JoLLE@UGA®
JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

"We Don't Wanna Strait-Jacket You": Community, Curriculum and Critical Literacy in Urban Debate

Susan Cridland-Hughes

Abstract: This article explores the interaction between popular culture, community-based education, and the establishment of a critically literate debate community, using the case of City Debate as one example of how critical literacy is embedded and taught through curriculum. Debate has historically been conceptualized as a structurally rigid space for traditionally academic youth (Fine, 2001); however, in the nontraditional space of the urban debate community, instructors and students used access points rooted in both popular culture and Black culture to engage students in deep thought about national policy and the ethics of actions (Cridland-Hughes, 2017; Warner & Bruschke, 2001). Using ethnographic methods, including participant observation and interviews (Merriam, 1998), document analysis (Prior, 2003), and triangulation, I examine the framing and implementation of one urban debate community, looking for how curriculum and pedagogy meet community critical literacy goals.

Keywords: critical literacy, out-of-school literacy, debate pedagogy

Susan Cridland-Hughes is an Assistant Professor of English Education at Clemson University. Her research interests include critical literacy and pedagogy and the literacy practices of out-of-school communities. Recent publications include "The Atlanta Urban Debate League: Exploring the making of a critical literacy space" in the *American Educational History Journal* and "On securitization rhetoric, critical literacy, and affirming teaching: A philosophical exploration" in the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*

Introduction[1]

In the community of City Debate, literacy magic happens. From a policy resolution of 30 words emerges a full year of ideas, questions, conversations, and relationships. Through pages of arguments, tubs of evidence, and countless hours of discussion, students refine initial ideas into a policy recommendation for a current issue of importance on the national and international stage. At the same time, writing, reading, speaking, and listening flow seamlessly together as debaters consider, contemplate, disagree, and challenge their opponents. Occasionally and profoundly, writing and speaking are transcended by social action.

Once weekly, a cross-section of debaters, scholars and activists congregate at City Debate, an afterschool debate community in a large Southeastern city. Together they challenge each other to think hard, to consider broad implications, and to push themselves to apply those ideas to better their lives and the communities in which they interact. In this space, community-based education and critical literacy theory merge to support youth in developing twin foci in discourse and action. Still the question remains, how does a community cultivate critical literacy through curricular philosophy and pedagogical resources?

Background and Review of Related Literature

This study draws on scholarship into out-of-school literacy experiences as key sources of youth literacy development (Cook-Gumperz & Keller-Cohen, 1993; Hull & Schultz, 2002;). In one strand of out-of-school literacy research, popular culture is seen as infusing literacy activities in traditional classrooms, demonstrating the one-way permeable boundary between in-school and home cultures. Dyson's (1999) work describing how young children bring popular culture experiences into their writing, tracing the inclusion of cultural characters in the stories of young children, explores how young children carve out room for integrating their out-of-school experiences into their schooled spaces. Additionally, Morrell (2002) explores how popular culture can engage youth in critical pedagogy within a schooling experience, and, in his work with Duncan-Andrade (2008), specifically advocates for teaching young adults to engage in youth participatory action research as a means of teaching critical pedagogy. Still other research in this strand emphasizes how popular culture and out-of-school literacy practices can help students engage with learning activities in more traditional settings. For example, Jocson (2006) and her discussion of one youth's response to Bob Dylan reflect how youth use popular culture to explore alternate identities.

In a separate but connected strand of research, out-of-school spaces are seen as a means of augmenting the official, incomplete knowledge transmitted inside of school. In this research, schools provide a limited curriculum that does not support the needs of historically marginalized youth, and external spaces become areas of connection and identity development. Blackburn (2003) described this phenomenon in her discussion of youth literacy practices at The Loft, a safe space away from school for queer youth to explore, advocate, and organize. Fisher (2003) looks at the close ties between nontraditional learning spaces and Black literacy

[1] I acknowledge that there is a gender spectrum and that myriad pronouns exist that I can use when referring to individuals in my writing. Throughout this article I will use "he" to refer to individuals who identify as male, "she" to refer to individuals who identify as female, and "ze" for individuals who identify as gender-neutral. I have selected these pronouns because I believe they are more familiar for a diverse audience of readers. In instances where individuals expressed a preference for particular pronouns, I have incorporated those requests into my manuscript.

practices, exploring Black bookstores as providers of additional knowledge inaccessible through traditional schooling. Fisher (2009) also traces the historical relationship between the magazines and textual productions of the Black arts movement and the supplemental schools provided to Black youth who were not learning culturally-relevant material in public schools. This work builds on the previous descriptions of Black literate thought in McHenry and Heath's (1994) work, where they challenge the notion of African American culture as primarily oral. Instead, McHenry and Heath offer a rich exploration of the literacy practices of African Americans in the 1800s, centered in Black community spaces.

This rich body of work acknowledges that intellectual and creative activities outside of school settings support and augment knowledge broadly construed. This is a theme that is also present in much of the research on urban debate leagues (UDL)—Mezuk (2009) documents this in her analysis of urban debate communities as particularly important spaces for supporting Black male youth in developing schooled literacies, and Wolf (2008) argues that the relationships built within urban debate communities are uniquely tied to the communities of practice the UDL cultivates. Importantly, it is the spaces working in tandem that allow youth access to both school-based and community-based knowledge, creating a multidirectional flow that values both in-school and out-of-school learning.

"The answer to the how question of teaching critical literacy, then, is through dialogue with communities and through building from the ground level up."

Theoretical Framework for Critical Literacy and Curriculum

Critical literacy provides a framework for this study, focusing on the idea of literacy as extending past the acts of decoding texts and parsing words. Shor (1992) describes critical literacy as "habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning… to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology and personal consequences of any action" (p. 4). In this definition, Shor emphasizes the importance of both deep reading and social application of literacy knowledge—it is not enough for one to comprehend text or media; instead, critical literacy is a theory of applied and critiqued knowledge. Freire (1970/1997) argues for the idea of praxis and the emphasis on reflection then action for those who are always becoming and always unfinished. Freire's notion of praxis coupled with the idea of dialogue as "the essence of revolutionary action" (p.117) offers a key perspective for understanding how a community built on discussion and exploration of disparate ideas becomes key to advocacy and humanization.

One of the abiding questions in literacy is how do we teach critical literacy? As we explore the idea of critical literacy as a curricular act, Freirean pedagogy offers the beginnings of an answer. In describing the adult literacy program in Brazil, Freire (1970/1997) emphasizes the importance of a curriculum generated by the adult learners, one in which they choose even the words they wish to explore and understand. This pedagogy is always grounded in the space and time of the learners. The answer to the how question of teaching critical literacy, then, is through dialogue with communities and through building from the ground level up. With schools more and more defined by rigid curriculums, this ground level pedagogical emergence is more likely to occur outside of school settings where less formal learning communities offer space for the type of curricular freedom

advocated by Freire. There are ways for schools to resist the rigid curriculums, including the model offered by Morrell and Duncan-Andrade (2010) of student investigation. Additionally, classroom teachers can cultivate an ethos that I term "caring critical literacy" (Cridland-Hughes, 2015), where I argue that teachers should reframe classrooms as spaces to make students whole. However, our educational landscape, both at the national and the local level, does not always support educational spaces that resist assessment and evaluation, with curricular flexibility always operating in tension with assessment culture.

