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# Deathscapes in Neoliberal Times: Prisonfare, Workfare and Resistance as Potential Outcomes for Black Youth

Ebony Rose

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Deathscapes in Neoliberal Times: Prisonfare/Workfare and Resistance  
as Potential Outcomes for Black Youth

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Educational Policy Studies and Research Program  
College of Education

DePaul University

In Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

By

Ebony B. Rose

Accepted

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DePaul University  
Chicago, IL



## DEDICATION

This thesis is first and foremost, dedicated to my aunt Shavelle Christian and her husband, my uncle Eddie Christian. My aunt and uncle gained custody of my brother and I in the fall of 1998. After three years in foster care, the State of Missouri's Division of Child and Family Services put my brother and I up for statewide adoption. At 24 years old, aunt Shavelle and uncle Eddie legally adopted my brother Isaiah Rose and I. From this single act, my life changed and they offered me unconditional love, affection, nurturing, encouragement, and support. This paper would not have existed if it were not for them. While in high school, my high school debate coach, Jane Rinehart promised my aunt and uncle that she would show me the world if they did not withdraw me from Central High School. Indeed, Jane showed me opportunities that I did not know as a black boy from the inner city who attended the lowest performing high school in the state existed. I was able to be in a nurturing space for young black radicals who were passionate about social change and inclusion in the debate community. Finally, yet importantly, the only reason I was able to graduate from the University of Louisville was because Dr. Mary Shelley Thomas's passion for Paulo Freire, social justice, and educational equity led her to be a fierce advocate and supporter on my behalf, and she still is to this day.

As a new father, I dedicate this to my soon-to-be daughter Veira Johnson-Rose. This paper is for you. I hope that my written stories, the hardships that I endured, will be alien to you. Let's hope daddy earns tenure one day!

This paper is also dedicated to the young men and others who are victims of this country's shameful legacy of white supremacy and anti-black racism: Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, John Crawford III, Eric Garner, Oscar Grant, Walter Scott, Freddie Grey, and Trayvon Martin. This paper is for all of you!

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## Abstract

### Deathscapes in Neoliberal Times: Prisonfare/Workfare and Resistance as Potential Outcomes for Black Youth

Ebony B. Rose

This paper defines and unpacks Loic Wacquant's concepts of *Workfare* and *Prisonfare*, coupled with a discussion of Tendayi Sithole's concept of *Deathscapes* and his appropriation of Achille Mbembe's *Necropolitics* as to why urban schools are poverty storage facilities for black youth. I address the centrality of the states social and penal policies in the reconfiguration of urban schools under a death politic guided by the deployment of both a neoliberal-paternalism and anti-black racist methodology. I argue, through the creation of *workfare* and *prisonfare* those urban schools eradicate black existence by conditioning low-income black students for low-wage labor or the prison. Next, this paper examines reproduction theory in education. Reproduction theory in education in regards economics is an outdated model, that rests on the assumption of a low-skill labor market that poor white students are being prepared for working class blue collar jobs. Previous reproduction in education theories are insufficient to explain how the schooling experiences of black youth in a punitive neoliberal post-industrialize world relate to the production of social, political and economic inequality. As urban schools are producing criminal subjects in surplus not workers. Lastly, I discuss the limitations and weaknesses of fighting for racial equality and radical transformation in our anti-black capitalist society. A Racial Realist framework advocated by Derrick Bell will ground my discussion on the possibilities for black youth resistance.

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## **I. Introduction**

Moving from house to house and shelter to shelter disrupted my formal education, but my drug addicted mother instilled in me, at a very young age, an appreciation of books. My curiosity for books and thirst for knowledge was my only stable relationship amongst uncertainty and precariousness, as I spent my middle and high school years reading myself to sleep. In eleventh grade, something radically transformative happened after accidentally stumbling upon Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Everything I had thought, but could not explain or fully comprehend in my own language, was illuminated in that book, especially the oppressor/oppressed relationship, the examination of exploitation, and the analysis of the "Banking Model" of education (Freire, 2000).

