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Drew Chappell
Chapman University, chappell@chapman.edu

Sharon Verner Chappell
California State University, Fullerton

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California State University Fullerton

Narrative construction has an important and under-explored role to play in examining questions of power and privilege in P-12 classrooms or higher education courses in education and the humanities. In this paper, the authors utilize pedagogical deconstruction and reconstitution of stories about childhood play, examining how young people embody cultural narratives of power through their play. Through narrative construction, the authors envision utopian moments of resistant play, in which youth question old scenarios and imagine more equitable and examined possibilities for play. Counter-narrative writing strategies include recombining events from the historical record, contemporary news accounts, or popular culture; playing with time; and adopting various points of view.

Narratives help us make sense of the world; they shape our historical and contemporary understanding of cultures and societies (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004; Goffman, 1974). As people tell stories during improvisational play and through retelling or recombining narratives from popular media, they navigate daily experiences, questions and problems. Yet stories employed in social play continue to utilize negative stereotypes (or stock characterizations) of minoritized people, contributing to the ways in which readers see themselves and others, and limiting the potential for actions and interactions (Bell & Roberts, 2010; Cruz, 2002; Graves, 1999; Lester, 2011). Counter-narratives, such as those of minoritized peoples' community contributions and resistance to inequitable power structures, offer alternative views and purposes for relationships across difference (Anzaldúa, 2012; Delgado, 1998; hooks, 2012; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Milner, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Vrij, van Schie, & Cherryman, 1996).

As humanities and education scholars, we are particularly interested in contemporary counter-narrative constructions as a pedagogy to engage questions of power. We see the impact of colonial Othering in

the required selection of readings in our higher education courses; the educational policies and practices that disproportionately impact our students of color; and the awkward silences about race, gender, class, and white privilege in our classrooms. We believe that narrative construction has an important and under-explored role to play in examining these questions, whether in P-12 classrooms or higher education courses in education and the humanities. We want to "hack schooling" (LaPlante, 2013) through the pedagogical deconstruction and reconstitution of stories in our own arts and education classrooms, beginning with writing such stories ourselves. Students and instructors can complicate the notion of a single authorial vision of the past and present through recombining events from the historical record, contemporary news accounts, or popular culture; playing with time; or adopting various points of view.

We have turned to counter-narrative research to inform our narrative constructions. In the field of education, for example, narrative researchers often tell the life stories of minoritized students and teachers, focusing particularly on resistance to inequity, positioning these perspectives as vital cultural capital to the classroom and to educational reform (Coulter & Smith, 2009; He & Ross, 2010). Counter-narrative educational inquiry also engages arts-based methodologies such as visual art and poetry. Faltis (2012) uses paintings to raise questions about restrictive border and immigration policies, and the responsive struggles of Mexican/Mexican American people to live under these policies in their communities and schools. S. Chappell and D. Chappell (2011) use collage and sculpture to analyze the objectification and exoticization of indigenous peoples' histories in children's nonfiction resource books. Cahnmann (2006) and S. Chappell (2008) use poetry to reflect on how students and teachers navigate schools' cultural borders. Counter-narrative and critical storytelling processes are also used as methodologies in performance ethnography and ethnodrama (Mitsumura, 2013; Saldaña, 2008). These arts-based methods demand an examination not only of "what counts" as evidence in social inquiry but also the purpose of the inquiry itself. What, we might ask, is the purpose of telling such "critical" or "counter" stories? Who "needs" to hear them? To tell them? What are the ultimate goals of the artist-researchers?

Our focus on counter-narrative storytelling interrogates ideologies embodied in childhood improvisational play. Social play often (re)produces unexamined norms of social dominance, through ideas/actions such as a lack of respect for difference, physical violence, and role enforcement (Killen & Rutland, 2011; Smith & Boulton, 1990).

Yet, increasingly, youth-produced media counters the stance that domination-based play is a matter of "kids being kids." Young people regularly engage in improvisational play and strategic creative activity that speak against colonial socialization and toward visions of a just, equitable, and inclusive world (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Schultz, 2011; S. Chappell, 2007; 2011, 2013; Students of Thurgood Marshall High School, 2004; Youth Speaks, 2012). We are inspired by such aesthetic strategies of intervention and counter-narrative storytelling; and, in this paper, have engaged our own narrative constructions to imagine childhood play that confronts itself—where play is stopped and re-enacted with counter-colonial purposes.