Shor (1999) also reflects that "this is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses and identities in a world not yet finished, just or humane" (p.2). This acknowledgement of "unfinishedness" crystallizes the idea that we as human actors are negotiating our space, our belief and our humanity through our literacy practices. It stands to reason, then, that the idea of critical literacy and a pedagogy of critical thought rests on dual beliefs in the importance of deep reflection about society and the centrality of curricular freedom. For purposes of this study, curriculum and pedagogy become the vehicles through which critical literacy beliefs flow for the community.

Method

This qualitative study draws on six years of observation and interviews in City Debate from 2004-2010. All participant names as well as local sites are pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality. Over the course of my observation, I wrote ethnographic field notes for both spaces, videotaped varsity policy debate breakout sessions and collected documents disseminated by the community. In the second phase of data collection, I conducted in-depth interviews with participants about their literacy beliefs and the activities of the community.

As I analyzed the collected data, I assigned first level codes connected with practices of critical literacy in the community that exhibited characteristics consistent with Shor's (1992) definition of critical literacy. I then collapsed those codes into the larger theme of curricular philosophy and practice (Appendix A).

City Debate was a once-weekly debate program housed on the site of a local college, and students from area high schools arrived on Wednesday evenings to spend two hours practicing debate and working with local college debaters from Pemberton University, an elite private institution, and Southeast University, a regional public university in the heart of a major Southeastern city. The Wednesday meetings included an all-group opening assembly and smaller breakout sessions, where I primarily observed students in the varsity policy debate breakout session (VPDBS) as they were most likely to attend on a regular basis.

In a recent publication (Cridland-Hughes, 2016), I discuss the history of the urban debate leagues (UDLs), specifically focusing on how they emerged from an historic rupture in Black public-school debate participation in one city in the South. This rupture resulted in what Fine (2001) describes as a competitive debate realm that is predominantly White, with only 2% of debaters identifying as African American. When considering what encompasses the debate community, then, it is important to note that while UDLs were predominantly Black, the larger competitive debate community did not reflect those demographics.

Students attending City Debate predominantly identified as Black, although there were schools with students who identified as a range of ethnicities. However, outside of their participation in City Debate and the UDL-specific tournaments, participants debated students from mostly White,

middle-class schools. The Varsity Policy Debate Breakout Session (VPDBS) was more diverse than most breakout sessions, with Asian American, White, and Black participants as well as youth, college-aged participants and myself as an older adult (see Table 1 for more information). On a typical Wednesday, three to five students would attend, mostly Lexy, Minh, and Robb, with Cole and Jim acting as lab leaders. Since there was a shortage of volunteers, I both participated as a lab facilitator and audio and video recorded the lab sessions. My background is important for context: I am a White woman with no previous debate experience, but I coached for a UDL during my time teaching high school. As I began negotiating access with the City Debate community, I was aware that the community had historically included people of color and of the tensions between UDL communities and the larger debate communities. I was also aware of the ongoing conversations around the academic value of debate for urban communities. It is also worth noting that there have been ongoing discussions regarding the use of the term "urban" and whether it becomes code for a predominantly Black debate community. I attended the once weekly meetings as first an observer and later a volunteer, gathering data in the opening assembly and the varsity policy debate breakout session.

Table 1

Participants in Varsity Policy Debate Breakout Session

Participant	Age	Race/ethnicity	Gender	Schooling experience
Jamal	30s	African American	Male	Pemberton University
Jay	20	African American	Male	Southeast University
Ben	60s	White	Male	Pemberton University
Cole	Early 20s	African American	Male	Southeast University, Green High School
Susan	30	White	Female	Pemberton University
Robb	17	African American	Female	Williams High School
Leigh	17	African American	Female	Green High School
Jim	19	White	Male	Southeast University
Minh	17	Asian American	Male	Green High School
Lexy	18	African American	Female	Green High School
Sean	17	White	Male	Green High School

In order to structure the findings, I first discuss the underlying curricular philosophy of City Debate, then the curricular resources of the program. Next, I describe specific pedagogical tools of the program and end by exploring how the philosophy of critical and reflective pedagogy is disseminated to participating volunteers and youth members.

Pedagogical Philosophy and Tools of City Debate

Pedagogy operates as the backbone of a learning space, a scaffold for the framing of the philosophies and tools of the community. Decisions about the central concepts of a discipline and how to teach those ideas reveal significant and important clues about the community. In some cases, pedagogy reveals a strong grounding in traditional education and a continuation of the status quo. In other spaces, pedagogy reflects a desire to teach in a way that challenges past injustices. When teaching with a social justice lens, pedagogy can operate as a "tool of revolutionary change" (Morrell, 2008, xii).

In the context of City Debate, the pedagogy of the community reflects the belief that debate offers the tools for written and oral analysis as well as critical and informed interaction in the world. This perspective emerges as community members talk about the facilitation of youth skill development as well as in the resources made available to youth participants and lab leaders. On a fundamental level, City Debate participants articulate the belief that debate pedagogy allows for the cultivation of skills that support the development of youth participants as "citizen activists."

It is with this conception of the role of pedagogy that I begin to explore teaching and learning in City Debate. My conception of pedagogy includes not only the program's curricular philosophy but also the curriculum and teaching strategies I observed.

The curricular philosophy of City Debate. I arrived at the first session of City Debate for the school year and participated in an on-site training session for new volunteers. On-site training sessions were luxuries; most days there were more students than volunteers and the need for lab leaders superseded the cultivation of thoughtful teaching. On this day, however, transportation had not yet been negotiated with the school system and Jamal referred to the session as "the pre-grand opening." Jamal was the director of City Debate, and a central figure of respect and appreciation for most students in the community. As a Black male in a predominantly White national debate community, Jamal was a key signal that this was a welcoming space for the youth of City Debate.

"What's going on in education is kind of like warfare." Jamal described the City Debate approach to curriculum as a triad approach to curriculum, consisting of critical reading, critical writing, and oral communication. When Jamal introduced this triad approach to curriculum in the training session, he began by talking about the United States military and the triad approach to nuclear weapons of air, land, and sea. He commented, "What's going on in education is kind of like warfare" (Training session, 9/12/2007).

Jamal linked the U.S. military's approach to nuclear weapons and the curricular philosophy of City Debate deliberately. Jamal's connection of debate education and military strategy described how City Debate approached debate education from all possible communicative fronts. He connected the fronts of land, air, and sea for the military with City Debate's focus on reading, writing, and speaking. This philosophy of integrated communication reflected the structure of policy debate and the complex interactions between reading, writing, speaking, and listening that occur within a policy debate round. Specifically, students in the round

read to prepare cases, write, and organize set arguments, listen to the arguments offered on the opposing side, and then verbally respond to those arguments. Students who hope to fully interact in the debate round, then, cannot rely solely on competency within one form of communication. Instead, they must have the capacity to switch forms of communication based on the particular speech in the round.

Explored in more depth, however, Jamal used the military metaphor to convey a sense of urgency regarding the importance of teaching students to think critically about their debate resources and their larger context. Invoking the image of warfare regarding education forced the volunteers to take their teaching role seriously. For Jamal, teaching youth in City Debate was an opportunity to "[equip] them with the ability to become advocates for social change in their communities and be able to articulate it in a way that causes people to have to listen" (Interview, 9-15-2009). Lab leaders and volunteers in City Debate understood and internalized this sense of urgency. Jay, a lab leader and former participant in City Debate, commented "most people see this as an extracurricular activity…as a fun little mind game. But for the inner-city youth it's more of a lifeline" (Interview, 6-26-2009). Debate pedagogy grounded the activities of the program, but the goal was not debate success but rather success in life.

