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**Author**

Tafari, Menelik

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## Games4Justice: Course Design Report

### Abstract

The facilitation of culture circles should be seen as part of this necessary expansion. Despite being an integral component of critical pedagogy, culture circles are frequently excluded from conversations about liberatory praxis. The following reports showcase the design and implementation of culture circle-based, human development, co-curricular programs for middle and high school students. These programs paired larger project for liberation, with play-, game-, and design-based pedagogical approaches (Bang et al., 2015a; Bang et al., 2015b; Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Flanagan, 2009; McGonigal, 2003, 2007, 2011), that cultivated value-creative (Makiguchi, 1936/2015, Makiguchi, 1989; Mokuria & Wandix-White, 2020; Goulah, 2015), critical (Freire, 2000; Glass, 2001), local (Souto-Manning, 2010), and global citizenship (UNESCO, 2015).

*Keywords:* Teacher Research, Second Language Instruction, Culture Circles, Design-based Instruction

### Executive Summary

Human development education must be expanded from elementary school to P20 programs. The facilitation of culture circles should be seen as part of this necessary expansion. Despite being an integral component of critical pedagogy, culture circles are frequently excluded from conversations about liberatory praxis. The following reports showcase the design and implementation of culture circle-based, human development, co-curricular programs for middle and high school students. These reports serve as examples of the facilitation and use of culture circles in K12 contexts. The two programs being spotlighted were designed at two urban, independent, K12 day schools with fewer than 500 students, respectively. Research on these programs was supported as part of a certification program in Serious Game Design & Research. The two programs were the Games for Social Justice (G4J, Games4Justice) Workshop, which served middle school students, and the Intergroup Dialogue and Social Innovation Programs, which served high schoolers. The data presented was collected for a teacher research study conducted from 2013-2017 on the implementation of play-, game-, and design-based teaching and assessment.

The courses were designed by integrating critical pedagogy, relational pedagogies (including *sōka* pedagogy), and design-based pedagogies. The framework for these courses was established upon an amended intergroup dialogue program where the last stages are facilitated as culture circles instead of hot topics. The four stages of this amended process can be described as framed by: Dignity, Belonging, Justice, and Joy.

### Course Background

#### *A History of Human Development Education*

Human development is a multidisciplinary field that combines aspects of social and emotional learning, psychology, education, sociology, anthropology, gerontology, communication, ethics, and other disciplines, to navigate the needs of individuals, groups, and organizations to positive and beneficial outcomes. While most public schools include human development education from

preschool and kindergarten, through elementary, most public middle and high schools do not include human development programming. Few private, independent schools have co-curricular human development programming beyond middle school.

As an educator pursuing professional development focused on human development education, I opted to begin my teaching career at a school that had a dedicated curriculum and courses. When I began to experiment with my own educational and pedagogical theories on human development education, I was an instructor at a school founded by Paul Cummins. Cummins framed quality schools as offering ‘the five solids’ of English, history, math, science, and foreign language instruction; and complimented them with ‘the other five solids’ of the arts, physical education, human development, environmental education, and community service. For Cummins (2006), these ‘other five solids,’ were seen as more important than the first group to the development of a well-educated, enlightened, engaged, complete person. As Paul Cummins founded and established multiple schools in Los Angeles ensured that each would carry a legacy of human development education.

This multi-decade legacy of human development programming, primarily utilized the Council format, which was appropriated from age-old communication practices learned from indigenous, First Nations cultures in the Americas, with appreciation and respect. Council is a ceremonial process where participants agree to speak one-at-a-time, sharing stories about their personal and universal experiences, such as love, loss, fear, triumph, challenge, hope. Participating in Council helps participants recognize themselves in each other, and attempts to neutralize hierarchical dynamics formed by inequality of status, ‘race,’ or other social factors through ceremony and storytelling. These human development courses were taken from kindergarten through senior year, and were designed to support students in the challenges they face in their transition to high school and college. Students learn techniques and are given information on ways to care for their bodies, handle and reduce stress, and develop positive and healthful relationships. During these classes, students discuss their relationship and connection with themselves, other people, their community, and the place they live.

### **The Games for Social Justice Program**

In 2013, I had the opportunity to propose a workshop course. Workshop courses were taught on Fridays for two hours. The initial design requirements for workshop courses included alignment with the school mission, and course content covering Fridays for 2 hours per week. In 2012, I postulated that simulation and serious gaming, coupled and designed as part of a larger project for liberation, could engender value-creative (Makiguchi, 1936/2015, Makiguchi, 1989; Mokuria & Wandix-White, 2020; Goulah, 2015), critical (Freire, 2000; Glass, 2001), local (Souto-Manning, 2010) and global citizenship (UNESCO, 2015). Games for Social Justice (Games4Justice, G4J) was my opportunity to develop a course based upon this postulation. While established as a variation of an intergroup dialogue program, G4J focused on the last two stages to prioritize the facilitation of culture circles instead of hot topics, and the design of games for liberation instead of coalition-building.

### **The Intergroup Dialogue & Social Innovation Programs**

In 2016, the results from the study were used to inform a co-designed Intergroup Dialogue and Social Innovation Program (SIP) for a newly opened high school. The Intergroup Dialogue and

Social Innovation Programs (SIP), were developed for a new, urban, independent, high school with fewer than 100 students. While this school also has a legacy with Council-based programming, which operated from kindergarten through middle school, when we established the secondary school program, we decided to instead incorporate Intergroup Dialogue, and pair it with the Social Innovation Program. The Intergroup Dialogue and Social Innovation Programs were developed to operate concurrently, with both being facilitated once a week for 3 hours each, on Fridays, or to run for 6 hours for off-campus site visits relating to their ongoing projects. IDP and SIP groups were to have over 75% overlap, despite not having their facilitation entwined.

## **Methodology**

### ***Data Collection***

The primary data used to analyze the human development games, *Pirate Oasis*, *Friendship is Magic*, *#SaveOurGirls*, and *XploreLA*, include (a) student reflections on game-based challenges and the gamified course, (b) student analysis of design- and game-based collaborative problem solving, shared during class discussions, recorded in notes; and (f) the designs of the games themselves, which were analyzed by designers and participants. Culture circles, and generative and iterative design, were used to facilitate collaborative analysis and design of these game-based and gamified learning experiences. Ethnographically-informed (Charmaz, 1996; Holt, 2003) teacher research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) framed the analysis of this data, which is presented as a teacher autoethnography and design reports. To properly evaluate the effectiveness of the course design, student descriptions of their generated and iterated creations, the lessons student designers taught about the history of the game modalities they chose to incorporate, submitted coursework, cross-curricular projects, classroom observations, user testing, ethnographic analysis and player reflections were used as data. Additionally, each project had its own self, peer, and game evaluation, these included written reflections from student and faculty designers, student, faculty, and administrative participants, and family members and community members where appropriate. When facilitated as part of a team teaching effort, collaborative analysis and feedback processes were also integrated as part of the evaluation and impact assessments. These analyses included feedback on the gap between design goals and outcomes.

### ***Teacher Research***

Two courses were designed as part of an autoethnographic, teacher research study conducted from 2013-2017 on the implementation of play-, game-, and design-based teaching and assessment. The study was conducted at an urban, independent, K-12 day school with fewer than 500 students, respectively, and supported as part of a certification program in Serious Game Design & Research (Samaras, 2010). This teacher-research (Hubbard & Power, 1999; MacLean & Mohr, 1999; Thomas, 2005) self-study (Samaras, 2010) *was meant to investigate the gap between the educational theories and classroom practice* (Kagan, 1993), in order to sharpen my praxis. Like others, I believe in the power of *teacher education through self-study* as a tool to improve the quality of instruction (Kosnik et al., 2006; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001; Samaras, 2002).

