserve Their Freedom," 1988, from *The Life of Toussaint L'Ouverture*, a series by Jacob Lawrence

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