The triad approach to curriculum emphasized oral communication, critical writing, and critical reading as the three components necessary to developing communicative competency. In this curricular model, all three elements occupied equal roles in the larger goal of developing engaged communication skills. In the triad approach to curriculum, the word "critical" preceded both reading and writing. The goal of communication and the curricular philosophy of City Debate reflected the fundamental belief that communication must be reflective, thoughtful, and active. For City Debate, reading, writing, and speaking could only be effective modes of communication if youth participants were also critical consumers and users of knowledge. This was a community where literacy operated on a deeper level than decoding of words.

"We don't wanna strait-jacket you": Curricular flexibility. Although there are specific resources available for the lab leaders and volunteers in City Debate, the community emphasizes creativity and individualized instruction. In previous studies into urban debate leagues, student debaters described a program that gave them freedom over curricular choices (Cridland-Hughes, 2016). This belief in the importance of freedom surfaced again when discussing curriculum with the City Debate volunteers. Jamal explained, "We don't wanna strait-jacket you" (Training Session, 9/12/07). Instead of being provided previously developed resources and a strictly regimented curriculum, lab leaders were expected to link to the debate topic in a way that was relevant, thoughtful, and aware of the participation and skill level of the youth participants. Some examples of these links included referencing current local events or including pop culture, but the type of link was less important than the connection with the community.

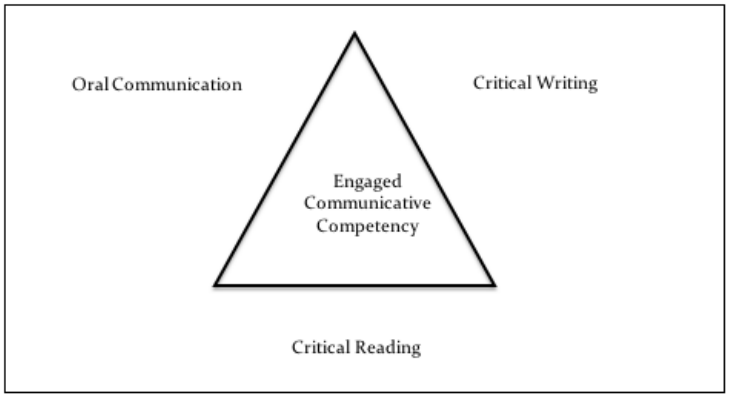

Figure 1. *Engaged communicative competency*

Although staff emphasized curricular flexibility as a central tenet of City Debate, it is worth noting that this flexibility operated within the rigid structure of policy debate. The policy debate format could not be changed to allow students more time, support from staff or peers, or a different order of speeches. The debate itself and interaction in the debate followed the same sequence, the same times, and the same argument structure. Initially, this appears to be antithetical to the flexibility espoused by the community. Looking more closely, however, curricular flexibility appears in the diversity of topics addressed under the umbrella of one resolution. For example, in 2003, students participating in high school debate were charged with crafting a policy that would substantially increase protection of marine resources. Affirmative plans crafted by students ranged from limiting the dumping of ballast water in foreign seas to more stringently regulating the waste produced by cruise ships. In 2008, the resolution required that the affirmative policy through the United States Federal Government provide substantial assistance for sub-Saharan Africa. The resolution itself has some structures that cannot be changed: the group responsible for the assistance has to be connected with the United States Federal Government, the location of the assistance provided has to be sub-Saharan Africa. However, the question of what constitutes assistance allows for youth participants to explore education, or healthcare, or even infrastructure support. Each of those options requires a different subset of research on the status quo of that particular topic in sub-Saharan Africa and that research becomes a negotiation between the students and the lab leaders in each breakout session. The lab leaders for the varsity policy debate breakout session (VPDBS) worked closely with one student, Robb, who was preparing a case for providing assistance focused on distributing water. Other debaters emphasized the development of community health liaisons and still other teams advocated distributing condoms as a means of controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS. When debating on the negative side, students often explored critical theory to explore, for example, the implications of establishing the United States Federal Government as the actor in other nations; students developed arguments about why capitalism is bad, or why securitization rhetoric is dangerous.

In many ways, the limits of policy debate as a structure inspired youth to find more freedom in the curriculum. More specific to City Debate as a program, the day-to-day operations of the varsity policy debate session reflected the immediate debate-related activities of the community, and instruction was tailored to the performative and analytical needs of the participating youth.

"In many ways, the limits of policy debate as a structure inspired youth to find more freedom in the curriculum."

Implementing the triad approach to curriculum in City Debate. The enactment of the triad approach to curriculum depended heavily on the specific time and space of the community interaction. City Debate operated in two linked, but distinct spheres. In the opening assembly, students gathered in a large group to listen as Jamal welcomed them and made announcements specific to the day. Students then broke into individual sessions based on level and form of debate participation. Although lab leaders in each session were responsible for the curriculum of their individual sessions, they had access to multiple supplemental resources to support their teaching. Resources came from Jamal, from summer debate camps, from lab leaders' own experiences, and from the youth in the program.

P-D.I.D.D.I, 2PAC, and Who ARE you?. Jamal and City Debate members provided materials specific to the development of debate skills and the evaluation of student competencies, as well as more general information about current events and issues of relevance to youth participants. Developed materials incorporated knowledge of current events and popular culture considered relevant to the urban students attending City Debate. Acronyms for central components of the program drew on students' prior knowledge of popular hip-hop figures like P Diddy (Sean Combs), Tupac Shakur, and T.I. (Clifford Joseph Harris, Jr.), the latter of whom grew up in a working-class neighborhood in a city much like the location of City Debate. Arguing for the inclusion of popular culture into learning activities, Morrell (2004) explains that hip hop music "represents a resistant voice of today's youth through its articulation of problems that the young people…face on a daily basis" (p.59). He goes on to describe hip hop as a resistant voice and popular music as performative and activist. One of the goals of City Debate is to help youth cultivate their ability to think and speak critically about issues of social justice. By incorporating recognizable names in the curriculum of City Debate, Jamal and City Debate staff members create a canonical listing of activist role models for the community.

In the training session, Jamal introduced staff to foundational skills for debate participation by exploring the P-D.I.D.D.I. sheet, the Personal Debater Inventory for Directional Development and Illumination (Appendix B). This document operated as the central written curriculum for City Debate. Staff were expected to complete the inventory for each student as they progressed through the program.

The P-D.I.D.D.I sheet itself was subdivided into eight categories: basic concepts, the affirmative case, the negative case, the disadvantage, flowing and listening, debate etiquette (community and respect), reading comprehension and articulation, and nonverbal communication.

Basic concepts. Concepts considered central to argumentation and fundamental to participation in debate comprised the first category. This section of the P-D.I.D.D.I sheet reflected the basic information necessary to begin participation in debate. The first category on the inventory is labeled 2PAC and focuses on presentation and content. The next category was titled "Who ARE you?" For this second skill, the focus was on argumentation and the parts of an argument, including assertion, reasoning, and evidence. The next acronym, D.R.M.O., addressed the refutation of arguments using denial, reversal, minimization, and outweighing. The final acronym was M.R.T.—M stood for magnitude of the problem, R stood for risk that it would actually occur, and T stood for the time frame in which it would come to pass. Other concepts included in the Basic Concepts category included information about the actual structure of the debate round, the parts of a debate, speeches, and associated time limits.

The affirmative, the negative, and the disadvantage. In these three categories, the curriculum focused on in-depth knowledge of the two sides participating in the debate round. These sections required that youth participants be aware of debate vocabulary and the structure of a debate in order to understand their role in the debate round. In addition, skills covered in these three categories included deliberate discussion about the construction of arguments, writing and crafting cases, and effective debate research.

