

Notes

Introduction: Schooling in a Time of Crisis and Austerity

1. This quote can be found on page xii in the Preface to the 2011 edition of Bowles and Gintis's *Schooling in Capitalist America*.
2. Studies consistently show, however, that average Americans tend to think quite highly of their own local public schools and teachers. It is only when asked about the system as a whole that they express a concern that public education is failing. Further, US youth in the upper middle class and elite continue to place near the top in the international rankings of student achievement. They only begin to fall behind as one travels down the socioeconomic spectrum. Youth in high poverty communities fare the worst (Ravitch, 2010). While the quality of individual public schools and teachers is indeed a crucial factor in promoting educational success, longstanding research indicates that achievement gaps have more to do with class disparities and social disadvantages than with differences between schools (Coleman, 1966; Rothstein, 2004). In short, the blame lies not in public schools but in deepening poverty and social fragmentation.
3. For further elaboration on this paradox see Christopher Newfield's (2008) *Unmaking the Public University* and Alex Means's (2011) "Creativity as an Educational Problematic in the Biopolitical Economy" in Michael Peters and Ergin Bulut's (eds) *Cognitive Capitalism, Education, and Digital Labor*. Here I argue that neoliberal systems of knowledge management and reform in secondary and higher education represent a distinct struggle over the global educational commons that opens up new challenges and possibilities for democratic resistance and development. For further analysis and the most comprehensive and acute examination of the failures of neoliberal schooling see Kenneth J. Saltman's (2012) *The Failure of Corporate School Reform*. Saltman systematically deconstructs how corporate reform in US secondary education has failed as a movement—functioning largely as a means for dismantling public schooling through privatization in the interest of short-term profits and long-term management of staggering inequalities and systemic contradictions.
4. While Canada has fared much better overall than the United States and countries in Western Europe in the wake of the crisis, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC, 2011) reports a series of disturbing statistics concerning the effects of the recession on Canada: "In March 2010, 867,948 Canadians (38% of them children) turned to food banks for food support—a 28% increase over March 2008 and the highest level of food bank use ever; In 2010, 150,000 to 300,000 persons were visibly homeless, another 450,000 to 900,000 were "hidden" homeless, 1.5 million households were in "core housing need", and 3.1 million households were in unaffordable housing. In 2010, 59% of Canadian workers lived paycheque to paycheque, saying they would be in financial difficulty if their paycheque was delayed by a week. In 2009,

per capita household debt, at \$41,740, was 2.5 times higher than in 1989; in 2010, 20% of Canadians reported they had too much debt and trouble managing it. In 2009, the average annual income (\$6.6 million) of Canada's best-paid CEOs was 155 times higher than the average worker's income (\$42,988); a third of all income growth in Canada over the past two decades has gone to the richest one percent of Canadians. At the end of 2009, 3.8% of Canadian households controlled 67% of total household wealth."

5. Chicago's homicide rate peaked in the wake of crack epidemic in 1994 at 929. In contrast, there were 440 homicides in Chicago in 2011. The majority of these were the result of firearms violence. In 2008, there were 510 homicides in Chicago, 80% of these were due to firearms violence, nearly half the victims were between the ages of 10–25, and the vast majority of the victims were male. Chicago has seen a 40% jump in firearms-related homicides in early 2012. Reasons often cited for this increase in 2012 are a fragmentation of the gang structure, as gang leaders have been arrested, splintering gangs into smaller rival sets. Another prominent reason for the spike in violence is traced to the effects of high unemployment and the economic crisis.
6. All proper names in this study including street names and the names of individuals are pseudonyms. Ellison Square and CHS are also pseudonyms. I have not identified the race or ethnicity of most of the adults at CHS as I am concerned that doing so could result in their identification. I have included the race and ethnicity of the students in the study.
7. Along with McNally, I understand the 2008 economic crisis as symptomatic of more general crisis tendencies in global capitalism. See also David Harvey's (2010) *The Enigma of Capital*. In this book, Harvey locates the global economic crisis as indicative of the long-term structural barriers to continued economic expansion in the neoliberal era. He argues that while the extension of easy credit to consumers combined with semiotic manipulations in finance offered one avenue of continued capitalist growth in the 1990s and 2000s, the failure of deregulated finance capital in 2008 signals broader problems and limits for an accumulation paradigm beset by tensions between, on the one hand, finding new exploitable markets and opportunities for profitable investment, on the other hand, encroaching environmental depletion and resource scarcity.
8. I frequently make reference to "social disinvestment" throughout this book. I want to be clear that by social disinvestment I mean not only cuts in social spending, but also to a shift in cultural attitudes toward the public. In this latter sense, by social disinvestment I refer to the ways we have lost a sense of social and collective responsibility toward the public sphere and the public values which sustain it.
9. Harper's magazine reported that in 2007 there was \$78 billion in venture capital invested in US education startups. In 2011, it was \$452 billion (Harpers Index, 2012). For an analysis of the influence of educational corporations on US education policy see Lee Fang's (2011) "How online learning companies bought America's schools" published in *The Nation*, Saltman's (2012) *The Failure of Corporate School Reform*, and in a global context see Stephen Ball's (2012) *Global Education Inc: New Policy Networks and the Neoliberal Imaginary*.