### ***Playculture Analysis***

Critical analysis on how players were engaging in the game was also included. Gameplay, narrative, collaboration, competition, teamwork, information-sharing, among others, were elements interpreted by participants. These games were opportunities for critical play to disrupts

the continuum of experience (Dewey, 1938) to offer an opportunity for a new playculture that can alter the dynamics of social space (Flanagan, 2009). This form of play is meant to be disruptive and even subversive, turning upside down, uprooting, and overthrowing the rule of systems and unjust laws. These spaces of encounter and interaction during play become thirdspaces, spaces for production and consumption of culture, community, language, commerce, work, and leisure, or what Homi Bhabha calls the space of subversion, hybridization, and blasphemy in *The Location of Culture* (1994). Play has the freedom to make the world contrary in almost any way we wish, and the socially produced thirdspace of playculture employs this possibility for social and political transformation. Critical play, like serious games, “encourage imaginative freedom to experiment with alternative solutions, while at the same time offering a realistic set of constraints on less practical responses to problems (Abt, 1970, p. 28).” Serious games require a ‘reconstruction’ of experience (Dewey, 1938), or a debrief that serves as a post-game discussion analyzing the limitations and insights offered by the game and the performance of players in representing and solving their problems effectively. Debriefing is an implied methodology when using frameworks derived from critical play.

### ***Participatory Design Research***

The courses would also rely heavily on participatory design frameworks (Bang et al., 2015; Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Björgvinsson et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2022; Powers & Tiffany, 2006) as tools implemented in the initial processes tied to community study (Makiguchi, 1936/2015; Mokuria & Wandix-White, 2020; Goulah, 2015) and culture circles (Freire, 1970; Souto-Manning, 2010). These generative design processes of community inquiry would then feed into intergroup dialogues (such as those discussed in Gurin et al., 2013).

### ***Document Analysis***

Document analysis (Kutsyuruba, 2023; Stage & Manning, 2015) is also used to analyze the games created by students, and the ways in which they created and managed their games, informed by critical media pedagogy and critical design pedagogies (Morrell et al., 2013).

## **Theoretical Background**

### ***Culture Circles***

Problem-posing education problematizes injustices and inequalities, and the contests unfair realities (Souto-Manning, 2010). Problem posing, critical pedagogy is (Kincheloe, 2004): (1) grounded in a social and educational vision of justice, equality, and the belief that education is inherently political; (2) dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering, taking first-hand knowledge into consideration; (3) based on generative themes, and used to read and write the world through problem-posing processes; and (4) positions teachers as researchers, learners, and facilitators, focused on collaborative problem solving. Culture circles begin as thematic investigations into generative themes, where we contest language before it’s internalized as distinct discourses that colonize our repertoires.

Teachers, acting as facilitator-researchers (ethnographers), support participants to critically analyze their positions in society, implement problem solving through dialogue, and engage in social action, or rewrite the world (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 26).

“Culture circles start from the very issues which affect participants' everyday lives. Generative themes, which are common experiences across participants' lives or relevant to participants'

realities, serve as starting points to problem posing. As problems are posed, participants engage in dialogue, considering a multitude of perspectives, and seek to move toward problem solving. As the group engages in collective problem solving, it charts a course for action at the personal and/or societal levels,” (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 9).

Generative themes are identified from the community in which student-participants live. This connection to the real existential situation is crucial to enabling participants to use knowledge to reconstruct their lives and iterate alternative futures, or untested feasibilities.

Participants group, then codify generative themes into limit-situations. This process identifies the root cause of their shared oppression (as limit-situations) preventing their liberation (Freire, 2000). These limit-situations are root causes preventing liberation. To be identified as a limit-situation (root cause), they must have a potential, realistic solution, are not defined as part of our ‘natural’ living condition or something that cannot be changed; are not a symptom of a larger problem; and must be based upon objective fact, not assumptions.

Once these limit-situations are identified through collaborative analysis, participants begin to imagine the solutions that would liberate them and others. These limit-acts are the enactment of cultural action to rewrite the world (Freire, 2000). Participants then describe these limit-acts, and delineate campaigns for cultural action to challenge them, and engender an alternative future of untested feasibilities. This critical and creative process for cultural and political action is a constant unveiling of reality that stimulates true reflection and action upon the world.

### ***Intergroup Dialogue***

While only the Intergroup Dialogue Program was designed to follow the normative 4 Step process, both G4J and SIP incorporated amended processes informed by them. The 4-step process is to: (1) establish the goals of dialogue as a means for sharing personal and social identities, (2) explore key terms like prejudice, discrimination and institutional bias as they impact students' lived experiences, (3) explore differences and similarities in perceptions of controversial issues, and (4) explore a range of opportunities and actions to promote diversity and social justice.

<b>Table 1</b>
<i>4 Stage Design of Intergroup Dialogue</i>
<b>4 Stage Design of Intergroup Dialogue</b>
<p><b>Stage 1 - Group Beginnings: Forming and Building Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creating an environment conducive to honest and meaningful exchange</li> <li>● Talking about the importance of dialogue</li> <li>● Building relationships and exploring personal and social identities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 2 - Exploring Differences and Commonalities of Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social identity-group commonalities and differences are explored</li> <li>● Goal of consciousness raising is given primary focus,</li> <li>● Clarifying and sharing information about multiple social identities requires the development of mutual trust and provides another way to build trust and relationships among group members</li> </ul>

- Understanding how those identities reflect systems of social power and resource allocation and are often expressed in conflictual relations among groups.
- Understand their roles in maintaining systems of social discrimination and oppression through structural activities
- Foster the development of a relatively safe place where participants can take risks in sharing and inquiring into each other's perspectives and experiences even if it means asking 'dumb' questions
- Dialogic methods are structures that encourage speaking and active listening in dyads, triads, affinity groups, and fishbowls are widely used in this stage

**Stage 3 - *Exploring and Dialoguing About Hot Topics***

- The third stage of intergroup dialogue involves dialogue about controversial topics or hot button issues that cause tension between people of different social identity groups.
- The topics selected for discussion vary according to the focus of the intergroup dialogue.
- For example, in a dialogue about race and ethnicity, students or facilitators may select topics such as interracial dating, separation and self-segregation on campus, racial profiling, immigration, affirmative action, and racism on campus.
- In a gender dialogue, such topics might include single-sex or coed residence halls, friendship between men and women, safety on campus, reproductive rights, gender and the media, and sexism on campus.
- In a dialogue focusing on gender and sexuality, topics might include families and relationships, gender roles, compulsory heterosexuality, sexuality and religion, marriage and civil unions, and campus policies regarding benefits for partners and gender-neutral bathrooms.

**Stage 4 - *Action-Planning and Alliance-Building***

- Participants are encouraged to identify and voice their perspectives on and experiences with such issues and then to relate their position on an issue to the members of their social group.
- Participants are discouraged from stressing the rightness or wrongness of any position and encouraged to engage in dialogue, not debate.
- Continued emphasis on consciousness raising and relationship building
- Support and challenge for risk taking
- Participants understand more about the personal and social costs of systems of discrimination and privilege and their own enmeshment
- Attention to is paid to building alliances and developing collaboration in and across social identity groups

***Generative and Iterative Design***

Generative design (Hannington, 2007) is incorporated into the process to identify generative themes. As part of their investigation into generative themes, participants engage the community through interviews, surveys, research, and participatory design. As participants begin sharing and reflecting about their lives, they also incorporate the insights of their community members into what they uncovered about their generative themes. An iterative design process is incorporated as part of the ideation of an idyllic future. At the beginning of the process, participants are invited to imagine what alternative future they will create together. Participants return to this vision

periodically in order to add more depth to how they envision what's happening in the future because of their actions, how they created this alternative future together, and how people are impacted by their shared actions and newfound liberation. An iterative design process is incorporated as part of the ideation and implementation process of limit-acts and cultural action. To change the world requires us to reclaim the power of worldmaking, and bring forth a new vision for the world. Participants revise their vision of an idyllic future, before imagining initial iterations of campaigns for cultural action

### ***Gamification***

Critical play can also be seen in the instructional design and design of serious games and gamified experiences during these programs. "Simulation, Gaming, and Language Learning" (1990) compiled and edited by David Crookall and Rebecca L. Oxford validate running simulation/games in educational settings, addressing the multiple layers of communication seen in play and games, and the ethics of using game-based experiences with varying levels of psychosocial risk. "Reality is Broken" by Jane McGonigal (2003, 2007, 2011) and "Gamify" by Brian Burke (2016) introduce the concept of gamification informed by positive psychology; the essential need to align gamified goals with player goals; the importance of developing emotionally engaging experiences; and general best practices when attempting to gamify objectives for organizations. Multiple games designed for this project incorporated McGonigal's "+1" approach to encourage student engagement. When introduced and performed in public spaces, these games can become public pedagogy disrupting and subverting every day experience.