We write and re-write two narratives of childhood play, first engaging problems of colonial power and then imagining resistance to and critical thinking about that power. To create these stories, we examined our own childhood memories, popular portrayals of childhood play and schooling, school textbooks, popular culture artifacts, and young people's self-authored narratives of resistance. We identified the impact of stock stories (dominant narratives) on our own childhood thinking, as well as how multiple perspectives from concealed and resistant stories informed our politicization into young adulthood. These autobiographical reflections informed our construction of the children's play. Following the stories, we discuss the aesthetic strategies we used to deconstruct and re-story power-based relationships in and through the characters' play, strategies that might support future pedagogy utilizing counter-colonial storytelling as a methodology both in P-12 and higher education.

Fiction in Social Research

Recent scholarship identifies the complexity of fiction writing as social research. Diversi (1998) suggests that the purpose of narrative research is to bring the stories of others closer to the reader, helping them uncover "truth" of analogous moments in their own lives. While both types of writing employ literary techniques (characterization, description, point of view, scenes, etc.), narrative construction is widely understood to consist of renderings of the results of field-based research and empirical data (Barone, 2000; Barone & Eisler, 1997; Coulter & Smith, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1995; Sparkes, 2002). Both narrative construction and fiction as social inquiry raise questions and encourage the reader to look anew at personal and societal values, attitudes, and beliefs (Barone, 2002; Barone & Eisner, 2012; Richardson, 2000). This aesthetic destabilization

can also encourage the reader/viewer to imagine new possibilities for social action. For Denzin (2000), this imagining of the future occurs through emotion: the connection between reader and writer evoked through the dialectical creation of and reflection on narrative events, and the ways both reader and writer can imagine circumstances being different, or better, in the "real world."

Writing and reading stories implicitly produce "acts of transfer" (Taylor, 2003), a transmission of social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated, "restored," or "twice behaved" behavior (Schechner, 2003, pp. 2-3). For this research on the impact of domination in play, we reflected on our own memories of childhood participation in certain played-through narratives, especially those with a focus on colonial exploration and imperialism. S. Chappell, for example, remembers enacting a rain dance in a school production of *Peter Pan*, as well as drawing Pilgrims and Indians in peaceful Thanksgiving communion, but never learning about the Trail of Tears or the vibrant present-day communities of native peoples.

D. Chappell recalls playground (re)enactments of the archeological removal of ancient artifacts from native lands, as well as dueling between white and native characters in the manner of Indiana Jones, while true stories of the removal and restorations of native artifacts were never mentioned in class. Both authors learned about slavery as a tragic period in US history, but not about its contemporary impacts on individuals, communities, and institutions. As educators and scholars who come from white, middle class childhoods, we often reflect on how infrequently we were exposed to the problems of social dominance, informed of our own positionality within those systems, or encountered strategies to resist and transform those systems.

As adults, we personally and professionally confront the affective and cognitive impact of colonial narratives on our thinking and acting in the world (Chappell, 2010). Yet we struggle to imagine how children might take up counter-colonial methodologies in their own lives, particularly in their elementary school years. In this paper, we take up the question of re-thinking children's play by emphasizing dissonance in our own storytelling. We are guided by Bell and Roberts' (2010) framework, which requires an analysis of stock stories to identify the resistance stories concealed in or omitted from those stock stories. After such analysis, counter-stories can be created. We hope to inform pedagogies in our classrooms, with university students who will either teach young people or create art for them.

We present scenarios in which young people's play leaves uncontested colonial structurations of race, class, and gender, and then utopianize these scenarios in order to raise questions about embedded relationships, values, beliefs, and practices in the activities described. In the counter-stories, we strategically foreground perspectival differences and ethical/moral complexities by specifically crafting the ways in which the child characters encounter artifacts and scenarios in his or her play. Our stories reference two cultural artifacts—a real-life board game dealing with the Spanish colonization of Puerto Rico, and an imagined integrated social studies/drama lesson that "teaches" about slavery and the Underground Railroad through the assignment of roles and improvisational drama activities.