Class exploitation under capitalism, white racism, sexism, militarism, oppression, hopelessness, and existential death began to make sense. I had an epiphany and understood my path to gathering the knowledge I needed in order to fully interpret and change the world. I ravenously read more books written by Freire, and wrote significant passages on pieces of paper and taped them to my bedroom wall. Freire then led to my exploration and embracing of Marxism and other philosophies, which became the critical frameworks that currently shape my perspectives and actions. Later, I acclimated myself to bell hooks and black feminist literature to incorporate more conceptual frameworks into a holistic understanding of systemic and institutional exploitation and the interconnectedness of race, gender and class oppression (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981). After my encounter with Freire, I have worked effortlessly to combine education theory and practices together for what Paulo Freire calls *Praxis*. Praxis is the

operation of theory and practice simultaneously to create change and liberating situations for the oppressed and marginalized voices.

While teaching, I decided to earn a master's degree in education. I enrolled in the Social and Cultural Foundations in Education program at DePaul because I could explore education in an interdisciplinary way. In my first graduate class, I discovered the word "Neoliberalism," which, for years, had never appeared in any of my readings or undergraduate coursework. I learned about charter schools, education reform, and market fundamentalism I had my second epiphany. After learning about neoliberal school reform and how the organizations that ran my school were instrumental in pushing free-market ideology and scientific managerialism policies in education policy, I decided to place my full energy and focus into my studies and find another way to work and empower youth outside of the formal classroom setting.

My third epiphany occurred in 2014, in my "Identity Constructions" course taught by Dr. Enora Brown. Dr. Brown introduced the class to the French Sociologist Loic Wacquant, who is a professor University of California-Berkeley and a researcher at Centre de Européen de Sociologie et de Science Politique in Paris. I was attracted to his scholarly work and have attempted to read and understand his main ideas and concepts, most importantly the four peculiar institutions that have "defined, controlled and confined African Americans" (Wacquant, 2002, p. 41) in the United States. Loic Wacquant conceptualizes the state sanctioned placement of blacks in segregated housing units, *statecrafting*, which is the reconfiguration of the state under neoliberalism and its re-masculinization, double punishment of the poor through *workfare* and *prisonfare*, the centrality of penalization to a core state function in order to control social insecurity and surplus/redundant populations, hyper-incarceration, ethnoracial marginality, and the prison as a repressive and productive apparatus using the bureaucratic field (which he

borrowed from his mentor Pierre Bourdieu) as a theoretical concept to grasp the Leviathan through the gendered *left hand* and *right hand* analogy (see Wacquant, 2001, 2001a, 2002, 2002a, 2009, 2009a, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013, 2014). I became consumed with his ideas, and concepts and like Freire before him, it directed my academic and intellectual path. Moreover, I integrated and added to my current understanding of race, racial formation, racial domination, institutions and the political economy of schooling for black and brown youth. To understand the *necropolitical* role of the sovereign state is to understand the power of the state to produce, reproduce, or render black youth as redundant and or surplus (Sithole, 2014), therefore rendering them obsolete through the formal schooling system (Giroux, 2008, 2013). This form of political terrorism against blacks is nothing new. What I want to bring to the table is integration of comprehensive perspectives to captures such a dynamic and complicated problem of schooling for black youth. This task is both difficult and valuable to black children because it complicates traditionally shallow debates about education and youth. I will address the question “Why are urban schools practicing poverty control responsibilities in a neoliberal society?”