Flowing and listening. This category focused on skills necessary to be an active listener in the debate round. Concepts covered in this section of the curriculum included practice in flowing oral communication in progressively more difficult

settings. Flowing involved creating a written record of the arguments in the debate round and required a solid understanding of how to make short notes that allowed participants to respond to the oral arguments presented by the other team.

Debate etiquette (community and respect). The P-D.I.D.D.I. curriculum intentionally included a section on behavior before, within, and after the debate round. Debate participation required constant challenging of ideas, and City Debate explicitly focused on teaching students skills to manage the anxiety produced in that intellectual conflict. This notion of community and respect was reinforced during end-of-year awards, when City Debate recognized not just competitive success in debate but also individual perspectives. These individual perspectives were not vetted by City Debate in advance, and this is important for understanding the faith the community put in its youth. One young man, currently starting his own political organization, recited an original oratory on war with the following lines: "we should teach a child civics so he can apply it to life as a productive citizen in this country" and "[Obama] is a living testament that we can no longer use the excuse that we cannot achieve" (Field Notes, Awards Dinner, 3-30-2008). I noted in my field notes that his words, "although delivered powerfully, seemed to be making some people uncomfortable, especially when he talked about whether Black people have a right to blame others for the community's underachievement…Jamal always talks about the importance of multiple perspectives, though, and the community listened respectfully as the student shared his" (Field Notes, Awards Dinner, 3-30-2008). This is a key example of how youth participants experienced both support from the community and opportunities to have their voices centered in the dialogue. Jamal referred to City Debate as a place where they give out "buckets of love…" and awarded Jones Middle School the community award, for demonstrating "what it means to be community, in the midst of all the notion of competition, it is community that binds us all together" (Awards Dinner, 3-30-2008).

Reading comprehension and articulation. Debate as an activity required interaction with and interpretation of textual evidence. Youth participants were monitored for their ability to read and explain text. In addition, they were given structured opportunities for participation and engagement with text.

Nonverbal communication. Youth participants were coached to be aware of body language and their nonverbal cues. Although this was taught in the context of the debate round, youth also practiced ways of controlling the messages presented through their body language.

The P-D.I.D.D.I. sheet operated as the primary written curriculum of City Debate. Each acronym reflected a set of debate skills that students were expected to learn and offered lab leaders a means of structuring their teaching for the semester. Although the written curriculum for the program never explicitly referenced the three philosophical underpinnings of the program, the skills central to the inventory reflected an awareness of the goal of critical reading, critical writing, and oral communication. The curriculum does not explicitly include any reflection or discussion on how these skills will develop thoughtful students. However, Jamal called the M.R.T. (magnitude, risk, and time line) acronym "the goal of an undergraduate education—the ability to make good, sound decisions…" (Training Session, 09/12/2007). In this quote, Jamal focused on what he saw as the importance of debate pedagogy, the ability to apply analysis to life decisions. Jamal went beyond the intended goal of the P-D.I.D.D.I. sheet of inventorying individual debate skills to reflecting on

how students could then use those skills in situations outside of debate participation. This became a part of the education and support of new volunteers.

Supplementary resources in the Varsity Policy Debate Breakout Session. Although City Debate provided a skeleton curriculum for students just beginning to participate in policy debate, the students in the varsity policy debate breakout session had moved beyond the minimal inventory offered by the P-D.I.D.D.I. sheet. These students relied on supplemental resources to push their thinking and practice. For these students, City Debate offered access to key resources for competitive success.

In order to be competitive at the highest levels of debate, many students in the VPDBS attended intensive summer research sessions held at colleges and universities across the country. These summer debate camps, ranging from one to six weeks in duration, resulted in the development of highly edited volumes that provided a range of resources for students to use in the cultivation and refinement of individual cases. One such volume used in City Debate was the 2008 Topic Research Guide, an 88-page introduction to the topic for the 2008-2009 school year (see sample in Appendix C). I include this appendix as an example of the types of resources lab leaders and students accessed to help craft and refine arguments.

Students in the varsity policy debate group also regularly relied on lab leaders as a resource for developing as debaters. Lab leaders for this group were college debaters with multiple years of nationally competitive debate experience. The experience of the lab leaders set City Debate in general and the varsity policy debate breakout session specifically apart from the school-based debate programs. At both Green and Williams High School, teachers facilitating the team had little to no competitive debate experience. In contrast, all of the lab leaders at City Debate had or were currently actively debating in college programs. Knowledge accumulated from years of debating could not be replicated with any resource other than the members of the community.

In addition to the actual debate experience, lab leaders came with files of knowledge on standard debate arguments. In the case of the varsity policy debate breakout session, lab leaders Cole and Jim were active high school and collegiate debaters with six to eight years of electronic and hard copies of standard debate files created for use in national level competition. These files operated as additional resources as students in the VPDBS regularly requested access to and instruction in common debate arguments. These arguments included debate kritiks, sophisticated critical arguments that incorporated questions about the underlying philosophy of whatever course of action was advocated in the debate round. Students referenced the arguments of Foucault, Agamben, and assorted other philosophers to challenge the positions of other debaters, exploring the nuances of philosophies at a level usually reserved for intensive college courses. In one such discussion, participants explored the idea that exclusion in debate topic choice leads to the extermination of dissenting voices (04/02/08):

> Cole: Their interpretation is exclusive. It tells us we can't debate the way we want and forces us to fit within this little box, and that's an example of what Agamben calls sovereignty. They just redraw the lines of the topic and try to exclude us. And the impact—what's the impact? Can you tell me? Lots of acts exclude people. Just give me any reason why. There's not a correct answer to this question. There's not a final one answer.

Like if you wanted to debate and then someone was like, "no you can't debate because you're black." How would that make you feel?
Robb: Mad.
Cole: Yes. Okay, now how is that any different from the other team being like, "You can't talk about what you want because we have this traditional topic and you don't fit. Go home."
Robb: You kind of – how can I explain this? It's not really relating- I'm not really relating to kind of like a gang-
Cole: Okay.
Robb: Like, I don't know. And you don't really get to choose what gang and they can exclude you but in terms of a debate-
Cole: Are you answering right now or are you-
Robb: I'm answering.
Cole: No no no. I'm asking how it impacted yourself.
Robb: Impact? Why is it bad to exclude?
Cole: Why is it bad to exclude? Let's bring this just to a conversation.
(new students arrive in session)
Hey, what's up? Let's pretend this is just a conversation we were having. Okay, you can't even talk about something and Sean was like, "No, I don't want to talk to you."
Robb: *(comment unintelligible)*
Cole: Sure, it increases education, but it's also_____ exclude people. Because that's the basis for what? Think about it this way. Excluding people leads to other exclusion, which leads to what in the end? I mean there's not a correct answer. Like think about-
Robb: Extermination then?
Cole: Sure. Something real bad, right? Because it's the basis for extermination. Okay, that's what Agamben says, right?

> Every genocide and stuff that's always happened has been based on line-drawing.

In this example, Cole and Robb explore the reasons behind exclusion in a small debate interaction and look at the larger philosophical problem of exclusionary behavior. Youth participants understood the complexities of the Agamben kritik and other philosophical arguments and applied these nuances to building strong responses to other debate arguments.