In writing about these artifacts, we examine the ways in which they construct historical societies. We consider the ways that restating cultural distinction and the superiority of colonizing societies were an important part of the colonial project (Stoler, 1989)—a "justification" for policies such as land seizure and enslavement. Such policies and philosophies also depended on the consent of the colonized or subaltern (Lears, 1985), and tended to treat the (usually nonwhite) "other" as a constructed fantasy (Said, 1979), negating or rendering interchangeable subaltern identities (JanMohamed, 1985). Native peoples and places were (and are) exoticized, infantilized, and/or fetishized in literature, visual art, and theatre as part of a specific cultural strategy to demonstrate and reinscribe Western superiority. While narratives from the colonial period marked the times in which they were written, certain tropes endure into postcolonial times and the present day.

The first of our scenarios centers around two young people playing a game called *Puerto Rico* (Seyfarth, 2002), published in the US by Rio Grande Games, beginning in 2002 and still a popular exemplar of the "Euro game" style, in which the goal is not typically to attack opposing players but to outmaneuver them through the development of a superior economic "victory point" engine. As the players engage in the narrative of historical conflict and exploration, *Puerto Rico* asks them to assume various roles associated with colonization, including mayor, craftsman, and ship captain, and the key to winning the game is to select useful roles at appropriate times. None of these roles reference the native peoples who were on the island before the Spanish colonists arrived. The game is targeted at players from age 12 through adult, has won numerous game awards, and has influenced many other tabletop games that use the "Age of Exploration" as their in-game world. Our scenario examines the

ethical dilemmas structured by the game as the players encounter its roles, game board, and storyline(s).

In our second scenario, elementary school-aged children participate in a drama activity suggested by their publisher-produced, fifth-grade social studies textbook. The pedagogical goal of this activity is to understand a given historical event—the Underground Railroad—through dramatic play. The teacher is directed to set up a scenario, assign roles to the students, and then facilitate the unfolding of a process drama, in which the students negotiate a conflict or problem. This pedagogical strategy of dramatizing key moments in history was popularized by drama practitioner/theorist Dorothy Heathcote (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995) and further developed by others, including Cecily O'Neill (O'Neill & Lambert, 1982). It is used today in language arts, social studies, and even science and math classes. Our scenario examines the ethical dilemmas that the students encounter once the dramatic play begins.

Posing a Problem: Playing *Puerto Rico*

Elena, a teenage girl who recently moved to the US from Puerto Rico, visits her friend Graham's house. Graham, a white boy, has a new board game he wants to share.

"Look at this!" he tells her. "It's about your home."

Sure enough, the game is called Puerto Rico. *Graham opens the box.*

"This is what you do," he explains. "You take this section of the island and make plantations. Then you turn the crops into goods in this building section and you ship them home to get points."

"Where is home?" Elena asks, unfamiliar with much of what she sees in the game besides the city of San Juan.

Graham checks the rule booklet. "They say 'The Old World.' I guess that means Spain." He shows Elena the small wooden pieces that come with the game. "These are barrels of goods. Blue is indigo, yellow's corn, white's sugar, light brown is tobacco, and dark brown's coffee."

He hands the pieces to Elena, who shuffles them around in her palm. They feel cool and solid, old-fashioned somehow. "What are those?" she

asks Graham, pointing to smaller, flat, round pieces the same color as the coffee barrels.

Graham begins counting the small discs and placing them on a cardboard tile with a drawing of a ship. "Those are the colonists," he says. "They work in the fields and in the buildings."

Elena is puzzled. "I don't think the Spaniards worked in the fields," she tells him. "I think they used slaves."

Graham frowns. "Well, the rules say they're colonists." He points to the ship tile. "This is the colonist ship." He continues counting out the pieces. "Why does it matter, anyway?"

The game looks appealing, and Elena doesn't want to upset Graham. "I guess it doesn't." She feels guilty giving in.

Graham has everything set up. "Now, this is how you play. Every turn, we're going to choose from these roles." He points to seven other tiles: settler, mayor, captain, craftsman, builder, trader, prospector. Graham continues talking, but Elena has stopped listening. All the roles are Spanish, she thinks. Everything about this game is Spanish, except the slaves, whom they don't call slaves. But Graham is clearly excited, going on and on about the island being open for settling. And as he describes how to play, Elena finds herself pulled into the game's storyline, art, and procedures. She wants to acquire the gold and silver cardboard doubloons. She wants to place the goods barrels on the cargo ships. She wants to build up the island with colorful plantation tiles. It's just a game, she tells herself. But then why does she feel so strange about playing it?