1 Securing Precarious Urban Futures

1. I take this to signal the abstract intensification of what Jurgen Habermas (1987) once referred to as "colonization of the life world" by expansionary market and state systems.

2. Quote from Foucault (2008) page 131.
3. Linebaugh (2008), Harvey (2003), Federici (2004) and others have observed that movements to enclose the commons through privatization have been a long-standing and ongoing process of capitalist development. Updating Marx's concept of "primitive accumulation," Harvey (2003) has called this "accumulation by dispossession" to signal how capital seeks to commodify sites previously held in common. Today, we have seen a global movement to expropriate land and resources and a wave of privatization across the Global North and South. The movement to privatize public schools and to make them commercially viable has to be understood within these trends.
4. My view is that despite epistemological incongruities, a Foucauldian governmentality approach broadly compliments a Marxian political economy perspective, particularly in understanding the mutually inflected relationships between the operations of global capitalism, the state, and subjectivity from the macrological to the micropolitical levels. Thomas Lemke (2001) notes: "the analysis of governmentality focuses not only on the integral link between micro- and macro-political levels (e.g. globalization or competition for 'attractive' sites for companies and personal imperatives as regards beauty or a regimented diet), it also highlights the intimate relationship between 'ideological' and 'political-economic' agencies (e.g. the semantics of flexibility and the introduction of new structures of production)" (p. 13).
5. Foucault (2003) positions biopolitics as a historical development in modern rationalities and technologies of power and social regulation that emerges out of and complements two other modalities—sovereignty and discipline. Whereas sovereignty refers to control over the legitimate use of violence within a distinct territory under the law, discipline refers to investments in the individual body—its spatial distribution, serialization, training, and surveillance. Biopolitics, in contrast, concerns itself with the regulation of "man as a multiplicity"; that is, as a "global mass that is affected by overall processes characteristic of birth, death, production, illness, and so on" (p. 243). The target of biopolitics is thus naturalization and regularization of particular frames of economic and political life. Biopolitics thus describe the always-contested dynamics of the political in its most basic sense—the antagonistic economic and social processes where some lives and forms of life are made more or less valuable than others. These dividing practices between deserving and undeserving lives, is a crucial axis upon which notions of security operate.
6. Women, particularly immigrant women and women of color, occupy positions at the bottom of the wage scale and in the informal sector of work in far greater numbers, and, along with their children, also bear the primary brunt of the effects of poverty (Goldberg, 2010). While women and children are overrepresented among the working poor, men are far more likely to face chronic unemployment coupled with higher rates of imprisonment. Here "workfare" directed predominantly at exploiting low-wage female labor and "prisonfare" aimed at managing unemployed men emerge as dominant race- and gender-coded class strategies for managing dispossessed and alienated populations in the neoliberal city (Wacquant, 2009).
7. According to a research study by the Pew center (2009), as of 2008, 1 in 31 adults in America was in prison or jail, or on probation or parole. It is observed that 25 years ago, the rate was 1 in 77. These numbers are highly concentrated by race and geography: 1 in 11 black adults (9.2 percent) versus 1 in 27 Hispanic adults (3.7 percent) and 1 in 45 white adults (2.2 percent); 1 in 18 men (5.5 percent) versus 1 in 89 women (1.1 percent). Loïc Wacquant (2009), Michelle Alexander (2010), Paul Street (2007), and Ruth Gilmore (2009) among others, have argued that soaring rates of