However, intellectual interaction with philosophical arguments was not limited to debate rounds or debate strategy. VPDBS members internalized these arguments and discussed them with other members of the City Debate community in noncompetitive arenas. Jamal described Robb explaining Foucault to other students as he was taking them home after one City Debate meeting (02/27/2008):

> And so the students were changing because their knowledge and what they understood was changing. So now, you have them having engaged in political discussions or philosophical discussion. You know, I'll never forget, I was taking some students home and Robb got in this big discussion with the students about Foucault. You know, and I was sitting there just kind of like what the heck? You know, because … she definitely had a much more intimate understanding I would say than the average person. The fact that she even knew who it was probably puts her in a different ballpark than most students. But the fact that she understood enough to engage in a discussion with her peers and to explain it to them in a way that was not talking down to them but was trying to explain her perspective on a particular idea, I thought was amazing, because she had done- not only just learned

> a fairly complex set of ideas, but was communicating them in a way that she could empower and educate her peers about it. And I think the same thing goes on with the students when we, you know, that I've seen at CAD (Community-assisted debate program), elementary kids- I mean the middle school kids. They will go off about the topic- you know, we're talking about Africa this year, you know, and I'm even remembering the topic we had about genocide in Sudan a couple years ago. They still have this very intimate and wide range of knowledge about the topic that was a part of them- that became a part of them some kind of way.

As Jamal explained, debate-related arguments were not solely to be used in competition but rather were ideas to be engaged, both internally and with other critical thinkers. Personal experience, debate files, and other resources considered supplemental in other settings comprised the entirety of the curriculum of the VPDBS. At each meeting, students received individualized instruction designed to meet their competitive debate needs. I will discuss this in detail in the Pedagogical Activities in the VPDBS section, but the structure of the VPDBS was such that the curriculum was guided entirely by the youth in attendance; resources for the subsequent session were requested by students during the current session. These resources ranged from information about debate strategy and debate experience to philosophical conversations about the nature of existence and deep explanations of political systems. Students in the VPDBS engaged with text as a means of exploring different viewpoints, a way to try on critical lenses with which to view the world.

Pedagogical activities in City Debate. Students in City Debate participated in pedagogical activities that deepened thinking about debate as well as critical reflection on current events in society. These activities challenged students to articulate their beliefs and support those beliefs with research and evidence. Students discussed current events, read supporting evidence, constructed arguments reflecting points of view, and learned to articulate those arguments through performance.

Pedagogy in the opening assembly. The opening assembly of City Debate operated as a specific space of communicative instruction. Although the overarching theme of this 15- minute interaction was one of unification and community, Jamal incorporated pedagogical activities designed to support the development of thoughtful and engaged youth. Pedagogical activities in the opening assembly emphasized the cultivation of general communication activities rather than instruction specific to debate. Interactions in the opening assembly helped students become comfortable with developing opinions and sharing those opinions with peers. The opening session offered a space to practice speaking in front of others and articulating opinions and to celebrate student achievements. During this time, Jamal introduced a topic for a Thinkwrite, a question asked at the beginning of City Debate usually related to current events. Jamal provided students with an oral prompt, gave them time to respond, then asked for students to share out. Students and staff wrote individual responses, and then participants volunteered to read their responses. Topics for Thinkwrites ranged from student and staff definitions of love and the best superpower to questions of how participants would spend the economic stimulus package authorized by Congress.

In one opening assembly, Jamal asked students to complete a Thinkwrite creating their own special holidays (03/18/09):

Jamal: The reality is this- is that I was looking up this month, and I came to the conclusion after a little research that people name every day [in the] year it seems is something special…the point I came to is that there's people always inventing a day or a holiday for their own benefit or for their own purpose or cause. So the Thinkwrite for today is this: this is the question. Give you just a few minutes here. Here's what it is. If you could create any holiday, if you could create your own holiday, what would it be, and why? Okay? You've got five minutes. Create your own holiday, okay? On the count of three—one, two, three…
(students start mumbling as they prepare to write)
Jamal: I'm gonna call on staff, too, so be prepared. Hey! Hey hey hey—you don't need to talk to write.
(students quiet down and write for three minutes)
Jamal: Okay, that's time. Who's gonna volunteer or do I need to call on somebody? Okay, beautiful. Y'all give the brother some love.
(Students clap and shout)
(Student shares his response for a day where everything would be free)
Jamal: I'm loving it.
(Students start to clap)
(Students share ideas for get money day, Give me money day, and "me" day).
Jamal: Whew. Okay, let's have some staff answers. Let me have Jay.
Jay: All right, uh…mine would be—it would be a specific day, because I believe that this specific day is the best day of any month, the 27th. And I believe the 27th should be an international day of service, all right? Because I believe that everyone should give back to your community because you can't complain about your community if you don't take strides to fix your community. So, the 27th of this month- every month, will be International Day of Service.
(student asks if you do that already on Earth Day)
Jay: You can do that too, but this is a new day.

Those who volunteered stood up, announced themselves, and were told to "be loud, articulate, commanding" (Jamal, 03/18/09). After the speaker finished, Jamal held a brief conversation with the volunteer, then asked both staff and students to "give them some love" (03/18/09). Regardless of the difficulties faced by the speaker or concerns about the relevance of the speech, student voice was respected, valued, and supported in the realm of the Thinkwrite.

"Students in City Debate participated in pedagogical activities that deepened thinking about debate as well as critical reflection on current events in society."

Although not directly connected to competitive debate competency, Thinkwrites acted as an important aspect of communication pedagogy. Students responded in writing to the prompt, allowing them to formulate ideas before participating orally. As students shared their ideas, Jamal prompted them to speak up, be proud of their opinion and their voice, and make sure that others could hear them. In a safe space, students received caring advice for how to support their own voice and explore their own beliefs. In addition, Jamal requested that staff participate in the Thinkwrite, saying "I'll be calling on staff, too, so be prepared" (Opening Assembly, 03/18/09). The inclusion of staff created an equal forum in which the students and the staff could share opinions as intellectual peers. Staff were expected to be "practitioners of the craft"

of debate, comfortable presenting beliefs and perspectives to be engaged by other members of the community (Fisher, 2007). Students gained knowledge from the staff opinions but were not made to feel as if those ideas were "right" in a fundamental way. Instead, public sharing operated as a structured conversation where all ideas were engaged seriously, examined for flaws and connected with bigger ideas.

Students in the VPDBS did not participate in Thinkwrites during the opening assembly. Instead, the Thinkwrite operated as a means of encouraging students with less debate experience and less competitive success than those in the varsity level breakout session. In some cases, lab leaders working with the VPDBS left for the breakout session as soon as all students had arrived, before the opening assembly.

Pedagogy in the VPDBS. In direct contrast to the general communicative practice in the opening assembly, pedagogical practices in the VPDBS focused heavily on the development of competitive debate competency. Students came with specific questions and requests that shaped the curriculum of the program. City Debate was the central space in which they developed as national level debaters.

Three specific pedagogical practices provided the foundation for most of the activities of the VPDBS: argument explanations, practice debates, and strategy sessions. These three foci reflected the important aspects of competitive debate success. Students used their participation in the varsity policy debate breakout session to develop strong arguments, refine the presentation of those arguments, and tailor debate strategies to take advantage of the weaknesses of opponents' cases. For each year, generic common arguments included political discussions of "cap and trade" policies, U.S. soft power, government spending, and the implications of U.S. hegemony, as well as theory-based arguments regarding utilitarianism, securitization, and exclusionary philosophies. These were generic arguments that could be applied across specific cases if debaters could establish links between the case and the critical argument.