Resistance/Transformation: (Re)Playing *Puerto Rico*

The Puerto Rico *game is ready to play. Graham hands Elena two of the cardboard doubloons and a corn plantation tile. "I'll go first," he says. "To show you how this works."*
Elena's frustration takes hold. "Wait a minute. I'm not playing this."

"Why not? I thought you'd like it."

Graham is just not going to get this. "Do you know what the Spaniards did when they arrived on Puerto Rico? They were horrible. They built plantations called encomiendas. *That's what these are. They enslaved the natives, the Taíno. That's who performed the labor. Not Spanish colonists. The Spaniards took native women by force to be their wives. And in a few decades, they brought African slaves over. Do you know why?"*

He's looking at her now, confused. "No."

"Because the Taíno were dying. Wiped out by disease, murder, and suicide." She looks at Graham. She feels better after saying all this. "None of that's in the game rules, is it?"

"No."

"I didn't think so." Elena looks at everything Graham has set up. Despite her frustration—more like disgust, she thinks—she really does want to try the game. Choosing the roles seems like an interesting idea, and everything looks so colorful.

Graham starts picking up the pieces. "Well, I guess I'll put it away, then.

"Wait," Elena tells him. "Maybe we can change the story somehow."

"Change the story?"

"You know, make it about something other than exploitation. Rewrite history."

He's interested. "OK, how do we do that?"

"Well, the encomiendas *were grants of land and slaves from the Spanish king. What if they were lands apart from the natives? Separate spaces that wouldn't expand?"*
"Sure," Graham says. "There's limited space on the player boards anyway."

"And what if the colonists performing the labor really are Spaniards?"

"OK."

"They could pay tribute to the Taíno for the use of the land. One barrel of goods for every building."

"But that will throw off the balance of the game."

"That's probably what the Spaniards thought too. But if they wanted to use the land, they should have given the people something in return."

Graham frowns. He's getting into it now. "But wait a minute. Wouldn't the food carry disease?"

"That's true. Not a good idea."

"What about if the hospital has to be the first building you build?"

Elena looks over the building tiles. "Is one of these a hospital?"

Graham points one out. "This is a hospice. That's the same thing, right?"

"Not really, but it's the closest thing here."

"Wait a minute. Would they even have a way to prevent the disease? There weren't vaccinations back then."

Elena puts her hand to her head. "This is pointless. There's no way to make it work. Colonization couldn't have happened without harming the Taíno. And we haven't even started dealing with the influence of the Church…"

"So there's no way to keep them from getting sick?"

"Not unless the Spaniards have literally no contact with them at all." Graham taps his fingers on the game box. "Since we're rewriting history anyway, let's just imagine disease wasn't an issue."

"But it was. You can't get around that."

"I know, but if we want to put the Taíno in, we're going to have to cheat a little."

"Now you want to put them in?"

"It doesn't make sense not to. They were there."

Elena picks up a piece of paper. "Then let's do this: when you build a building, instead of paying the bank, let's give a tribute to this piece of paper." She writes: cacique. *"This is the Taíno chief. When you take the role of the* cacique*, you get all the goods that are on the paper."*

Graham smiles. "I like it."

"Me, too. It's not perfect, but at least the Taíno are part of the game."

"OK, then, are you ready?"

"Sure. Go ahead and choose a role. But watch out. I'm feeling pretty confident."

Graham reaches toward the role cards and the game begins.

Posing a Problem: Curriculum around Slavery

Jamal, a young African American boy, arrives back in class from lunch.

"We're going to be talking about slavery during the Civil War," his teacher, Ms. Decker, announces. "We'll be playing different roles today. Some of you will be plantation overseers, and some will be slaves. The slaves have heard that escape is possible, but they need to work together to evade the overseers. I want to show you how difficult and dangerous escape was for the brave men and women who chose to try."

Ms. Decker, a white woman, begins to divide up the class. "I'll randomly assign the roles of slaves and overseers." She has index cards in her hand. Jamal looks around the room. He is one of two African American students in the class. He doesn't remember that fact ever feeling so obvious.

As the children are given cards, they migrate to opposite ends of the room. Suddenly Jamal fears being chosen as a slave. What if his teammates ask him what they should do? What if they ask him if he knows anything about being a slave? Ms. Decker approaches and hands him a card. He looks at it. "Overseer," it says. Jamal lets his breath out with relief. He walks over with the other overseers.