#### **A. *The Problem***

As a descendant of Africa, I know I belong to a racial group that has been historically and is currently at the material and symbolic bottom of this nation’s racial and class caste-like structure (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Marable, 2000; Wacquant, 2001, 2002, 2009). I am questioning how I situate my narrative into a mature and emerging body of academic scholarship with my experience of spending early and late childhood in a home with a drug addict mother and an absent father. How can I tell the tales of my brothers? Where do I fit the narratives of a brother in a Missouri state jail and the youngest brother struggling with mental illness and alcohol abuse? Or the tale of my mother and father, who both grew up during the heightening of economic free-market liberalism and the transition from production industrial economy to a

service-orientated, globalized post-industrial economy? Around this time America witnessed that automation and robots replace people in labor market (Brown, 2005). I write because of my personal anecdotes of attending the schools and living in the communities, which were negatively impacted by the necropolitical role of the sovereign state and the deployment of death through political terrorism. Moreover, past work experience as a teacher in Chicago as a teacher has situated me both as a participant in the system that shuffles poor black boys to the penal apparatus and girls to the welfare to work programs. Later, I became disillusioned. This disillusionment gave me agency to subtly resist, and engage in pedagogies that were more radical. My goal and purpose here is to expose the exploitative economic and racial system that controls, dominates and confines black men and women, simultaneously fighting for those who are excluded from knowledge production in the ivory tower; my students who I worked with on the South and West sides' in Chicago.

### **B. *An Overview to the Literature Review and the Thesis***

This thesis begins with the Literature Review, followed by Chapter 1 on urban schools and poverty management. Chapter 2 is on social reproduction theory in education. Chapter 3 will argue why we should adopt a Racial Realist framework. Chapter 4 will conclude this thesis. I will grasp and reconfigure academic scholarship in an attempt to place macro government policies central to the reconfiguration of urban schools behavior and actions under a neoliberal-paternalistic racial structural formation analysis through the creation and maintenance of life eradication on black subjects through the low-wage labor market, the prison or mass disposability. In the Literature Review, I will define and unpack Wacquant's concepts of *workfare* and *prisonfare*, coupled with a discussion of the ontological, epistemic, and existential consequences of structural racial violence, as it relates to neoliberalism and outcomes for black youth in a neoliberal society. Sithole's (2014) concepts of *deathscapes* and his appropriation of

Mbembe (2003) and Agamben (2005) ideas will be used to argue why schools perform poverty storage warehouses for disposable waste. The central question that grounds this work is what are the consequences for black existence under the empire. Reproduction Theory will be used as a justification for schooling in the 21st century in a capitalist society. The change in our global economy and new market ideologies will be thoroughly discussed. I will argue that this is a stable system of governance that functions with the morphing reality of race and is fused with centuries state policies that control, constraint and repress black populations (Wacquant, 2002, 2009, Winant and Omi, 1994).

The first chapter of this thesis will place schools at the center of a microanalysis and examine structures of education for the poor that operates under a paternalist-neoliberal (Fording et al., 2011) and white supremacist (Vaught, 2011) model of monitoring and controlling black bodies. This persistent continuation of the historical arc of racial domination over black people in this country is key to the reconfiguration of our education system. Necropower and necropolitics will ground my examination of psychological, social, and physical death for black children and adults who are rendered meaningless and disposable. As schools and communities serve as sites for as existential locations of violence. Lastly, I will argue that the black community exists in death spaces to what I will describe as *necropolises*<sup>1</sup> or *deathscapes*. Characteristics of necropolis are; 1) limited possibilities of a world-class education as schools for low-income youth of color function to sort students to the low wage service worker economy. These jobs have little dignity, autonomy, recognition and ability to earn a living wage (Knopp, 2012) 2) The extraction of black youth and their adult family members in a prison cell under the supervision of the criminal justice system, justifies the establishment of prison-like schooling conditions, 3)

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<sup>1</sup> Necropolis is a cemetery, especially a large one belonging to an ancient city. Its Greek from the word *nekros* 'dead person' + *polis* 'city'. *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. This term relates to the other terms I use to define places of death and where death is made possible and where this process is

By situating the police presence as Godly, the empire controls and represses poor youth, thereby squashing potential rebellion and resistance 4) lastly, this serve the free-market order for capitalism integration by ironically excluding them from the formal economy and schooling system.