incarceration in the United States are largely unrelated to actual crime rates. For instance, Alexander points out that between 1970 and 1990 the crime rates of Finland and Germany were roughly identical to the United States, yet the US incarceration rate quadrupled during the same period while the Finish rate declined by 60 percent and Germany's stayed about the same. Since 1990, the US crime rate has slightly dipped below the international average while its rate of incarceration has continued to rise 6–10 times faster than any other industrialized country. These statistics and their deep racial characteristics suggest that the imprisonment binge has more to do with extrinsic factors than with crime rates—factors such as institutional and cultural racism; turning profits and providing a tax base and jobs to rural white communities; the gutting of the social state; and the need to exert direct social control of populations dislocated by the global economy.

8. According to Smith (2002): “communications and financial deregulation have expanded the geographical mobility of capital; unprecedented labor migrations have distanced local economies from *automatic dependency on home grown labor*; national and local states (including city governments) have responded by offering carrots to capital while applying the stick to labor and *dismantling previous supports for social reproduction*; and finally, class and race based struggles have broadly receded, giving local and national governments increased leeway to *abandon that sector of the population surplus by both the restructuring of the economy and the gutting of social services*. The mass incarceration of working-class and minority populations, especially in the US, is the national analogue of the emerging revanchist city” (p. 433, my emphasis).
9. Darling-Hammond's (2010) book *The Flat World and Education*, offers a rational defense of liberal and social democratic approaches to educational policy and public schooling. However, while arguing for educational investments and liberal commitments to fairness and equity, Darling-Hammond largely reproduces the neoliberal viewpoint that education is or should be valued primarily according to its capacity to serve economic ends. In contrast, I subscribe to the values articulated within progressive and critical traditions articulated by the likes of John Dewey (1944), Paulo Freire (1998), and Henry Giroux (1983) that situate the purpose of education within the terms of human development, social transformation, and democracy as opposed to the reductive logic of global economic competition.
10. Neoliberals like Eric Hanushuk, Paul T. Hill, Stephen Brill, and others roundly reject the notion that school funding and socioeconomic condition have anything to do with educational performance. They cite statistics indicating that the United States has one of the highest per pupil expenditures. Deceptively, however, they do not acknowledge two key determinates in promoting educational success (narrowly measured here in terms of test scores). First, the United States spends a significantly lower percentage of GDP on education and other social services than other developed nations (Sachs, 2011). This means that the poor receive far less support in matters like health care for mothers and children and early childhood education—things that are consistently cited as key factors in child development and whether or not young people enter school ready to learn (Anyon, 2005; Ravitch, 2010). Second, the reformers also deny the impact of poverty on school performance, however, the research is overwhelmingly clear that socioeconomic status is the single greatest determinate in predicting educational achievement (Rothstein, 2004). In short, as the vast majority of educational research has concluded (which the market reformers roundly ignore), poverty and inequality matter, while investments in social provision and educational

services (or the lack thereof) are central factors in the relative success of individual students and schools.