Argument explanations usually began as a response to a request from youth participants to either explain an argument they had encountered at a debate tournament or to introduce a new argument that could strengthen the specific case of a team. It is important to note that if there were two teams present in the breakout session, it did not follow that both teams would need the same arguments for their cases. Both teams participated, however, because it was possible that they would face these arguments in debate rounds. Argument explanations began with a reading of the argument and then the lab leader would present a general overview of the argument. After the general overview, both lab leaders and youth posed questions that deepened understanding of the argument. In this example discussion of utilitarianism, Cole emphasizes the dual challenges of determining the value of human life and choosing between competing moral claims. He uses real-life examples such as the bombing of Japan in World War II and the Holocaust to demonstrate how utilitarianism could lead to atrocities. Argument explanations helped youth develop a sense of the nuances of an argument, deepening understanding of how that argument connected with the plan put forth by the other team (Breakout session, 02/27/08):

> Cole: People like- so generally- if predictions generally fail then Util[itarianism] cannot work. If you cannot accurately predict how conflicts will work out then it definitely can't work for you to be like the greatest number- greatest number of people [saved]…I don't necessarily know if this argument holds

water but it's like you're not a policy maker per se, you're like kind of an individual so even if it is inevitable that states act in certain ways, like states make utilitarian at all times, you are not a state and so you don't have to do that. You don't have to be personally implicated in the attitudes that you know- for you to make a decision supports I think will be your moral- being immoral is bad, there is an impact to immorality. Whatever the [first affirmative speech] is the impact that uh you don't have to be implicated in that. Whereas all their disad[vantage]s are kind of like not working. I don't necessarily think their argument is like great but.

[Cole goes back to first argument.] This is like your big offensive argument. So this is you know this is the internal link to this argument. Like util[itarianism] can't assume a value to life because any policy maker can use util[itarianism] to justify any policy that they want. And that that's bad. And so this is not your- your aff[irmative]- this is an impact. And in the links util[itarianism] is bad…So for instance the big problem with the ontology is how you decide between two competing moral claims…

Robb: But like what if-

Cole: I know that Util[itarianism] is not going to be better, right? Because util[itarianism] will make it seem as though the ontology is like really hard for you to determine. How do you decide between two moral claims? Well, how do you decide between you know invading Japan and not invading Japan using atomic bombs? Like we need to use_____ In cross-[examination], when they are asking you questions like that where it's like really simple you need to like pull counterquestions to them that are really really complicated. Right, since Util[itarianism] is like all this mathematical formula the more complicated the situation the harder it is for you to make a decision. Right. Util's not better- is not a better framework to use for a national _____

Robb: What if you don't have like a moral obligation? We don't pretend that the United States has a moral obligation.

Sean: But isn't the United States the only person who can do-

Cole: Well I don't understand why this argument is valid. They say- they say util- if they're saying that their impact outweighs yours, then-

Robb: Well our impact is dehumanization.

Cole: Are you joking?

Robb: No.

Cole: Well that's not a good situation.

Robb: It's not?

Cole: Because dehumanization might be bad but you don't solve all dehumanization you solve an instance of dehumanization.

Youth did not regularly use the language of these philosophical frameworks outside of the argument explanations, but they applied the ideas to their critiques of national policies. Explaining how she felt about the United States after reading for a military topic, Robb described how she "learned about Guantanamo Bay and all the stuff they do there. And I guess that's interesting 'cause before that I thought the United States—all they did was just do nice things and I learned that wasn't the case" (02/28/09). Robb applied her knowledge of utilitarianism to a critique of the United States as a nation acting in its best interests. In doing so, she demonstrated the application of knowledge outside of the boundaries of the debate round.

Practice debates focused on areas of performance and argumentation that youth participants or lab leaders identified as areas of weakness. In some

cases, youth requested additional practice with an argument they did not fully understand, such as hegemony or the idea that securitization rhetoric can result in less security. In other instances, debaters used the practice debates to revisit arguments they lost in previous debate rounds. In this example, Tran performed the securitization speech from a debate round he and his partner lost. First, Cole evaluates the performance of the speech, then he asks pointed questions to identify the areas where Tran does not have a clear understanding of the argument. He finally offers specific language for Tran to use to respond to questions about securitization:

> Cole: Great good. Um, that was actually real good. Um, things- first, what did you mean by your aff[irmative] advocating a counterplan?
> Tran: That's what I didn't know how to answer in the cross- ex[amination]. Because I thought it was just like a way to present a policy that would like to prove that we don't reject policy. We're not-
> Cole: If you don't advocate policy then you're not- like, for instance when they read a card saying that security discourse is bad because it doesn't advocate a policy, when you say we don't advocate this policy but this is an example of a policy that runs counter to those arguments. So you are advocating a counterplan, you're just doing it for a different reason, right? I mean, in a future debate you wouldn't like- like for instance, if this was the counterplan we read against Johnson, you would say absolutely we advocate a counterplan. But we don't advocate it as a way to decrease stability in Africa- like instability in Africa. Or a way to, you know, preserve U.S. hegemony. You can make a choice the first argument is to uh adopt and lie and you know the counterplan is an example of that and it's in your Sheet evidence there where it talks about how like the securitization can lead to _____ policies and their policies. Does that make sense?
> Tran: Yeah.
> Cole: Like that Sheets evidence says that like securitization if it's internalized by policymakers it can lead to them making better policies that don't exacerbate security problems.
> Tran: What does that mean?
> Cole: Like essentially that they can create policies that don't fall under the kritik and solve the affirmative.
> Tran: So if I'm like- so we should not run a counterplan and just on the line by line say that we don't straight up advocate policy-
> Cole: Yes, in this debate you should not run a counterplan. You can just like, "extend our Sheets evidence we can kind of" or you should be like "look, there's nothing about giving water to Africans that's necessarily and inherently securitizing. You know- that was their choice. Then read a piece of evidence that says that's a personal choice and we don't have to advocate that so we can give water to Africa we just don't do it with the means that you do. Read a couple cards about why they have to defend the political choice and the security issue.

Practice debates were a key strategy for individualizing curriculum—students presented individual speeches and lab leaders then evaluated those speeches for content, organization, and presentation. During this session, Tran read the speech as organized for a previous debate round. Cole critiqued the presentation initially, but then asked questions regarding the challenges Tran faced when attempting to defend the speech. Ultimately, Cole suggested a different way of thinking about the argument organization and the oral responses to

questions in cross-examination that helped Tran refine his language, argumentation and understanding of the concept of securitization discourse.

Strategy sessions most directly connected pedagogy in the VPDBS to competitive success. For each debate tournament, participants disclosed cases [also known as affirmatives or affs] and key arguments one to two weeks in advance of the tournament and the VPDBS spent the week before the tournament creating strategies for competing. These strategy sessions reflected a key role of the lab leaders at City Debate—although there were coaches in the individual schools, most coaches were not experienced debaters. Lab leaders brought both the experience of their own competition as well as their experience as debate judges.

In the VPDBS strategy sessions, participants focused on isolating winning arguments in a debate round. At one meeting, Sean asked Cole to look over a list of policy cases he might face at the next debate tournament. Under the overarching resolution about increasing aid to sub-Saharan Africa, teams advocated the provision of naval assistance for sub-Saharan Africa or the training of a medical doctor corps similar to the Peace Corps. The VPDBS offered a space for discussing the strategies for responding to each team's central argument (04/02/08):

> Cole: You already have some strategies in some of these affs. Let's talk about the affs that you don't have strategies for. Can you think of one that you don't?
> Sean: One was Naval assistance to the heart of Africa.
> Cole: And what was the advantage?
> Sean: Disease and –
> Tran: Heg[emony]?
> Sean: I don't think it was heg[emony].
> Cole: Naval assistance to the heart of Africa?
> Sean: Yes. What type of –
> Cole: Do you know about _____?
> *[Crosstalk]*
> Sean: Topical is the first part… Also, this is a case that I don't understand. It's just this case about – it's Med Flags. It's contained in China, but there's no like – war with China is inevitable type stuff, and how China is going to overtake the US.
> Cole: _____ that now?
> Sean: Yeah. And for advantages, they got like three impacts. First is radiation. Nuclear testing is another rule if we don't play China.
> Cole: Hold on. So, they're like provoking China? Like we send boats over there to provoke China into fighting us?
> Sean: No, this is Med Flags. Like we get medical doctors or something.