In the second chapter, I will argue that reproduction theory in education in regards to class and schooling outdated model. The reproduction thesis rest on the assumption that schools prepare poor and working class white boys for blue collar jobs (Nolan, 2009). In reality, the jobs that working-class students walked into after high school in the 50's through the 70's are no longer a reality, especially in poor black communities in the United States (Anyon and Greene, 2011). Previous reproduction-in-education theories are insufficient to explain how the schooling experiences for black youth in a punitive neoliberal post/de-industrialized world relate to the production of social, political, and economic inequality. I will examine how the educational environment for poor black youth resembles a prison,. Instead of producing working subjects who identify with industrial capitalism, poor black students are being produced as criminals in both a material Marxist and French sociological view of the *symbolic* production of particular populations (Nolan, 2009, Wacquant, 2001 or 2002). A framework is necessary which reveals how gender and race operates in schools and create negative effects for males and females alike. Lastly, I will attempt to revitalize social reproduction theories and make it relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century production system and economic relations for low-income black youth.

The third and final chapter will discuss why Racial Realism provides a critical framework for practicing resistance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Derrick Bell's ideas and most influential concepts will be discussed in detail to argue that only a realist perspective came save us from white domination and hyper-capitalism.

## II. Review of Literature

### *A. Statecrafting: The Neoliberal Reconfiguration of the Leviathan and Poverty Management via the creation of Workfare and Prisonfare*

Loic Wacquant (2010, 2012, 2013) argues that the transformation and reconfiguring of the government poverty treatment is the consequence of economic deregulation, welfare retraction and revamping, and urban retrenchment. Focusing on the United States Wacquant's appropriation of Bourdieu's *bureaucratic field*, "set[s] organizations that define and distribute public goods," (Wacquant, 2012, p. 241) allows those who study policy to comprehend and bring the development of organization into a single analytic framework that integrates both social and penal policy (Wacquant, 2012). The bureaucratic field in the contemporary period is "traversed by two internecine struggles" (Wacquant, 2010) in which *high state nobility* of the policy makers who are, as Wacquant (2010) argues, intent on promoting market-oriented reforms and those who perform the actions of the *lower state nobility* are attached to the traditional behaviors of government. The goals and duties of the government is the central site of struggle between high and low nobility that reconnect many of the "'hands' of the state involved in the political production of inequality and marginality" (Wacquant, 2012, p. 241). Under the framework, developed by Wacquant (2012), welfare has been revamped as *workfare*<sup>2</sup>, and the prison stripped

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<sup>2</sup> Workfare is the combination of "work" and "welfare". Workfare is a welfare system that requires those receiving benefits to perform some work or to participate in job training. *The New OxfordAmericanDictionary*. Loic Wacquant in an interview for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, by Karen J. Winkler July 13, 2009 defines "workfare" and provides context: "The sudden growth and glorification of punishment partakes of a broader re-engineering of the state, which also entails the replacement of the right to welfare by the obligation of 'workfare' (forced participation in subpar employment as a condition of public support)." Data Retrieved May 26, 2015 <https://kruso.wordpress.com/2009/08/27/11/> Welfare before the states' re-engineering was given to those who needed it. It was a right, just as Wacquant explains it. The only precondition was meeting the federal guidelines for those who met the poverty threshold. Now a person, in order to receive government benefits has to demonstrate they are working, willing to work or is willing to be trained to work. The job that are available to them and that society has set aside for them is low-wage, low-skilled, service sector

of rehabilitative functions as *prisonfare*<sup>3</sup> (Wacquant, 2012). Together they now form a single organization fabric that is swung at the poor according to a gender division of control: *workfare* handles the women and the children while *prisonfare* handles their men who are the husbands, brothers and the sons of these same women (Wacquant, 2010, 2010a, 2012,2013). Wacquant (2012), in his analysis of statecrafting, provides a portrayal for both genders that are poor and argues, “social profile of public aid recipients and inmates are both recruited from the same marginalized sectors of the unskilled working class” (p.242). Moreover, they belong to the same household, “trapped in the same urban neighborhoods that are the targets of the new policy of ‘double disciplining’” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 242), which is the coupling of the left and right hands of the state. The idea of “double disciplining” regulates poor people through poverty management strategies and grabs subjects who are most likely to be women in a shrinking welfare state, in order to work low-wage/low-skill labor under workfare while men are subjected to the expanding carceral state under prisonfare (Wacquant 2010, 2010a, 2012).