### **Design Report 1:**

*Games for Social Justice (Games4Justice, G4J) (2013-16)*

### **The Games for Social Justice Program**

Games for Social Justice, later Games4Justice, was conducted from 2013-2016 under the auspices of this legacy of human development education, at a small, independent school with fewer than 500 students. In 2013, using the results from a previous study on utilizing games and simulations to support the facilitation of culture circles (Tafari, 2012), I designed and began to teach the G4J course for middle school students. The Games4Justice (G4J) workshop course was designed to integrate encounter groups and culture circles. The facilitative process used was based on previous work and research on facilitating student-designed culture circles (Tafari, 2010), and how the facilitative process used independently evolved to mirror Paulo Freire's (2000) description of a culture circle. *The Framework for Analysis* process was synthesized from this research and used to develop Games for Social Justice (G4J) Workshop course.

The purpose of the course was to: (1) facilitate a honing of participant's abilities for deep and critical inquiry through emancipatory processes, and constructive consideration of multiple viewpoints and perspectives; (2) prepare a new, participatory citizenry for pluralistic democracies who realize their own power as transformative democratic agents (Nagda et al., 2003); and to prepare a participatory citizenry to pursue the idyllic mission of society (Makiguchi, 1989) through cultural action. The class tagline was to focus on problems that were "Big enough to matter, small enough to tackle. The course was described as focused on "teambuilding, investigation and community problem-solving." The syllabus said that:



“Students will role play as superheroes to save the world, collaborating through a working group format to investigate and design solutions for local issues, and create a game to encourage our community to take action. This class will focus on the development of civic culture through leadership, problem-solving and the design of games for civic engagement.”

The assignments, or ‘learning objectives,’ as we called them, included that students would: (1) Create a Role Playing Game to play as super heroes saving the world; (2) Research and discuss the current context of our community with respect to Social Justice, Ecological Sanity, and Diversity; (3) And design games for community problem-solving and social justice. The description ended with the line, “The course utilizes interpersonal, competitive and non-competitive games as opportunities for students to learn about themselves, each other, and their role as leaders forging a just world.”

The implementation of the G4J course was conducted in collaboration with an inclusivity program for students on the autism spectrum, and was co-taught alongside an inclusion specialist. The initial design of the course leaned heavily on the learning and coaching of interpersonal communication skills. This co-teacher was an instrumental collaborator and co-designer from 2013-2015. The course was explicitly designed to align with the school mission and purpose statements that included explicit commitments to diversity, ecological sanity, and social justice.

The course was conducted from 2014-2016, for two consecutive hours, once a week, during three 15-week semesters. The encounter-based human development program was framed by critical pedagogy, sōka education, and other relational pedagogies. Participants analyzed a community issue of their choice through a Freirian culture circle, and designed a solution using generative and iterative methodologies (Hanington, 2007) (Doyle & Strauss, 1993). The course was originally Pass/No Pass and learning outcomes were all based on interpersonal competence and communication. During the G4J course, students participated in interpersonal and communication-based experiential learning, game design conducted through encounter groups (Rogers, 1996), culture circles (Freire, 2000; Souto-Manning, 2010), and the generative design of a school-wide game to engage collaborative problem-solving. Half of the class time was dedicated to playing various communication, teambuilding, and information-sharing games. The second-half would focus on designing and coordinating a game-based experience that would recruit community members to improve their community or solve a community problem. These goals were aligned with our institutional vision that prioritized diversity, ecological stewardship, and social justice as core values.

### ***Process Design***

The amended Intergroup Dialogue process used for the course can best be described as following the BDJJ organizing framework for the liberation of Black, Native, queer, disabled, subalterned and othered people through (B) Belonging, (D) Dignity, (J<sub>1</sub>) Justice, and (J<sup>2</sup>) Joy (BDJJ), (Davis, 2021; Saxon, 2021; Davis, 2016). Belonging is a sense of fitting in or feeling like you have purpose as an important member of a group. Activities that focus on identity and diversity help reinforce students’ sense of belonging. Dignity involves feeling honored and respected, and frequently interpreted as interpersonal. Activities and processes that reinforce dignity and respect frequently focus on confronting intergroup conflict and repairing relationships after dignity violations. How we respond and repair harm is as important as preventing harm through radical care. Justice involves organizing for equal rights and equitable opportunities for all. This stage is usually characterized by campaigns to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities. Equity

programs frequently look like culture circles, and critical pedagogy applied to understand and transform local issues. Joy is the physical and cognitive freedom to ‘broaden and build,’ which involves exploring and creating new novel schema, new relationships (Johnson, 2019). Joy includes attuning to new possibilities, and relating to our circumstances differently after perceiving them in a new light.

### ***Stage 1 - Belonging***

During the Belonging Stage, the focus is on establishing the foundation for creating an environment conducive to honest and meaningful exchange. The main goal of this stage is to support the formation of the dialogue group and build relationships across differences. Facilitators focus on creating a safe space for participants to share their thoughts and experiences. They begin to lay the groundwork for future sessions by attending to group-building as well as introducing participants to the meaning of dialogue. Participants discuss why it is important to talk about the focus of the dialogues and their hopes and fears about the experience, identify needs and expectations, and establish guidelines for communication and confidentiality. Distinctions are drawn between dialogue and debate, and the importance of speaking clearly from the mind and heart is emphasized. Participants are introduced to the characteristics of dialogue and subsequently practice some of the skills involved. The activities in Stage 1 begin the process of building relationships and exploring personal and social identities.