The goal of the strategy session was to create a plan for winning a competitive debate. This included outlining the arguments the affirmative team would make and identifying a strategy for responding to each on the negative side.

Winning a debate did not always mean making arguments with which debaters agreed. Although certain arguments were compelling in the debate round, debaters later acknowledged that a winning argument could also be an argument that lacked truth in the real world. As Sean explained (04/29/09):

> Debate has taught me that there is no objective truth about the world. Like nothing in any newspaper is always the whole story. It's not always true which definitely helps with the whole idea of changing the way we act about the world and the way we perceive the world. It means we view everything with a skeptic eye.

Youth participants in the VPDBS shifted between the arguments needed for competitive success and those that felt "true" as they interacted in their lives. Interestingly, those arguments that felt "true" were not the same for each debater—each participant took something different from the activity and the intellectual engagement with different perspectives. Even as participants learned to value different perspectives, they still sorted arguments outside of the competitive value, relying instead on the nuances of individual truth. This ability to separate arguments of personal value from arguments of competitive value indicates that participants developed habits of critical thought that they employed in real life situations.

Discussion

In City Debate, community, curriculum and critical literacy created a space of freedom, deep thought, and engagement. Students in both the opening assembly and the VPDBS were expected to consider ideas, speak out, and have individual perspectives on issues relevant to local, national and international current events and policies. High school students from historically marginalized racial and ethnic communities engage in deep analysis of a broad range of topics, exploring and advocating in depth for multiple sides of a policy issue of national relevance. Simultaneously, youth were expected to read widely and deeply, to consider words in context and recognize the implications of the arguments they made. Those implications were sometimes philosophical implications, and at other times were competitive advantage implications—in some cases, students were able to determine the appropriate space for each type of consideration, but they also identified the tension between learning to consider all ideas and moving towards the idea that there is no true argument or belief.

City Debate implemented critical literacy pedagogy on three separate levels: philosophical conceptualization, curriculum choices, and pedagogical activities. The philosophical foundation of the program reflected the belief that debate pedagogy could support the development of what Jamal referred to as "scholars and intellectuals" at whatever level of participation. Training sessions explicitly taught lab leaders to see their role as developing basic debate skills in youth and helping participants cultivate the ability to use those debate skills in making thoughtful life decisions.

"One of the markers of the importance of the community is the extent to which it has encouraged additional communities underrepresented in competitive debate to develop incubators for community building and advocacy."

Curriculum choices also reflected a sense of critical pedagogy. Youth participants received access to a broad range of resources and were encouraged to find their own. Pedagogical activities reflected the desire to support student voice and student belief development regarding large-scale policy development. Youth participants regularly learned arguments for competitive benefit, but students like Robb also took those arguments and continued the conversation with peers. Debate pedagogy in City Debate provided a space for youth to hear their own voice, to engage their own beliefs.

One of the markers of the importance of the community is the extent to which it has encouraged additional communities underrepresented in competitive debate to develop incubators for community building and advocacy. The Women's Debate Institute, for example, advocates for gender-

inclusive debate communities in high school and college with the goal of building a pipeline and fighting sexual harassment in debate (Women's Debate Institute, 2017). The Eddie Conway Liberation Institute explicitly links policy debate and advocacy training (Eddie Conway Liberation Institute, 2017), and the California Migrant Education debate program (Migrant Ed Speech and Debate, 2018) offers bilingual debate opportunities for the children of migrant farm workers. All of these spaces offer the opportunity to explore how curricular decisions tied to critical literacy differ when the composition of the community changes.

The complex conversations in which students engaged in the VPDBS, however, were divorced from daily and local issues in their immediate contexts of school, family, and neighborhood. There is evidence that youth began to develop their own beliefs regarding large-scale policy issues, but little evidence that youth began to develop a voice for challenging immediate issues in their lives. However, students did engage in curricular and critical literacy experiences at City Debate that were atypical for their schooled classrooms. They read philosophical theory, they presented in a safe context, and they considered national policies. Most importantly, they planned for solutions. It is this type of education that will help us develop critically active, justice-oriented adults who can evaluate complex ideas and help us grow as a society.

References

Blackburn, M. (2003). Exploring literacy performances and power dynamics at The Loft: Queer youth reading the world and the word. *Research in the Teaching of English, 37*(4), 467-490.

Cook-Gumperz, J. & Keller-Cohen, D. (1993). Alternative literacies in school and beyond: Multiple literacies of speaking and writing. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 24*(4), 283-287.

Cridland-Hughes, S. (2015). Caring critical literacy: The most radical pedagogy you can offer your students. *English Journal* 105(2). pp. 129-132.

Cridland-Hughes, S. (2016). Making words matter: Critical literacy, debate, and a pedagogy of dialogue. In Davis, K., Zorwick, L., Roland, J. & Wade, M. (Eds.) *Using debate in the classroom: Encouraging critical thinking, communication and collaboration.* New York, NY: Routledge. pp. 48-59.

Cridland-Hughes, S. (2017). The Atlanta Urban Debate League: Exploring the making of a critical literacy space. *American Educational History Journal*, 43(1), 41-57.

Duncan-Andrade, J. & Morrell, E. (2010). *The art of critical pedagogy: Possibilities for moving from theory to practice in urban schools*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Dyson, A. H. (1999). Coach Bombay's kids learn to write. In Cushman, C., Kintgen, E., Kroll, B., & Rose, M. (Eds.), *Literacy: A critical sourcebook* (pp. 325-357). New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Eddie Conway Liberation Institute. (2017). *Eddie Conway Liberation Institute.* Retrieved from http://www.eclidebate.com/

Fine, G. A. (2001). *Gifted tongues: High school debate and adolescent culture.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton.

Fisher, M.T. (2003). Open mics and open minds: Spoken word poetry in African Diaspora Participatory Literacy Communities. *Harvard Educational Review, 73*(3), 362-389.

Fisher, M.T. (2007). *Writing in rhythm: Spoken word in urban classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fisher, M.T. (2009). *Black literate lives. Historical and contemporary perspective.* New York, NY: Routledge. Critical Social Thought Series.

Freire, P. (1997) Pedagogy of the oppressed. (Rev. ed.) (Ramos, M., trans.) New York, NY: Continuum Publishing Company (Original work published 1970).

Gee, J. (2000). Teenagers in new times: A new literacy studies perspective. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 43*, 412-420.

Heath, S.B. (1997). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1983).

Huber, G., & Plantageonette, A. (1993). Speaking out: Tapping potential in urban public schools. *Cross streets: Ideas for cities and citizens*, *1*(1), 29-36.

Hull, G., & Schultz, K. (2002). *School's out! Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice.* New York, NY: Teachers' College Press.

Jocson, K. (2005). Taking it to the mic: Pedagogy of June Jordan's Poetry for the People and partnership with an urban high school. *English Education, 37*(2), 132-148.

Jocson, K. (2006). Bob Dylan and Hip Hop: Intersecting literacy practices in youth poetry communities. *Written Communication, 23*(3), 231-259.

Kinloch, V. (2009). Literacy, community, and youth acts of placemaking. *English Education, 41*(4), 316-336.