Ms. Decker approaches his group. "Now," she says, "your job is to catch the slaves if they try to run away. You need to develop a plan for watching the plantation day and night, and a way to know if any plots are developing. You also need to think about how you would recapture the slaves if they do manage to get away. Remember how valuable they were to their owners." Somehow Jamal has the feeling Ms. Decker is trying not to look at him when she talks about the slaves.

"OK, how should we do this?" one of his classmates, an Asian American girl named Alyssa, asks. Ms. Decker has given the group a map of the plantation and a list of the supplies they have. "I think we should post guards in these places. We have enough rifles and lanterns to do that."

"I think we should just let them go," says Jonathan, a white boy who sits beside Jamal in class.

"No way," Alyssa replies. "You heard how valuable slaves were."

"It's not right." Jonathan is standing firm. "Everybody has the right to liberty. It's in the Declaration of Independence."

"Slaves didn't count," Alyssa observes.

"Why? Just 'cause they were black? Forget it. I vote to let them go. Who else thinks so?"

But that's not the assignment, thinks Jamal. Ms. Decker wants us to try and keep the slaves at all costs. She'll grade us down if we do this. Suddenly, he feels a sense of betrayal. What if his family had been there? What would they want him to do? The other kids in the group look at Jonathan, then at Alyssa. And then they look at Jamal.

Resistance/Transformation:
Rethinking the Curriculum on Slavery

In the group of overseers, Jamal speaks up. "Jonathan's right. It's immoral to keep slaves. We should free them, or pay them for their work and provide them better housing."

Alyssa glares at him. "That's not the assignment and you know it. You're not thinking like someone who lived back then."

"There were plenty of people who didn't own slaves," Jamal counters. "And lots of people who spoke about abolishing slavery."

"I'm not saying I think it's right," Alyssa says. "But it's not our job anyway. We're overseers, not owners. We just give the orders. We can't make decisions."

"So we convince the owner to free the slaves," Jonathan suggests. "What difference does it make?"

"It makes a difference because we can't just do something outside the role we're given."

Jonathan shakes his head. "Fine. We tell the owner he should free the slaves."

Alyssa shifts into the owner's role. "Why?"

"Because it's immoral to own another human being."

"Not according to the laws of the country. And if we free the slaves, how is the plantation going to make any money? How will you *be able to live?"*

"It's not going to make money when it's burned to the ground during the Civil War," Jamal comments.

"That's true," Alyssa says. "But as an owner, I don't know that the Civil War is going to happen."

"They must have had some idea," Jamal tells her. "And they must have known how devastating it would have been."

"I still don't think it's as easy as telling the owner to free the slaves 'cause it's the right thing to do."

"I still won't accept anything else," says Jonathan.

Jamal sees a way to break the standoff. "Let's ask Ms. Decker."

Jamal raises his hand and Ms. Decker comes over. Alyssa explains the group's dilemma. She's so worried about doing something outside the plan, Jamal thinks. About getting permission. Isn't the point that sometimes you shouldn't ask for permission? You should do what's right regardless of the rules?

Ms. Decker finishes listening. "Well, I didn't expect you to make that choice," she says. "But I'm proud of you for thinking like caring people. Instead of planning to secure the plantation, why don't you prepare some remarks to all of the plantation owners in your county? If they don't agree to do away with slavery, there's no way you can survive."

"We were talking about that," Jonathan tells her. "We wanted to invite abolitionists to speak."

"Good idea," Ms. Decker responds. "But I think they'd be shouted down, or worse."

"It has to be us, then," Jamal realizes. "It has to come from the people who are most affected by it."

"The people most affected are the slaves," Alyssa says. Jonathan and Jamal both look at her, surprised.

Ms. Decker looks over at the escaping slave group. "I need to check in with the others. Plan out your ideas, try to make them understand that continuing the institution of slavery will lead to devastation. Put your best case in front of them. We'll present that to the whole class."

Ms. Decker leaves, and Jamal, Jonathan, and Alyssa sit down with a piece of paper and begin writing.