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work. More of this will be discussed in-depth in the first chapter in this thesis as it relates to the opportunities low-income black girls have available to them.

<sup>3</sup> For me “Prisonfare” is both the words “prison” + “welfare” combined to create a new term. I see prisonfare as a new method for dealing with social problems, as in a welfare policy for the dis-integration of poor and marginalize people in our society. Wacquant in the same interview describe what “prisonfare” is and how it operates as both a social and penal policy: The state can seek to remedy undesirable conditions and behaviors in three ways. It can “socialize” them by tackling their roots in the collective organization of society. It can “medicalize” them as individual pathologies. Or it can “penalize” them by ramping up its law-enforcement agencies. Think of the three ways of responding to homelessness: build low-income housing, offer mental-health services, or throw street derelicts in jail. “Prisonfare” is the stream of policies that responds to urban ills by rolling out the police, the courts, jails and prisons, and their extensions... “Prisonfare” also encompasses the whirling images of criminals diffused by scholars and politicians and by the cultural industries that trade on the fear of crime and feed a public culture of vituperation of felons... from its historical inception, the prison has never been a tool to fight crime-It is an instrument to manage deprived and dishonored populations, which is quite a different task. And so, after the acme of the civil-rights movement, the black lower class stuck in the crumbling ghetto became its privileged clients as they were made economically redundant by deindustrialization, politically expendable by the great white migration to the suburbs, and tainted by the triple stigma of race, poverty, and immorality. See *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, by Karen J. Winkler July 13, 2009. Data Retrieved May 26, 2015 <https://kruso.wordpress.com/2009/08/27/11/>



The explanation for the gender segregation of poverty management lies within the logics of black male criminality and disciplining of black women to control their reproductive capabilities (Brown, 2015, Fording et al., 2011; Wacquant, 2010). It just occurs in our nation that black men are viewed as violent and dangerous, therefore unsalvageable, while women who are perceived by others through a cultural of poverty framework offer rehabilitation potential. Therefore, the gendered treatment of poverty management under neoliberalism can be explained in four ways. First, institutions have been politically built around gender-specific cultural images of poor racial populations: the lawless, violent male of the underclass ghetto and the lazy, licentious, welfare queen (Fording et al., 2011). Second, Haney (2004) argues, the system operates through gender-segregated institutions, as women make up roughly 90 percent of adult welfare recipients and men making up roughly 90 percent of prisoners (as cited in Fording, et al., 2011). Third, the direction of change on both sides has been toward a masculinizing of the state as a paternalist, behavior-enforcing custodian (Wacquant, 2010). Starobin (1998) argues that the *nanny state* of welfare protections and prison rehabilitation programs are connected to a *daddy state* emphasizing direction, supervision, and discipline (as cited in Fording et al., 2011). Fourth, historically masculine images of the worker-citizen have been elevated and universalized as a behavioral norm (Collins and Mayer, 2010; Korteweg, 2003). For former welfare recipients and prisoners, the essential condition of civic reinstatement is the same: formal employment and wage-based support of one's children.

Wacquant (2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013) links changing forms of urban marginality with emerging models of *statecrafting*. Using the concept of lower state nobility under the bureaucratic field, the government produces familiarity; providing social functions or enforcing economic discipline (Wacquant, 2010). Using Hobbes depiction as a metaphor, the two parts of