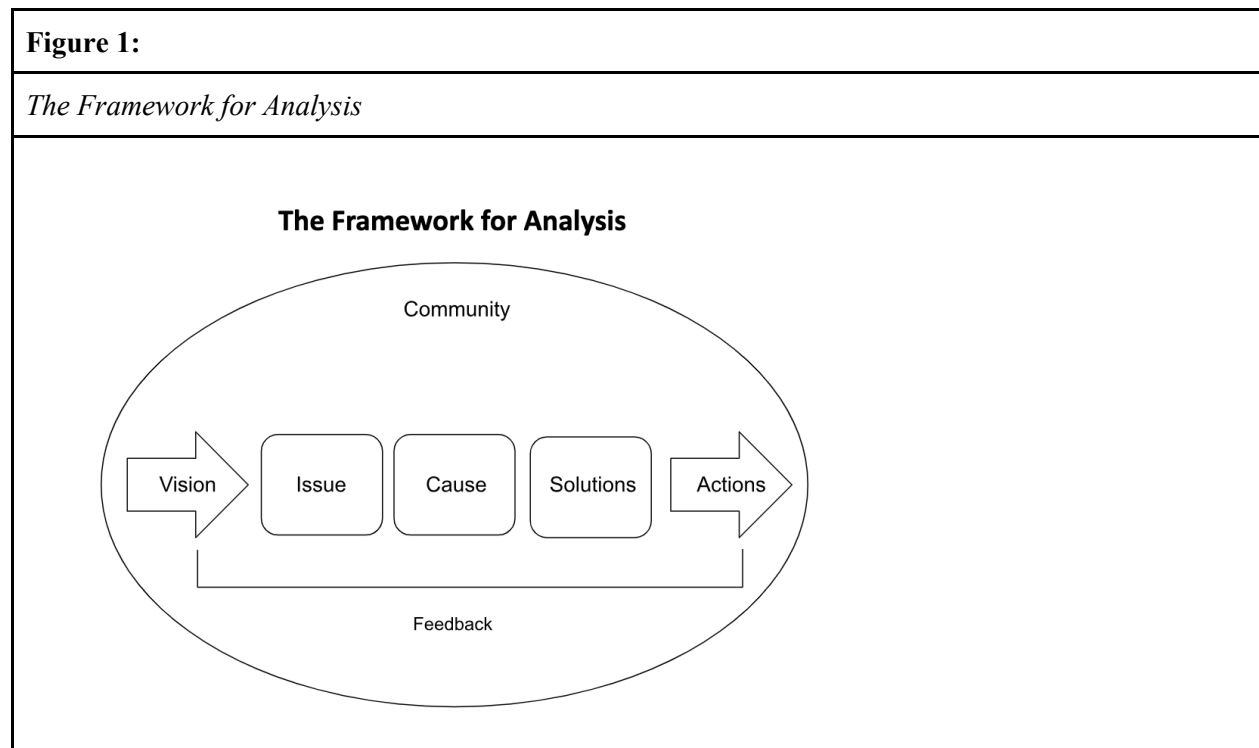
### ***Stage 2 - Dignity***

During the second stage, social identity-group commonalities and differences are explored. Sharing information about multiple social identities requires the development of mutual trust and provides another way to build trust and relationships among group members. This stage is also where the goal of consciousness raising is given primary focus. Consciousness raising requires understanding how those identities reflect systems of social power and resource allocation and are often expressed in conflictual relations among groups. In this stage, members of both privileged and disadvantaged groups begin to understand their roles in maintaining systems of social discrimination and oppression through structural activities, readings, and reflective writing. They can also explore both the views and interests they hold in common and those in which they differ or conflict. These issues of dominance and subordination are often played out in the actual conduct of the dialogue. To overcome the typical patterns of those from privilege statuses dominating discussion, and those who come from disenfranchised statuses withdrawing from engagement, intentional facilitation is necessary. This includes establishing a relatively safe, brave space, where participants can take risks in sharing and inquiring into each other’s perspectives and experiences even if it means asking ‘dumb’ questions, departing from stifling norms, and entering potentially conflictual positions. As participants learn about their enmeshment in supremacist systems, they also find ways to leverage their positionality and resources to accomplish various campaigns to address root causes, representing limit situations, preventing them and others from living expansive, liberated lives.

### ***Stage 3 - Justice***

As part of their investigation into generative themes, participants engage in a community study (or Kyodo-ka, in Kyoju no togo chushin toshite no kyodoka kenshu) (Makiguchi, 1912) involving interviews, surveys, and other investigative methods to understand the relevant problems being experienced by those around them. As participants begin sharing and reflecting about their lives,

they also incorporate the insights of their community members into what they uncovered about their shared generative themes (Freire, 2000). By problematizing these shared generative themes in their experience, participants are able to name the primary Issues facing their community. After identifying and prioritizing a top issue, participants develop a vision of the alternative future they intend to create together. Participants group, then codify generative themes into limit-situations. This process identifies the root cause of their shared oppression (as limit-situations) preventing their liberation. To be identified as a root cause or limit-situation, they must have a potential, realistic solution, are not defined as part of our ‘natural’ living condition or something that cannot be changed; are not a symptom of a larger problem; and must be based upon objective fact, not assumptions. Once these limit-situations are identified through collaborative analysis, participants begin to imagine the solutions that would liberate them and others. These solutions are developed into campaigns for cultural action. These campaigns could include policy, programs, individual or collective actions, among other strategies and tactics. These campaigns intend to engender an alternative future of untested feasibilities. This critical and creative process for cultural and political action is a constant unveiling of reality that stimulates true reflection and action upon the world. This stage follows The Framework for Analysis.

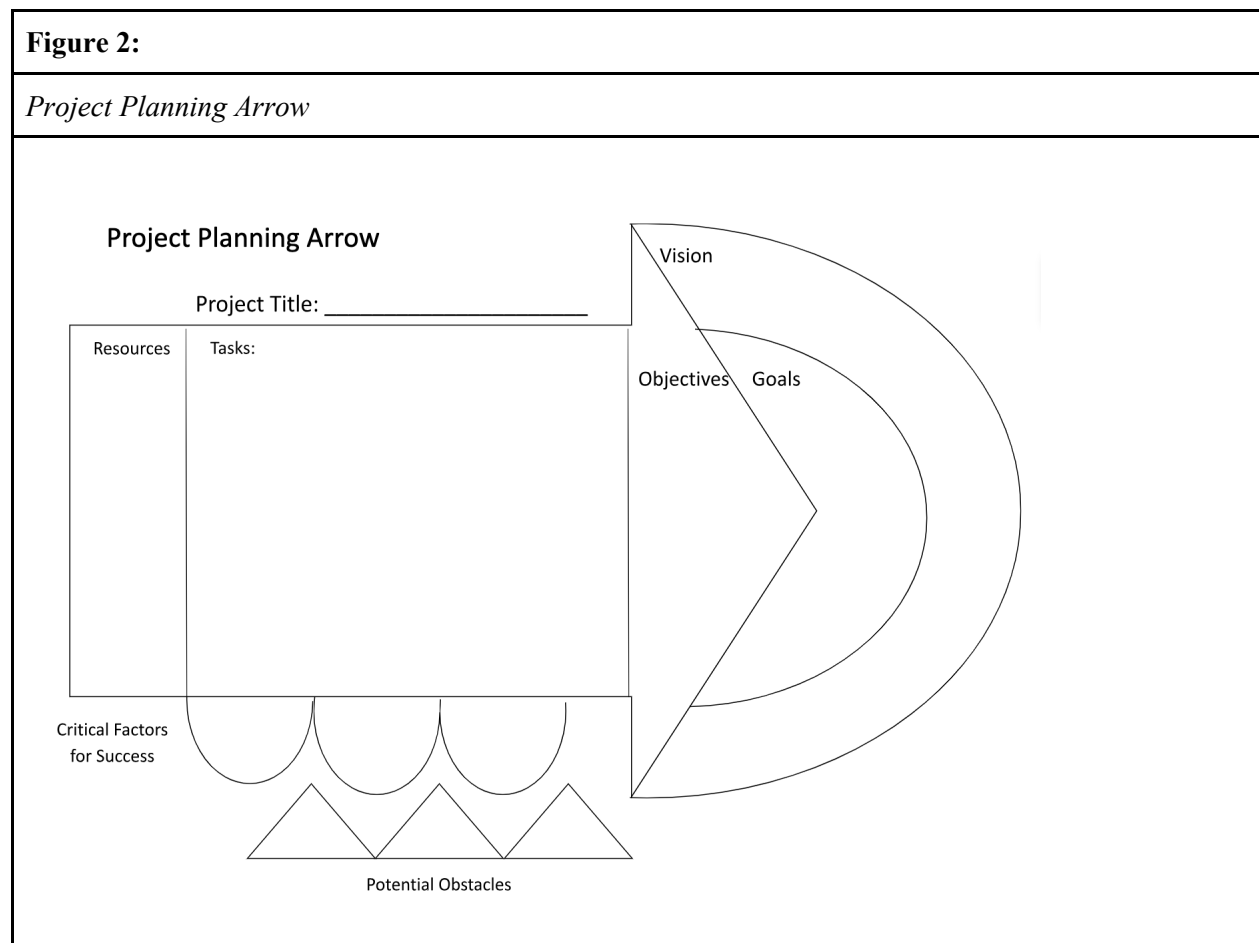


***Stage 4 - Joy***

Joy can be disruptive and even subversive, turning upside down, uprooting, and overthrowing the rule of systems and unjust laws. This joyful disruption is a creative act that shifts the way of a particular logic or paradigm, disturbing our sense of comfort (Flanagan, 2009). This joyful and playful disruption encourages imaginative freedom to experiment with alternative solutions, while at the same time offering a realistic set of constraints on less practical responses to problems. We leverage disruptive potential by delineating a critically playful campaign for liberation. As part of the Action process, participants return to their Vision of an Alternative Future, prioritize their shared Goals, outline their cadre’s Objectives, and design playful projects that build alliances and

develop collaboration in and across social identity groups. This stage follows the Project Planning Arrow. While prior stages have shifted the group discussion from reflection and dialogue, to collaborative analysis, the final stage of this intergroup dialogue variation is focused on intentionally cultivating joyful agency. To cultivate joy is to cultivate epistemic flexibility that regards suffering and disappointment as ripe with possibility for grace and redemption (Johnson, 2019; Moltmann, 1973).

In this last stage, participants also acknowledge everyone’s contributions to the project and celebrate their collective effort. The four-stage design is not a rigid formula, and it is pedagogically important that the educational design match the flow of participants’ organic learning process. Although the stages may appear to be linear in their progression, these processes flow back and forth between stages as participants address and work through relationships, issues, and designs.