The Importance of Resistance

In the scenarios above, children play characters—real or imagined—from history within a matrix of power and domination. Scenarios such as these, prompted by artifacts such as books, games, and curricula, encourage performance and representation that are troubling when viewed through postcolonial and critical race theories (Love, 2004). Through these theories, scholars question the imperialist mindset of whiteness as norm and the exoticization and "othering" of non-white peoples that led to exploitation, subjugation, and brutality. More generally, critical theories allow scholars to look at strands of power in any scenario involving dominant and subaltern identities. The scenarios we presented here ask contemporary students—whether children or adults—to embody people and play out events temporally and culturally removed from their present day identities. For these students, with multicultural/multilayered identities, the play raises ethical questions about embodiment. How can we teach about dominant stories while at once asking students to resist them? What roles should children take, and what if they refuse? Might they feel drawn to an experience even if it contradicts their personal values? And, how can we engage in a counternarrative process open to multiple interpretations and social ideologies?

Barone (2001) uses the term "revolutionary readers" to describe "readers who are reluctant to relax their critical faculties" (p. 172). Such readers "speak back" to the texts they engage with, questioning their assumptions and creating alterative readings to serve as heuristics toward understanding and meaning. When young people create the kinds of counter narratives we depict in our constructed narratives and express them through performance, they might be considered "revolutionary" or "resistant" players, acting against the text they are assigned. Because our characters—Elena, Jonathan, and Jamal—have access to alternate perspectives—prior knowledge that they can juxtapose with the controlling narratives they're working through—they can make critical decisions, alter the frames that structure their play, and create new narratives and performances that seem more just or ethical to them. The stories of Elena and Jamal are deliberately utopian views, constructed not to suggest real-world probabilities, but to offer a vision of how resistant

play might function; how certain culturally-bound acts of transfer might be disrupted.

Aesthetics in Counter-Narrative Construction

We employed multiple aesthetic and pedagogical strategies in our scenarios, intending to prompt the reader's emotional response and promote ethical questioning. We used principles associated with narrative construction to understand the mindsets of young people playing through historical scenarios and offer some insight into what young people and the adults who facilitate such experiences might do to "interrupt" the embodiment inherent in playing through these scenarios. The strategies we will highlight here are: freezing the action, responding with counter-narratives, calling attention to gaps and slippages in meaning, and employing multiple stances of analysis in our writing.

Our first strategy derives from the work of Boal (1985), who, in his forum theatre methodology, "freezes" the action of a scene at a point in which the protagonist must make a decision regarding how to deal with the (mis)use of power by authority. After the freeze, Boal's audience (he employs the term "spect-actors") tests out various strategies for the protagonist to employ to overcome this subjugation. In our scenarios, this temporal intervention did not lead to audience interaction with the narrative (due to the stories' form), but rather to a specific choice made by the protagonists, with utopic results. Thus, the choices we had our protagonists make represent only one solution to the problems they find themselves facing. In the classroom, we might ask students to create multiple solutions inspired by different character interactions with the problem.

We also employed counter-narratives—those stories of subaltern, resistance to dominant cultural norms, assumptions, and expectations—in our scenarios. These counter-narratives derived from information the protagonists had about the period; only because they had this knowledge were they able to weave it into the play they were participating in. The additional perspectives provided by the young people would have come from primary and secondary artifacts and texts they researched on their own or were shown or directed to by adult facilitators. The insertion of these perspectives aligns with Bell and Roberts' (2010) strategy of revealing concealed narratives through interrogation of the dominant scenario often at work in children's play.

In addition to referencing these counter-narratives, we had our protagonists call attention to gaps and slippages (Iser, 1980) in the artifacts they were using for their play. The lives of the Taino people, for example, are completely absent from the game of *Puerto Rico* as it is published, as Elena points out. These gaps and slippages provide opportunities for players to "fill in" as they see fit—yet this includes the opportunity *not* to fill in the gaps and leave the silences as they stand. In our story, the players choose to fill in the gaps because they care about the absence they represent.

One strategy for "filling in" Iser's gaps is to recast and rewrite given historical scenarios. In addition to creating voices not present in the scenarios, recasting and rewriting can also talk back to stock responses or stereotypes as part of play (Bell & Roberts, 2010). As mentioned above, this strategy depends upon knowledge of counter-narratives; players cannot talk back to stereotypes, for example, unless they recognize them as stereotypes, and this recognition is based on knowledge and understanding of the complexities of culture(s) from within.