the lower state nobility represent the ruler's *left hand* and *right hand* (Wacquant, 2010). Wacquant (2012) argue that the left hand is the feminine side and right hand is the masculine side of the Leviathan. The left hand carries and regulates the social function pocketbook to spend money on public education, health, housing, welfare which offers "protection...to the social categories shorn of economic and cultural capital" (Wacquant, 2010, p.201). *The right hand* is charged with "enforcing the new economic discipline via budget cuts, fiscal incentives and economic deregulation" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 201). Wacquant (2010) inserts the prison in the concept of the bureaucratic field as a/ the core constituents of the right hand of the state. I will argue, that penal policies need to be brought from the edge of socio-political analysis to the center of its redesign and deployment of government programs as part of the "remasculinization of the state" under neoliberalism (Wacquant, 2010). Wacquant theories of statecrafting under neoliberalism is of utmost importance here as the Fordist-Keynesian policies of the New Deal and the Great Society under the nanny state, guided the ideology of the Leviathan's left hand has now transitioned to the punitive, authoritarian and strict daddy state of neoliberalism (Wacquant, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013).

*Workfare* (welfare to work) replaced welfare under the embedded liberal, Fordist-Keynesian economy. Capital and labor agreed to have international free trade and the accumulation of capital while simultaneously, securing full employment, education and other traditional nanny state functions, in order to provide stability and peace for democracy (Harvey, 2005). The task of workfare is to subject citizens to the low wage, un/low skilled labor market and to regulate, shape and mold particular groups' behavior instead of protecting citizens from the punitive nature of the economic system. People must now be "worthy" of receiving benefits of the state (Wacquant, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013). *Prisonfare* represents the policies

encompassing “categories, programs and discourses-that confront urban ills by rolling out the police, the courts jails and prisons” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 242). This includes probation and parole, which supervises “five million individuals in the United States in addition to the two million plus under lock” (Wacquant, 2012, pp. 242-243). The justification of the prison and the images of criminals dispersed by politicians and scholars are embedded prisonfare (Wacquant, 2012). Prisonfare has other traits other than incarceration for it extends to include the development of “social, educational, medical and other agencies of the welfare state to the extent that it operates in a panoptic and punitive mode” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 243) whose agenda is not about serving the poor’s needs, but exerting disciplinary supervision over “trouble categories and territories” (p. 243). Workfare is an emerging relationship in which our government maintains harmony over its defragmented disadvantaged populations through panoptic measures rather than the tradition methods of “spendthrift” (Wacquant, 2010). Therefore, as schools become more “prison-like” (Norgera, 2008; Nolan, 2011, Wacquant, 2001); schools stop performing traditional left-hand tasks of the Leviathan. Nonetheless, as the right hand struggles for dominance its task of enforcing free-market practices of the neoliberal state, punishes the poor through authoritarian penal practices (Wacquant, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2014). This I believe is what uniquely defines the large urban public school today, especially ones that serve exclusively low-income youth of color. In relation to the education system, I will argue later that under Wacquant’s framework of gendered Leviathan under neoliberalism, the urban schools represents a messy and often contradictory path supervision of the criminal justice system for young black boys. For young black girls as their lack of high quality instruction prepares them to work in the low-wage, low-skilled labor market.

### **B. *Linking Social Reproduction Theory to the Present***

The existence of political, economic, and social inequality is as American as apple pie. Schools are key instruments in the maintenance of an asymmetrical, hierarchical oppressive social order. Scholars in the 1970s and 1980s, who used Karl Marx's concept of reproduction, as argued by Henry Giroux (2006), have given this concept a central place in developing "a critique of liberal views of schooling" (p. 3). Moreover, they have used it as the theoretical foundation for developing a critical science of education (Giroux, 2006). In addition, Marx's concepts have been one of the "major organizing ideas informing socialist theories of schooling" (Giroux, 2006, p. 3). Bowles and Gintis (2011), in their classic education text, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, challenged the conventional wisdom of schooling being viewed as the "great equalizer" (Saltman, 2014). They contend that schooling largely functioned to produce and reproduce the class order, and as a byproduct, the racialized order in a semi-caste like social system under the guise of merit (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Saltman, 2014). Reproduction theory maintains that schools solidify, or even exaggerate, the inequalities children bring with them to school (Bowles and Gintis 2011 ; Morris, 2007). Contrary to popular belief, reproduction theorists have empirically proven that a students' parents educational background, income and occupational prestige are the largest determinants of students' future wealth and income over intelligence or amount of schooling (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Saltman, 2014). Schools are quintessential to the capitalist system by producing subjects who are complicit to wage labor without questioning the class vertical hierarchy and demanding an egalitarian social structure. Bowles and Gintis (2011) main thesis in *Schooling in Capitalist America* rests upon the *Correspondence Principle*. Saltman (2014) and Anyon (1980) articulate the thesis comprehensively as the correspondence between labor relationships on the shop floor and the