Feedback, an ongoing process of critical reflection, is conducted throughout the four stages. Feedback processes question whether or not Vision is inclusive or expansive enough; if our community is focused on the most prominent Issues; if the root Causes have been identified; if the most effective Solutions have been designed; and if our Actions are accomplishing our stated campaign goals.

**Initial Course Design**

During the first unit of the course, student-participants played various structured activities and games with the learning outcomes focused on team building, information-sharing, and interpersonal communication.

<b>Table 2</b>	
<i>Orientation Unit</i>	
	<b>Unit 1- Orientation</b>
Week 1	<b>Personal Shield (40)</b>
Week 2	Super Powers: Ideal Cards
Week 3	Game Design: World-building Game Design: Character-building
Week 4	Myers-Briggs Ideal Leader LO: Issue Survey

During the second unit of the program, teacher-facilitators used organizational development tools to develop an initial, shared vision. The facilitation of a culture circle process follows the development of a vision. During the culture circle process, participants use collaborative analysis to codify generative themes, and their corresponding Issues, Causes, Solutions, and Actions.

<b>Table 3</b>	
<i>Civic Engagement Unit</i>	
	<b>Unit 2- Civic Engagement</b>
Week 5	Civic Engagement 1: Community Crisis
Week 6	Civic Engagement 2: What’s going on? Where are we trying to go?
Week 7	Civic Engagement 3: How do we get there?

During the Civic Game Design Unit, participants design an overarching, gamified narrative to galvanize their peers into actions aligned with the campaign. For the initial iteration of this program, this also included hosting a weekly, school-wide, gamified experience.

<b>Table 4</b>		
<i>Civic Game Design Unit</i>		
	<b>Unit 3- Civic game design</b>	
Week 8	Eggs Can Fly (RPG) Civic Game Design 1: World-building	LO: Reflection

Challenge	Make a machine to infiltrate compounds from zeppelins and to defuse doomsday bomb	
Week 9	Win As Much As You Can (RPG) Civic Game Design 2: Mechanics	LO: Reflection
Challenge	Investigate Alien city ruins, infiltrate compound, captured by Dr. Festi, escape, find map	
Pie Day		
Week 10	Civic Game Design 3: Final Game Preparations	
Spring Break		

The final unit of the program, Alpha Testing, was a five-week sequence in which student-designers coordinated a gamified experience for the school-community. In this initial iteration of the course, a final game during lunch was the climax of the experience. This project culminated in a presentation to the administration showing the success of the campaign to reduce trash, increase recycling, and reestablish composting.

**Table 5**

*Alpha Testing Unit*

<b>Unit 4- Alpha Testing</b>		
Week 11	Meltdown (RPG) Civic Game Prep Game Launch Lunch Party (during class)	Civic Game Tally during week Civic Game Challenge Friday at Lunch LO: Reflection
Challenge	Stop a doomsday machine, leave with map	
Week 12	Mindfield Civic Game Prep	Civic Game Tally during week Civic Game Challenge Friday at Lunch LO: Reflection
Challenge	Pilfer pieces of Alien weapon first in ruins, begin to implode after collected	
Week 13	Murder (RPG) Civic Game Prep	Civic Game Tally during week Civic Game Challenge Friday at Lunch LO: Reflection
Challenge	Solve murder, identify mastermind	
Week 14	Life Raft (RPG) Civic Game Prep	Civic Game Tally during week Civic Game Challenge Friday at Lunch Final Game Evaluations LO: Reflection
Challenge	Who will survive the steampunk space pirate disease?	
Week 15	Final Battle Appreciation Council Class Evaluations and 1-on-1s	Final Lunch Party and Shout Outs Presentations to Admin (Evaluation Metrics) LO: Final Reflection and Feedback
Challenge	Defeat and capture mastermind	

The assignments for this course were reflections where students debriefed their experiences as collaborators, researchers, designers, and gamemasters. Our school used the phrase Learning Opportunities (LOs), for classwork and ‘homework.’ Assignments were separated into two categories: reflections on activities (Engagement) and reflections on design (Action). Engagement LOs asked students to reflect on their recent participation during interpersonal and intercultural communication activities. Action LOs asked students to describe what they were designing, or how they imagined it functioning, and their efficacy working as a team coordinating a community (school-wide) experience. Activities such as Super Powers Trading, Rainbow River, and Star Power provided a dynamic playculture (Flanagan, 2009) that allowed students to critically engage their interpersonal and intercultural dynamics. Facilitated processes such as The Framework for Analysis and The Framework for Actions allowed students the space to control course content, analyze the issues they felt most important, and design solutions that inspired them.

<b>Table 6</b>	
<i>Initial list of assignments</i>	
<b>Engagement Learning Opportunities (Assignments)</b>	<b>Action Learning Opportunities (Assignments)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal Shield (1/9)</li> <li>● Ideal Cards: Super Powers (1/16)</li> <li>● Ideal Leader (1/30)</li> <li>● Eggs Can Fly (2/27) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Win As Much as You Can (3/6) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Meltdown (4/10) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Mindfield (4/17) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Murder (4/24) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Life Raft (5/8) LO: Reflection</li> <li>● Final Battle (5/15) LO: Reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Game Design: World-building (1/23)</li> <li>● Game Design: Character-building (1/23)</li> <li>● Community Survey (1/30) Hand submit</li> <li>● Civic Engagement 1: Community Crisis (2/6)</li> <li>● Civic Engagement 2 (2/13)</li> <li>● Civic Engagement 3 (2/20)</li> <li>● Civic Game Design 1 (2/27)</li> <li>● Civic Game Design 2 (3/6)</li> <li>● Civic Game Design 3 (3/20)</li> <li>● Civic Game 1 (4/10)</li> <li>● Civic Game 2 (4/17)</li> <li>● Civic Game 3 (4/24)</li> <li>● Civic Game 4 (5/8)</li> </ul>

### **Technical Review**

The program itself was divided into various units. Units included: Orientation, Civic Engagement, Civic Game Design, and (Alpha) Testing. The course was designed to dedicate one hour to interpersonal encounters, and the second hour to developing a civic game for the school. Structured experiences, teambuilding, information sharing activities, and puzzles were used within a gamified narrative to frame the experience for students as something otherworldly. For different groups of students, that threshold of alterity framed a world where they were steampunk pirates unwillingly recruited to save the world; manifested as them becoming legendary magical animals, like unicorns, fighting for a more caring universe; transforming into investigators uncovering a human trafficking ring to save women and children from harm; and becoming community members, stepping up to save an illegal alien that crashed landed in their neighborhood, among others. Students collaborated with their communities to create various critical gaming experiences through multiple modalities, including Live Action Role-Playing, Alternate Reality Gaming, and Forum Games & Simulations.

### **Program Results**

*Pirate Oasis* rekindled the recycling and composting programs on campus, and had a measurable impact of increasing the recycling by 15 pounds per week. The initial process design was heavily focused on the game design portion of the program. Secondary iterations more heavily emphasized the group dynamics and dialogue side of the program. The program was also very effective in cultivating prosocial bonding among players and participants from the broader school-community. Additionally, subsequent iterations prioritized more intersectional gender- and race-analysis being taught and implemented with the students.

During the second year of the program, it was evident that design- and game-based methodologies were able to consistently and successfully deepen interpersonal and intercultural encounters. This group had multiple student-designers actively attempt to derail and sabotage the process, leading to the group falling into the Abilene Paradox, and having to abandon the implementation of a school-wide game. During the generative design processes for *Friendship is Magic*, multiple classes were invited to participate in a *Community Crisis* role-playing experience where students split into representative groups to perform as students, teachers, faculty and parents grappling with the realities of the school's bullying problem. The activity highlighted the need to address bullying on campus, while inspiring players to be catalysts for positivity in their community. Heather shared, "I felt very involved in this debate, because bullying is a terrible thing... they know what kind of effect it can have on students and that it is a very serious problem." "I learned more ways to solve bullying and I will use this to help stop bullies in my daily life," deliberated Jayden. In his reflection, Jonah acknowledged, he "learned from this game that, "I really like having my voice heard." For other students, they were able to deepen their understanding by seeing from the perspective of another stakeholding group on-campus. Inari said:

"I got to really understand how much goes into the silencing of bullying especially for the administrators. I could really understand what a big problem this is and what effect it has on a community as a whole. It involves parents, students, faculty, and administration. I think that the ideas we came up with mostly were good efficient ways of working as a group to stop the subject."