McHenry, E. & Heath, S. (1994). The literate and the literary: African American writers as readers- 1830-1940. *Written Communication, 11*(4), 419-444.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Mezuk, B. (2009). Urban debate and high school educational outcomes for African American males: The case of the Chicago Debate League. *Journal of Negro Education, 78(3),* 290-304.

Migrant Ed Speech and Debate. (2018). *Migrant Ed Speech and Debate 2018.* Retrieved from https://sites.google.com/site/migrantspeechdebate/

Morrell, E. (2002). Toward a critical pedagogy of popular culture: Literacy development among urban youth. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 46*(1), 72-77.

Morrell, E. (2004). *Linking literacy and popular culture: Finding connections for lifelong learning*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Morrell, E. (2008). *Critical literacy and urban youth: Pedagogies of access, dissent and liberation.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Prior, L. (2003). *Using documents in social research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Introducing Qualitative Methods Series.

Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Shor, I. (1999). What is critical literacy? *Journal of pedagogy, pluralism and practice. 1*(4), 1-30.

Warner, E., & Bruschke, J. (2001). 'Gone on debating:' Competitive academic debate as a tool of empowerment for urban America. *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate, 22*, 37-44.

Wolf, I. (2008). *Learning the language of debate: Literacy and community in the Computer Assisted Debate Project*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Emory University, Atlanta, GA.

Women's Debate Institute (2017). *Women's Debate Institute.* Retrieved from http://www.womensdebateinstitute.org

Appendix A

First Level Codes

	Definition of Literacy and Critical Literacy and Pedagogical Practices
DE	debate experience
5P	Positive, proactive, prepared, persistent, punctual
IR	intellectual respect
COMM	community- all instances where community is connected to DC
RES	respect-all instances where respect is connected to DC
ACA	academic increases
ACC	debate as access
CONT	contradiction in debate
ST	staff training
DAC	debate across curriculum
EXP	expectations for community interaction
PT	philosophy of teaching
CARE	caring about community and world in which you live
TA	types of arguments
TNA	Teaching new arguments: Socratic questioning
CURR	debate curriculum; PDIDDI, 2PAC, DRMO, who ARE you?, MRT
CT	Critical thinking skills- students
TRIAD	critical reading, critical writing, and oral communication
PD	practice debates
REF	Reflection by community on practices
CL	critical literacy skills in curriculum
VOC	Vocabulary

LANG	language of the debate center
ACT	activities for the Debate Center
ARG	Argumentation skills
CA	College access: college bridge, conversations about college
RS	research skills
TW	Thinkwrites
CRE	conversations relevant to experience
EVE	current events and discussion
FREE	curricular freedom
LITS	literacy skills
V	references to "voice"
CTA	call to action; what will students do?
I	Internalization
TLBE	teaching and learning by example
E	empowerment, debate participation as activism
FAM	family--all instances where family is connected to DC
CEL	celebration of student success
SM	staff meetings
IC	Intellectual community
LEC	Lecture
SUPP	supplemental resources for curriculum
CLD	critical literacy in debate
DSL	debate skills used in life
HOPE	"an infusion of hope"
DISC	discussion of arguments

DCR	Debate and conflict resolution
TSR	teacher student ratio
DLIT	definition of literacy
BP	broadening perspectives
TA	targeted activities to individual needs

Appendix B

Personal Debater Inventory for Directional Development and Illumination

P- D.I.D.D.I. SHEET

PERSONAL DEBATER INVENTORY for DIRECTIONAL DEVELOPMENT and ILLUMINATION SHEET

Directions: Please use this as a GUIDE for what the student you are working with needs to learn or improve upon. Whenever Please print your name off to the side of each curriculum item you cover. Use the "other and note sections" to write helpful comments to future instructors. ***Please put the name of the student at the top. THIS IS FOR INSTRUCTORS USE ONLY!*** Have fun and teach well☺!!!

Basic Concepts								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
2PAC								
A.R.E.								
DRMO								
MRT								
What to expect - (make this brief)								
AFF								
NEG								
Speech orders								
Time Limits								
4 Step Refutation								
Logical Fallacies								
Other								

The Affirmative								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Overview of the 1AC								
Key terms of the 1AC								
Read and Write 1AC								
Cross ex questions to anticipate								
Purpose of the 2AC								
2AC blocks – what they look like and how to write them								
2AC blocks – write some for each								

a good one								
How to give a good rebuttal (don't forget MRT)								
Other skills:								

The Negative								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Overview of the 1NC – goal and purpose								
Key terms often used in the 1NC (can skip down to disad discussion, etc. if needed)								
Read and Write 1NC shells								
Cross ex questions to anticipate								
Purpose of the 2NC								
2NC blocks – what they look like and how to write them								
2NC blocks – write some for each disad and major case arguments								
1NR – how to give a good one								
How to give a good rebuttal (don't forget MRT)								
Other skills:								

The Disad								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Parts of disad								
Read and write shells								
Disad overviews								
How to								

extend a disad (make sure you have talked about flowing first)								
How to answer a disad (emphasis the need to make several arguments)								
Other skills:								

Flowing and Listening								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Definition								
Purpose and need for flowing								
How to flow (use of shorthand, spacing, role modeling)								
Practice flowing (3-5 exercises)								
Practice flowing in debates								
Have had follow-up discussion about challenges they had flowing								
Other skills:								

Debate Etiquette (Community and Respect)								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
How to behave at tournaments								
How to treat and communicate with your partner								
How to have an effective cross –ex as questioner								

3

How to have an effective cross- ex as an examiner								
How to behave after the debate round has ended								
Other Skills:								
Reading Comprehension and Articulation								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Thinkwrites								
Read and Writes								
Read-a-louds (role model when appropriate)								
Articles to read								
M&M's								
Other Skills:								
Non-Verbal Communication								
Concept	Rating				Signature	Date	Sign (2nd attempt)	Date
	REDO	Good	Very Good	Excellent				
Talk about the importance of good body language								
Practice on having good body language (3-5 exercises)								
Talk about specific things they can do improve in this area								
Other Skills:								

OTHER NOTES/COMMENTS:

Appendix C

Sample Debate Preparation

Sample Disadvantage Section

High Oil Prices Good – Russian Economy

A. Uniqueness: Higher oil prices are inevitable

Baltimore Sun, 5-25-08, "Oil's Challenge," http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/editorial/bal-ed.oil25may25,0,6455021.story

Government can hasten our adjustment by quickly setting tougher fuel-efficiency standards for cars and trucks, eliminating unnecessary tax breaks for oil and gas companies, imposing a tax on oil products that would be used to fund development of alternative energy resources and requiring significant conservation steps in heating, air conditioning and lighting. Regardless of the conservation steps taken, the United States will be forced to rely on imported oil to some extent for decades to come. It's possible that the current price run-up is a bubble that will burst if hoarded oil supplies are released and producers increase their output. But any drop in oil prices is likely to be followed by more record highs as global demand continues to grow. If we lack the courage to significantly reduce our oil dependence, the social and economic costs will be formidable.

B. Link: Oil Prices will remain High Unless US reduces demand

Associated Press, 5-28-08, http://www.pr-inside.com/a-look-at-some-of-the-r612240.htm

Oil prices have surpassed high after high in recent weeks, reaching an all-time peak of US$135.09 a barrel last week. Experts differ about why and what if anything can be done about it.
THE PRODUCERS: Oil cartel OPEC says the world is well supplied with oil and that the higher prices are driven by financial speculation. The organization says it's not planning to increase production. And many fear the U.S. economy will slow and reduce demand for oil.