RACIAL JUSTICE WORK IN EVERYDAY LIFE

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PRESENTATION PREVIEW

- Insights from the *MAESTR@S* Teacher Support Group

- Processes of Engaging Disenfranchised Students

- Implications for our Work in the Institute

PRESENTATION GOALS

- Flipping my Approach to Framing the Institute -> Applications over Concepts

- Sharing how we have done Racial Justice Work in schools at the practical level

- Connecting the approach and practices to the Institute and our Framework

MAESTR@S INSIGHTS:

We sought to find ways to heal ourselves, wanting to reach back in time and give ourselves what we needed but didn't know we needed, something we had no one to help us see...

We experienced Personal Trauma in the context of Historical Trauma but were led to believe that neither were worthy of intellectual or even personal exploration.

We realized that these experiences needed to be understood and deconstructed and that this was central to our efforts to support our youth: both for us and for them.

THE EVOLUTION OF WALKING SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 4 years of development as a group

- Gradual Application in SJSU course: Working for Social Justice in Disenfranchised Communities

- Model for 11th Grade English at Lincoln High School, San José

HOW DO WE ENGAGE OUR DISENGAGED STUDENTS OF COLOR?

- **Centering Student Experiences in Conceptual Framing of the Course**

- **Curriculum as a Mirror: Reflecting & Visioning**

- **Student-Centered Pedagogy: Students as Thinkers, Creators, Teachers**

- **Racial Justice Ethics: Our Values as the Foundation of our Teaching/Learning** *[as opposed to Classroom Management/Discipline]*

CONCEPTUAL FRAMING OF 11TH GRADE ENGLISH: RE-IMAGINING LEARNING

- **Analyzing Students' k-10 Experiences in School:**
  - Subtractive Schooling & Stereotype Threat
  - Deficit Approaches to Students of Color & Historical Trauma
  - Normalization & Individualization of Failure of Students of Color
  - Microaggressions, Racial Battle Fatigue & Internalized Racism
  - Community Cultural Wealth as a Weapon

Deficit Models

Definition: Data Showing the difference in education

Examples:

- Scholars have tried to prove that their cultural differences between whites and people of color to justify the deficit of education

" These popular understandings became embedded in the genetic blueprint of Schooling as an institution, leaving an impact till this day "

o People of Color will believe in their own inferiority and their work ethic will show negative results due to the constant bombardment of negativity

o White Scholars were trying to say that there were genetic differences between people of color and whites that would show differences in communities and work places instead of discrimination because of their race and cultural

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Individualization of Latina/o School Failure

Problem: Students blame themselves for their failure in School instead of blaming the teacher.

Examples: More latinos dropout than latinos graduating.
- More suspension for Latinos.
- Bad grades (gave up)

Quote: a student who does poorly in English Classes over the years believes that they don't have the skills to be successful in English and doesn't have what it takes to thrive in School.

This quote is important b/c students just give up in School

Also this quote is important b/c Students feel guilty for not following the negative stereotype.

Individualization of Latina/o School Failure

Every Latino Individual feels that they will Fail School.

Examples:
- Latino students always believe that Other students will achieve more themselves.
- Most Latino students do not have Confidence within themselves because they assume they don't speak or understand English well.

Latinos individualize themselves by believing the comments white students & teachers say.

" They are told that they should aspire to attend college, even though there is a rarely-spoken, underlying assumption that most will not "

Internalized racism.

Internalized Racism
White people "already" know what kind of Job us Latinos will have. This made us feel and think we can't be successful because of our race.

Racism

This looks like
The reason it is caused is the fault of the class Latino teachers are trying to fix it is the hardest to imagine they doing their darnest feel left out and this can be because he's blaming.

This quote says that in this generation it is far less common for raza youth to hear that "Mexican Kids can't do well in school." So Latino kids start to think that this is true about their race. So many raza youth apply this shared societal understanding to themselves as individuals.

Gilbert Contreras
Miguel Cruz
Stephanie Peña
10-15-12 Pd. 4

CURRICULUM AS A MIRROR

- Students get the opportunity to see Latinas/os as writers, thinkers, creators, teachers
- Students see Latinas/os whose experiences reflect their own
- Students unpack & demystify the writing/creative process
- Students explore all of this in multiracial contexts, often teaching white students & connecting with other SOC

STUDENT-CENTERED PEDAGOGY

- Students/Learning are always the focus
- Students build on the Curriculum, Teacher Examples, and then Create their own Work -> framed as teachers
- Critical Thinking & Sociological Analysis are the Foundation
- Student-Selected Group Projects related to Social Issues demand their commitment

RACIAL JUSTICE ETHICS

- **The Curriculum & Pedagogy are manifestations of our Ethics**
  - **Relationship Building -> Creating "Familia"**
  - **Re-thinking Discipline -> Classroom Mapping**
  - **In lak ech – Nehuan ti Nehuan – Tu eres mi Otro Yo – You are my other self**

CLASSROOM MAPPING

- We need to know the students, their lives & families:
  - Who never knew a father?
  - Whose parents are or have been in the criminal justice system?
  - Who struggles with substance abuse (either themselves or in their families)?
  - Who is still learning to speak English?
  - Who is undocumented?
  - Who would be the first in their families to go to college?
  - Who has struggled with their academic confidence and why?
  - Who has had negative relationships with teachers and why?
  - Who has struggled with gangs?
  - Who has to work to support their families and how much?

CLASSROOM MAPPING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

- But also, and *even more importantly*:
  - Who has a talent for building theory through their own life experiences?
  - Who can code switch in ways that make them able to break down complex concepts through their writing?
  - Who can bring humor to discussions of challenging topics in helpful ways?
  - Who is skilled at providing others assistance?
  - Who has an unstoppable will to thrive?
  - Who commands attention whenever they speak?
  - Who has consciously used their challenges as a resource?
  - Who manifests an impenetrable integrity?

IMPACTS ON THE TEACHER

- **Clarity**: Seeing myself in the students -> recognizing the Tools I sought but did not yet have

- **Affirmation**: seeing the students emerge as intellectually powerful

- **Transcendence**: even if only for a moment, it helps me look past the institutionalized racism and see the power of our resistance

IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK NOW...

- The Power of Ideological Analysis & Framing
- Understanding Ourselves within these contexts and the toll it all takes on us: Professionally, Personally, Intellectually, Emotionally, Physically, Spiritually...
- Identifying the Tools that help us Survive and Transcend
- Developing Applications that give Meaning to our Lives and Work
- Building a Community of Support to Take Care of Ourselves: Professionally, Personally, Intellectually, Emotionally, Physically, Spiritually...
- PS: We are *NOT* Crazy!

QUESTIONS, CONNECTIONS, FEEDBACK...