Students enjoyed being able to encounter and work with each other, debate an idea at-length, and contribute without adult facilitation. Jonah continued, "I felt like my group worked well together, and it was fun being allowed to argue our points. I feel like others in our class would agree with me about the arguing part, because we always argue at the wrong times and get in trouble for it, so it was nice being allowed to do it for once."

This activity was also the beginning of attempts to hijack the process by a few students. At the end of the activity, participants rank elements to include in their final, shared proposal by putting up a fist (0) to five fingers (5) to rank their support for each element. No consensus was reached by the end of the activity. Ruminating about this fact, Ben wrote:

"I didn't really like it 'cause it was a little bit annoying how some people were making it more complicated than it needed to be, and I thought it was sort of pointless in the end. If I could change anything I probably used my 0s a little more wisely before I just gave them and made them a little bit less used. and if i could, I would have put a little more thought in what number I gave everything."

Students identified the ways in which they and their peers were establishing disruptive intergroup dynamics, and exemplifying bullying and peer pressure. In his reflection, Jonah attempted to grapple with the disruptive dynamics by suggesting a change in the consensus-based voting method of the activity "to more like, 2-3 people putting zeros instead of just [one] so we would be able to actually get somewhere." While few students wanted to address their complicity in peer



pressure, the serious games and simulations incorporated for the program forced the group to confront, and begin to find ways to address, if not name, their interpersonal issues.

The group selection process the following year (2016), was intentionally coordinated by staff. The 2016 group of student-designers began the program by confronting group dynamics head-on. Group dynamics can be effectively problematized to inspire democratic agency through gamified and game-based interpersonal and intercultural encounters. After the second week's activity, Kiran shared:

"I feel that I learned about how others (including myself at times) all have a bit of a greedy spark, especially when it came to this. I also learned about people's personalities and how certain people don't have intentions of good in heart... This game brought out a lot of people's inner desires and it was really interesting to participate in. This game helped bring another level of understanding with others and seeing inner intentions. It helped me connect with others too through similar desires. Most of all, it brought a deeper awareness to the fact that we all have dreams, wishes, desires of our own and that we will never let them go."

That student would later describe the third week's activity:

"we did an exciting game called rainbow river. In rainbow river, the objective was to cross all the people participating across a 'river' with only a 2x4 wooden board and 2 box crates. ... At the beginning we had 10 minutes to plan what we were going to do. There was a lot of loud noise, shouting and overall chaos in the beginning. However, by about the 6th minute, things had significantly calmed down and we seemed to be able to understand each other. Finally, we came up with the idea of having the board placed down and having 2 passengers and one 'ferryman' go across the board and into the crates. Then, picking up the board and placing it on the front, and so on... It was a brilliant success and we managed to get all the people across with a few minutes to spare."

His assessment of the game was that it was that it was "a great example of how in life people often have many ideas but the human brain can always find a way, some way or another to come to a consensus." This group was more amenable to searching for, and attempting to reach consensus. Weeks later, another student would articulate the correlations between the simulated activities and their positional context in the US:

"During the 8th week, we did an activity called Star Power. In the activity, we played a game which simulated the discrimination within society directly relating to people's economic situations. At first everyone started with relatively similar amounts of money. Then we went around meeting other people in the room and trading coins or tokens. The best negotiators and manipulators made the most money in the first round. After that, we were separated into rankings by how much money we had made. The squares were the richest, the triangles were the middle and finally, the circles were the poorest. I got put in the squares and therefore enjoyed the privileges of the high-life. At the beginning of the 2nd round, when the chips were sorted out, our teacher casually let us look at the bag and gave all of us gold chips. Of-course, after the 2nd round, the rich stay rich and the poor stayed poor. Finally, after the 3rd round, the teacher let us write our own rules. All of which were quite unfair."

Another student would write:

"I particularly enjoyed week 8's activity. I thought that it was very fun and provided a great example of how the modern economic situation works in the world. I felt that the first round of the game showed what it's like to first come to the Land of Opportunity. Once you come, you have to rely on your skill-set to make money, but your children don't. Often the head of the family, the first generation in the country is the one that makes it big and determines the economic class the next generations will be in. As for the 2nd and 3rd generations, it is more a matter of maintaining your reputation and economic status. It was interesting to me how even though the situation that the

squares were in was great enough, our egos forced us to make things even harder for others, unnecessarily. ... In the long run, the game was both a fantastic and fun example of how the modern economy works around the world. I loved the game and the lessons it taught.”

Another student named Will wrote, “this game, however, really made me think about what kind of power the squares have in real life.” Like Kiran, Chloe extended her generalizations and analysis to the world at-large:

“Honestly I wouldn’t change the rules of the game because it represents the reality of this world. Or at least to me it does because the people with more, more of anything really whether it be money, clothes, sq. feet in a house, etc. they get things in life faster and easier to them. It may be a job, opportunity to do something cool, or do something for another person. In the real world I think it’s pretty obvious who the circle, triangle, and squares are; lower class, middle class, and upper class. In comparison to the whole world, the people in 3rd world countries may be Lower Class while people in the China are Middle Class and the United States are Upper Class. But just in America, it may vary on where you live, your job, or family history...I learned that even though there are wealthy people who work/worked hard to get to where they are, sometimes the more fortunate people just get lucky and don’t have to use a key to unlock the door. (my metaphor for the door is already unlocked)”

When paired with a larger project for liberation, play-, game-, and design-based pedagogical approaches (Bang et al., 2015a; Bang et al., 2015b; Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Flanagan, 2009; McGonigal, 2003, 2007, 2011) cultivated value-creative (Makiguchi, 1936/2015, Makiguchi, 1989; Mokuria & Wandix-White, 2020; Goulah, 2015), critical (Freire, 2000; Glass, 2001), local (Souto-Manning, 2010) and global citizenship (UNESCO, 2015).

Student reflections and designs showed a reflective problem-posing about poverty and socioeconomics, nationalism, international hegemony, and human trafficking. They even identified that human trafficking was at the intersection of gendered and racialized violence, and decided to focus their project on the topic.

In many ways, the 2016 program was a capstone to this design experiment for middle school students. Nick, one of two students to take the class multiple times, took the course in 2015 and 2016. During the 2015 program, he was part of the subgroup of students advocating for results that would lead to the Abilene Paradox derailing the possibility of facilitating a game. At the end of the 2016 program, Nick shared this closing reflection on the course that encapsulated the purpose and findings:

“I learned that Games for Social Justice is not only a class for playing games and then talking about them, I learned that you first identify a problem and then you can make up a game to fix it, instead of having one already made. I learned about myself. That I really care about real world problems.”

As a teacher-researcher and teacher-facilitator for this program, this statement stands out as clear evidence of the process design and program itself. These emancipatory processes prepare a new, participatory citizenry for pluralistic, sociocratic democracies, and help them realize their power as transformative democratic agents (Nagda, 2003).

## **Design Report 2:**

*The InterGroup Dialogue (IGD) & Social Innovation Programs (SIP)(2016-17)*

## **The InterGroup Dialogue & Social Innovation Programs**

In 2016, the results from the Games4Justice study were used to inform co-designed InterGroup Dialogue (IDP) and Social Innovation Programs (SIP), developed for a new, urban, independent, high school with fewer than 100 students. This school established IDP and SIP upon their own legacy with Council-based programming, which operated from kindergarten through middle school. When establishing the secondary school program, we decided to instead incorporate InterGroup Dialogue, and pair it with the Social Innovation Program. The InterGroup Dialogue and Social Innovation Programs were developed to operate concurrently, with both being facilitated once a week for 3 hours each, on Fridays, or to run for 6 hours for off-campus site visits relating to students' ongoing SIP projects. IDP and SIP groups were to have over 75% overlap, despite not having their facilitation entwined.