Finally, in our writing we employed two stances of analysis suggested by social studies education scholars Levstik and Barton (2005). We adopted explicit positionalities on *cause and effect* and *moral response* as authors, and conveyed those stances conveyed within the scenarios. Through the stance of cause and effect, fiction can make connections between otherwise disparate events or ideas. The moral response stance allows the characters to judge the actions of people in history from a contemporary standpoint, such as when Jamal insists the abolitionist have the opportunity to speak, or when Graham and Elena raise questions about the absence of indigenous people from the *Puerto Rico* colonial trading scenario. Whether in P-12 or higher education, a counter-colonial methodology necessitates that instructors and students adopt moral response stances, with the open possibility that these stances may lead to diverse, even contradictory, responses to the action. Instructors and students engage the characters' questioning process as a means for personal reflection on issues such as cultural and economic domination, othering, and response/resistance.

Implications

If the artifacts and performances of culture function in ways that often (re)produce colonial power relations (A. Chappell, 2008), then we suggest that counter mimesis (McKenzie, 2000) can also structure play.

Through a prolonged engagement with ethical questions, deconstruction and reconstruction, we can teach young people to play—and adults to facilitate that play—differently. This pedagogical strategy can serve to counter the narratives that young people are often expected to engage in and assimilate into their understandings of both historical events and peoples and contemporary culture.

Through our scenarios highlighting moments of play—in particular, the moments when play can *change*—we worked to develop ideological clarity (Expósito & Favela, 2003) regarding the ways that play and storytelling might contribute to internalized systems of social dominance, as well as re-configurations of those systems toward care and justice. We are sensitive to the ethical implications of our narrative inquiry. While we strive to create a utopian "third space" (Bhabha, 1994) for examining the power of social dominance, we also recognize JanMohamed's (1985) stance that it is impossible to "negate" dominant culture in order to comprehend the "Other." Thus, we worked to interrupt dominant culture and include counter-narratives rather than attempt such a negation. Rather than a comprehension of "the Other," we wanted to hint toward the complex social questions that are not typically addressed in scenarios such as the ones we built upon. Like Barone's (2000) "artful writer-persuader," we worked to relinquish control of interpretation, putting the reader in the center of the meaning-making process.

Yet we are conscious of the deep introspection required of writers—researcher, teacher, and student—interested in counter-narrative storytelling. Tillman (2002) calls for culturally sensitive research that examines our positionalities within/across collaborations, and shifts spaces toward asset- and capacity-based views of participant knowledge. Such sensitivity can apply to the ways that we as writers view our characters, the power of their voices, and the expertise they convey. Through such a proactive reflective and critical stance, writers can explicitly address neo-liberal epistemologies (Scheurich and Young, 1997). For example, the social studies textbook often emphasizes the end of slavery rather than an analysis of its explicit historic impact or its implicit structuring of economies today. This stance requires self-reflection, and an analysis of the relation between self and social systems of power (Milner, 2007).

As Leavy (2013) suggests, there is strong potential for fiction writing or hybrid narrative research/fiction writing as a methodology of living inquiry. Fiction encourages the act of everyday witnessing to bring to light unquestioned curricular moments we struggle with culturally

(Coulter and Smith, 2009). Fiction writing helped us as researchers and teachers to envision utopian moments of resistant play, in which we questioned old scenarios and imagined new narratives. Future applications of this research involve reading these narrative constructions with our university students in the humanities and education, discussing the ethical dilemmas they pose, examining the aesthetic strategies used, and employing them during in-class writings, and reflecting on the applications of "interruption" as a counter-colonial strategy in our daily lives. We are committed to future enactments of narrative construction as potent vehicles for pedagogical conversation about nationhood and citizenship, and as conduits for alliance-building that results from such critical, creative processes, whether in P-12 or higher education.

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Drew Chappell, PhD, teaches at California State University Fullerton in the Department of Theatre and Dance. He is a performance studies scholar with research interests in popular performance forms, enculturation, globalization, and cultural export, as well as visual and narrative research methods. His edited book, *Children Under Construction: Critical Essays on Play as Curriculum,* was published by Peter Lang in 2010. He is also an award-winning playwright.

Sharon Verner Chappell, PhD, is Assistant Professor in the Elementary and Bilingual Education Department at California State University Fullerton. She is an arts-based researcher interested in teacher education and youth art-making toward social justice. Sharon taught K-8 multilingual, multicultural young people in Texas and California for six years before becoming a teacher educator. She has recently mounted the international bilingual arts exhibition at CSUF titled *Border Inspections: Arts-based Encounters with Language, Culture, Identity and Power*.