11. Quote from Giroux (2009) page 78.

2 Chicago and the Management of Social Research

1. Quote on page 19 of Horkheimer & Adorno (2002).
2. Student quoted in 2011 Report on Illinois Poverty (Heartland Alliance, 2011).
3. The restrictions placed on the research inhibited a more immersive approach to the data collection. For instance, with only one semester, I simply did not have as much time to develop longer term relationships with staff and students and to become more deeply acculturated into everyday life at CHS. Despite the fact that I have taught in the Chicago schools, my presence as a white male researcher decidedly mark me as an outsider at CHS and in the Ellison Square community. However, the limitations on time may also contain some potential positive value. While I was afforded less physical time in the field, my outsider perspective could theoretically be productive in maintaining a fresh and critical distance to everyday realities. Another consequence of the time restrictions placed on the research was that I ended up relying perhaps more heavily on my formal and informal interviews. In theory, this has the value of letting the young people, educators, and others in the community speak largely for themselves. Such an approach enables a rich picture to develop through the actual voices and points of view of those living and working in Ellison Square and at CHS, particularly when balanced out against city and neighborhood data, media reports, CPS policy analysis, and my observations from the field. However, this too has its own ethical and theoretical problems. We cannot simply assume that the educators and young people that speak in the following chapters do so unproblematically. Rather, their perspectives along with those of the researcher are situated within and inflected by particular histories and cultural locations. This situated character of knowledge marks the ethically fraught terrain of relations to truth, to power, and to authority. I have attempted, where possible, to highlight productive contradictions and moments of slippage in the narratives that I think provide vivid insight into the inner tensions and the often conflicted nature of the reflections. However, I also recognize that my own social location has both informed the dialogic specificity of the narratives as they unfolded in real time as well as how I have represented them here. I do not claim to speak either for or on behalf of the participants nor am I naïve enough to think I am simply and unproblematically “representing” their voices. Rather, I view the narratives as well as their representation here as part of a dialogic process and the shared construction of knowledge between researcher, reader, and the researched. I think that when viewed in this light we get a much richer and more deeply empirical view of the narratives that appear in this text.

On a further note on methods, interview subjects for this study were selected using a “snowball” sampling approach, meaning that I selected interview subjects as I began to meet teachers, staff, and students and make connections with them. In some cases, teachers whose classes I was observing recommended particular students to interview and made introductions for me. Throughout the research process, I attempted to select interview subjects in a way that would ultimately reflect the gender and racial diversity of the staff and student body at CHS. For instance, I tried to pick students from across the various grade levels and achieve a close balance of male and female, African American and Latino students. Formal interviews followed a semi-structured

format whereby I utilized question guides for teachers, students, staff, and others with pre-determined questions concerning issues of economic, social, political, and human security at HS. However, these question guides provided only a loose framework. I was careful in the interviews to allow for flexibility in order to be able to further explore in the moment the often unexpected pathways that open-up in human conversation. For the analysis, I used NVIVO research software which enabled me to develop a set of themes and codes from my interview and observational data that logically followed from my research questions concerning how notions of security are imagined, lived, and practiced at CHS. I made every attempt to allow the codes and themes to develop organically from the data in contrast to imposing a pre-determined schema onto the analysis. Quotes were selected on the basis of how they contributed to elaborating the patterns, connections, conflicts, contradictions, and themes that emerged during the research and in the analysis. In many instances, I have chosen to focus on one or more interview subjects in depth as opposed to cluttering the text with quotes from multiple subjects. I think that this is a valuable way of humanizing the narratives and a tool for delving deeper into particular points of view.

4. This is a point that Lather (2010) has also made.

3 Learning by Dispossession: Objective Violence and Educational Failure

1. For more on the practice and effects of predatory mortgage lending in minority communities see Matt Taibbi's (2010) *Griftopia*, David Harvey's (2010) *The Enigma of Capital*, and David McNally's (2011) *Global Slump*.
2. See the database of articles by Jon Conroy on Chicago police brutality in the Chicago Reader via: <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/police-torture-in-chicago-jon-burge-scandal-articles-by-john-conroy/Content?oid=1210030>

4 Criminality or Sociality: A Zero Sum Game?

1. These figures do not count the youth who do not attend CPS schools killed by gunfire in Chicago each year. See footnote 5 in the introduction for more on this.

5 Searching for Human Security and Citizenship

1. Quote from Freire (1998), p. 58.
2. As of 2011, 45.8 million Americans were receiving some form of food assistance.
3. For a broader historical analysis of this phenomena see Deborah Cowen (2008) *Military Workfare: The Soldier and Social Citizenship in Canada*.
4. Restorative justice is a philosophical and practical alternative to punitive forms of discipline rooted in aboriginal traditions and principles of dialogue, peer mediation, and community reparation and accountability.

Conclusion: Public Schooling for a Common Security

1. A useful text to explore this history is Howard Zinn's (2003) *A Peoples History of the United States*.

2. I owe Ken Saltman (2012) for this phrasing from his *The Failure of Corporate School Reform*. Ken Saltman, Noah de Lissovoy, and I further develop these ideas concerning the educational commons in a forthcoming book to be published on Paradigm Press.
3. An FST tax has broad support even among hard core neoliberals like Lawrence Summers; only the most regressive factions of the conservative and libertarian right oppose such a measure.

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