The four-year Social Innovation Program (SIP) is designed to develop students' empathy and desire to be thoughtful, effective collaborators and changemakers. In the Social Innovation Program (SIP), students learn about social innovation and entrepreneurship focusing on three main areas: personal transformation, strategy finding skills, and the recent history of change agents and movements within political, economic and sociocultural systems. In the initial design of the SIP, students are introduced to different sets of 'grand challenges' such as the White House 21st Century Grand Challenges, United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and LA2050. SIP then reoriented students to the inner-workings of the city of Los Angeles, including a variety of site visits and meetings with representatives of ports, transit systems, utilities, waste management companies, as well as policy makers in Los Angeles County, giving students a basic understanding of the geography, people and systems that make up the area. After traveling around the greater Los Angeles areas, students select an environmental or social problem and join a team to develop a campaign of research-based, culture circle-designed projects, informed by the generative design of community experts and stakeholders. SIP emphasized applied research, and was a school-wide program, not isolated to a handful of students.

Through SIP, students became familiar with a range of social and environmental justice issues affecting communities in Los Angeles and around the globe. The program prioritized the development of key skills of social entrepreneurs: ethical decision making, ethnographic methods and use of data, a systems approach to problem solving, and innovative community based strategies that lead to sustainable impact. Students participated in weekly workshops in which they had dedicated time to undertake project-based assignments in the classroom and off-campus. Students focused on one challenge per semester using design thinking as a means to address complex problems through research, relationship building, implementation and feedback from a diverse group of community members.

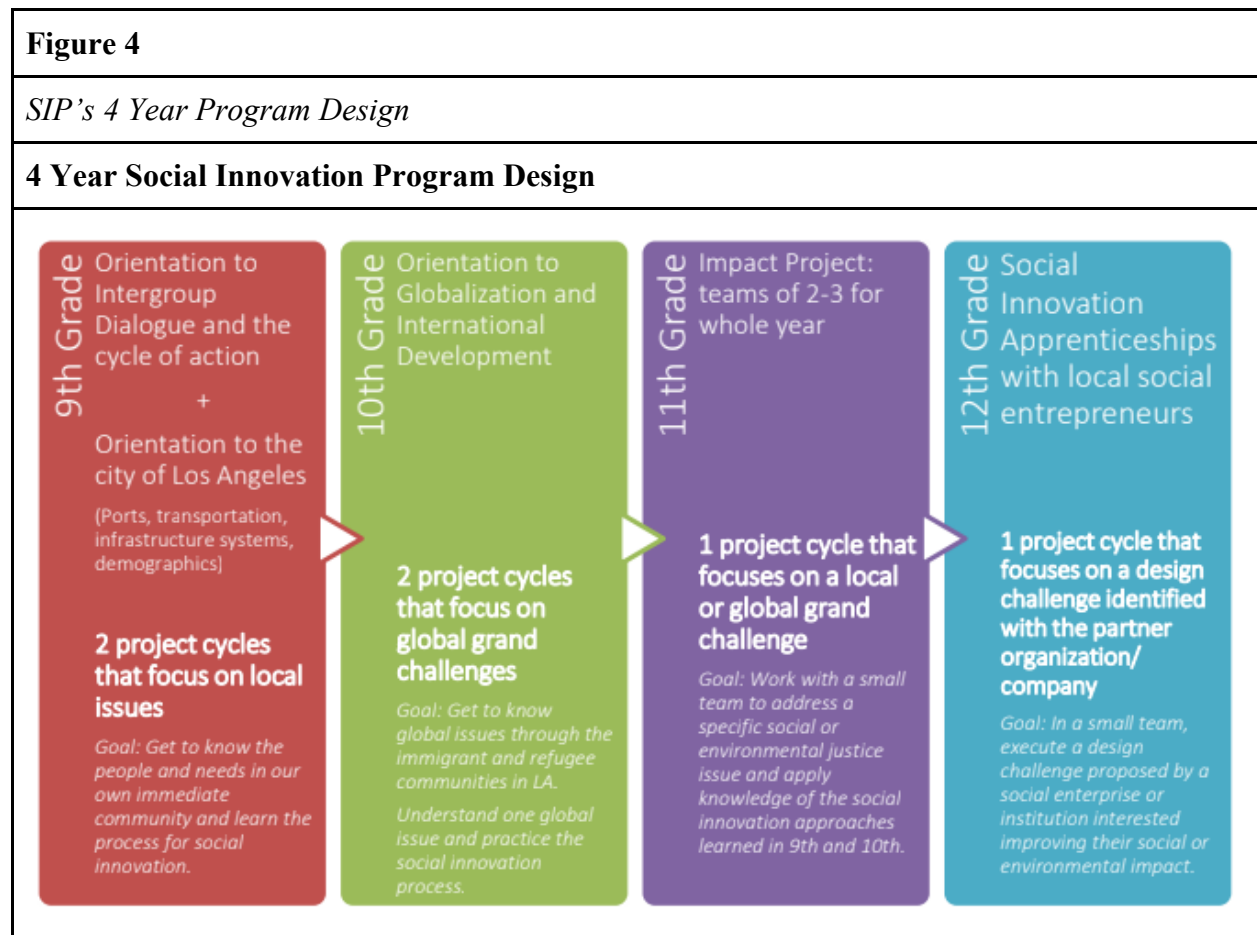
SIP was complemented by an InterGroup Dialogue Program (IDP). InterGroup Dialogue prepared students to learn about positive psychology, a field of research that examines humans at their best. Students will investigate qualities and strengths, like compassion, hope, and grit that enable individuals to successfully make the world a better place. The IDP was facilitated during the block before SIP. In the first iteration of these programs, the InterGroup Dialogue and Social Innovation groups would have between 50%-75% student overlap [ethnographic notes], though they did not include analysis of interpersonal and group dynamics during SIP. During the program design process, the School Director opted not to include game-based experience for the entirety of the

school, but did like the idea of including small group campaign design. SIP would also see students exclusively focus their attention externally, on off-campus communities.

### Technical Review

The processes and design cycles were planned for all four years of participants' high school program. The 9th grade cycle was focused on local issues, while the 10th grade cycle was focused on global grand challenges originating from the White House 21st Century Grand Challenges, and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

global report card for the fight against poverty ( ) used for local poverty in the US which is frequently whitewashed

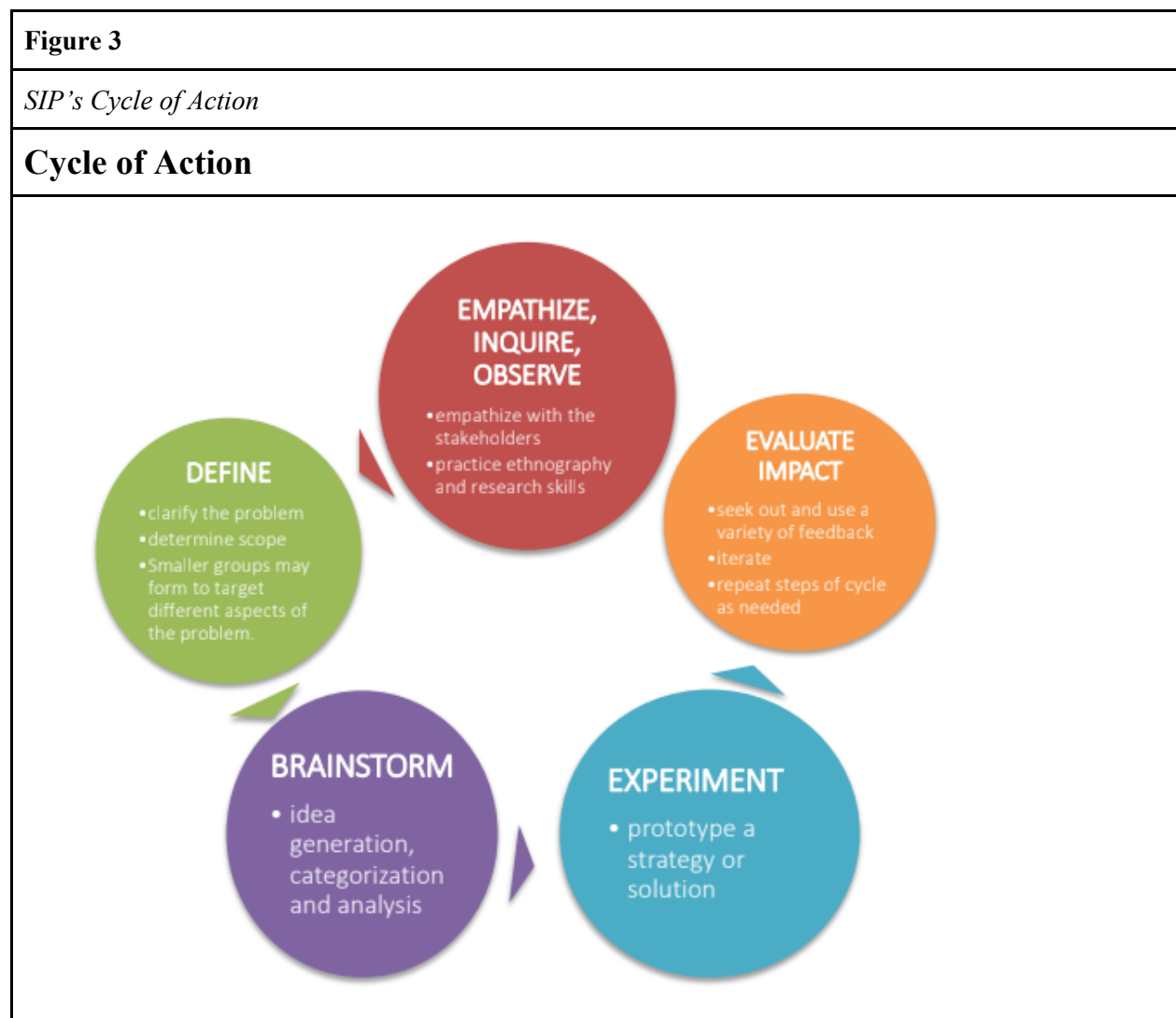


SIP incorporated a design-thinking cycle called “The Cycle of Action.” “The Cycle of Action” is a process that walks teams of students through the steps of research, starting with learning to conduct interviews with stakeholders and experts in the community. Through “The Cycle of Action,” students learn brainstorming and strategy development techniques. This process for The Cycle of Action included (1) Empathize, Inquire, Observe; (2) Define; (3) Brainstorm; (4) Experiment; and (5) Evaluate Impact. Emphasis is placed on the idea that effective strategies to address complex problems seek to make change with, rather than for, the communities most affected. The program would frequently be expanded from 3 hours to the entirety of the school-day for off-campus portions of the program, eating into the Intergroup Dialogue Program. For site

visits, students were designated various roles during SIP including Leader of the Day, Scribe, Photographer, Researcher, Outreach Coordinator, Navigator, Liaison, and had to complete site reports for corresponding assignments for the program.

**Program Results**

SIP was extremely successful in its scaffolded instruction of applied research and design methods. The processes used for SIP were able to go through multiple discursive cycles, with the input and advice of other co-facilitators. The multiple design perspectives engendered projects developed by students that were expansive, and incorporated various approaches to change. Out of more than a dozen projects developed school-wide and presented to the panel, no proposal looked similar. Design-based approaches were shown to establish a honing of participant’s abilities for deep, critical, and creative inquiry.



SIP reframed the implementation of culture circles as a tool primarily (or exclusively) for emic community participants, to instead be reimagined as a design tool for etic ethnographers and

entrepreneurs. This was to the detriment of those students who were also community members of the areas being studied, discussed, and designed for. Despite being a program developed to be students designing with community members, it invariably led to students designing for them instead. This paternalism was felt by student-designers from the nearby area, and named openly, but never addressed through the program or feedback processes. This shift moves away from a culture circle model.

Every instructor of the fledgling school was asked to facilitate SIP, regardless of expertise. This led to a noticeable gap between the quality of facilitative interventions implemented. The skill-gap between facilitators with extensive training and those who only received four days of professional development over the summer was noticeable to students and staff alike. More coaching and support was needed for those new to facilitation.

The decision to disconnect the IDP from SIP allowed negative subgrouping to fester, and left many interpersonal issues unaddressed. Group dynamics were never included, problematized, or addressed in the SIP program, and analysis was more focused on research evidence than experiential evidence, as emphasized in Freire's work. Without addressing interpersonal dynamics, the process for project design fails to reinforce the emancipatory project outcomes. If an issue was brought forward, students were just moved to different groups, or the group would stagnate until the next Vision brainstorm, during the shuffle in preparation for the next recursive cycle. SIP's facilitated process focused more on generative and iterative design than human development. Despite the extensive programming from SIP, evaluations failed to properly address group dynamics. Final evaluations focused almost exclusively on the project design, since there was no implementation.

### **Comparing Courses**

While G4J was a program for a select group of students interested in registering for that experience, SIP was school-wide. SIP would be facilitated across the entire campus, by teacher-facilitators of various interest and expertise. While G4J focused on play-, game-, and design-based, participatory praxes, SIP solely borrowed a design-based approach and was inclusive of game design-based solutions being advocated and implemented by students. In G4J, students pioneered novel approaches to Alternate Reality Gaming, Forum Games & Simulations. SIP participants had projects more expansive than game-based approaches to solutions. Both programs were established upon an institutional history of council-based human development programs; and incorporated elements of Intergroup Dialogue. Both programs highlighted the burden these programs place on teachers and the need for intensive training of facilitators. Both programs integrated facilitative methodologies from encounter groups and culture circles. Students used these methodologies in concert with generative and iterative design-based approaches

Four students in the SIP group were from near the area the school chose to focus on, Boyle Heights. These students were clearly racialized as 'Latino,' and assumed to be on scholarship. It's hard to ignore the ways this change, especially within the context of a private school, miles away from the campus. An unnamed emic/etic dynamic between the cadre of students from around the area of Boyle Heights, and those who lived near the newly opened private high school was built into the design process, and required those students to step forward as organic intellectuals, speaking for their community's perceived needs, while also representing its poverty.

While projects don't have to be gamified to be successful, G4J was more successful because it incorporated game-based learning to address interpersonal issues. It was through these conversations, and oftentimes, conflicts, that students began to feel inspired to practice their democratic agency, according to their reflections.

SIP assignments and reflections were heavily focused on design in lieu of agency. While The G4J course ended once the evaluation of the game-project prototype was completed, SIP culminated with presentations to a panel. In this case, that left agency in the hands of the panel instead of the student-designers and -players themselves. I found this to undermine the goal of developing democratic agents (Nagda, 2003). While G4J was framed by liberation, SIP emphasized entrepreneurship, and participation in a capitalist system. These two perspectives appear to be diametrically opposed purposes.

Despite the process design of the SIP program was more thorough in its implementation, this is likely due to the fact that SIP had almost three times the amount of dedicated time as the G4J process, and extensive, collaborative involvement from administrators and many in the instructional staff.

## **Conclusions**

For those interested in implementing similar pedagogical frameworks, it's important to note that facilitators must be cognizant of group dynamics when teaching middle and high schoolers. While consensus-based decisions are a cornerstone of culture circles and generative design research, consensus-seeking is more aligned with the metacognitive development of high schoolers. Younger students can find success with scaffolding and support.

In addition to these courses and games being the culmination of years of research, they were also taught in schools that maintained a legacy of human development education that expanded beyond what's seen in public schools. At the initial site, the implementation of game- and design-based instruction was intentionally implemented as part of a multi-year initiative that included nonprofit collaborations, and the innovation of an integrated studies program for sixth-grade students. The second site saw SIP implemented as part of a school-wide program set at its inception. Sustained institutional support for human development programs have become more rare despite students begging for space to connect and create with each other, and possibly share in rites of passage experiences together.

In order for more teachers to be able to experiment with these methodologies, we need teacher training that supports the application and integration of these 'nontraditional' methods. Furthermore, these courses should be taught by dedicated professionals with specialized training. For those programs unable to ensure this level of quality, teacher coaching and feedback during the year is essential. While the processes incorporated inherently reinforce public pedagogy outcomes, the context of the school and support (or lack thereof) from school administrators is an essential variable that determines programmatic success. Waning administrative support can really hamper or be detrimental to the learning goals of a program that includes these, or other nontraditional approaches to learning, instruction, or schooling.

Human development education in public schools expanded to cover kindergarten through undergraduate schooling, and taught. Coaching and feedback during teacher training is essential

for the integration of these or similar novel or nontraditional instructional methods. This divided praxis was exacerbated by but no coaching and feedback during implementation. More ethnographic and longitudinal research is needed to investigate the ways in which culture circles, and play-, game-, and design-based approaches implemented within them, can reinforce democratic agency.



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