school between administrator, teacher and students. Therefore, the categories of schooling opportunities for students are related to their class positions in society. The Correspondence Principle is summarized with five subtopics: 1) class inequality in the United States is almost exclusively a function of our markets and the broader economy, not of the education system 2) students' schooling experience is independent of the quality of education, thereby domesticating them to understand economic inequality as natural and deserved 3) the reproduction of the economy is largely situated in the schooling dynamics of educating students in the hierarchical relationships that correspond to the hierarchical relationships of the workplace 4) the reproduction of existing social relationships is not perfect as it also exposes the contradictions within capitalism to produce two groups- misfits, rebels and docile disciplined workers 5) the form of schooling is related to the historical moment of the economy and to popular struggles connected to capital accumulation (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Saltman, 2014). Traditional methods of reproduction theory, as articulated by Bowles and Gintis (2011), explained how capitalism and class are the primary driving force behind social reproduction, then argued that race, and gender are secondary to capitalist production (Morris, 2007). Nevertheless, social reproduction in education is important because it highlights the ways in which schools create, produce, maintain, and reproduce social inequality.

Nonetheless, the traditional understanding of social reproduction within schools attended by poor and working class students is called into question as “these urban students are not being academically prepared for viable employment or higher education” (Nolan, 2009, p. 44).

Reproduction scholars provided an important framework for understanding the relationship between schools and the political economy. As argued by Nolan (2009), their theories were formulated and research took place before the dramatic shifts in the political economy and their

scholarship focused primarily on the reproduction of a white labor force. As new economic and racial relations occur, we must ask new questions about the significance of reproduction in a new context of structural unemployment, hyper-incarceration of people of color and the reconfiguring of overt government sanctioned racism. Moreover, we must question and be critical of placing the white male worker in the center for reproduction theories in the present. A more thorough discussion of this will occur in the second chapter of this thesis. There is both theoretical and empirical evidence that supports the usefulness of reproduction theory in examining the micro-practices of penal control, poverty management, criminology of poor black youth, and punitive disciplinary practices in low-income urban schools. Kupchik and Ward (2011) argue that “Our findings thus help to confirm the relevance of the social reproduction thesis to the adoption of school security measures...with concentrations of poor students are uniquely inclined to employ most of the security measures we consider” (p. 26-27). Wacquant’s (2001) description of public schools in the large urban school districts that serve predominantly low-income youth illustrates how particular schools that serve mostly isolated and marginalized youth of color reproduce social marginality by treating these students as prisoners. The negative consequence of this process domesticates them to anticipate and accept “custody and control” (Wacquant, 2001). Morris’s (2007) study uses social reproduction theory to explore how schools serve as important institutions that socially construct race, class and gender identities for black female youth. He argues that social reproduction in education is a valid tool to analyze how education reproduces existing asymmetrical, social inequalities in our society. For radical educators we have a tool to argue against mainstream claims by liberal theorists who believe that education offers possibilities for individual development, and for both political and economic mobility social mobility and power the disadvantaged and dispossessed (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Giroux, 2006; Saltman,

2014, 2015). Radical educators have argued that education is not the mythic “great equalizer” but that schools are instrumental in the reproduction of the dominant ideology, and “its form of knowledge and the distribution of skills needed to reproduce the social division of labor” (Giroux, 2006, p. 3). Within this framework, schools as institutions could only be understood through an analysis of their relationship between the state and the economy (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Giroux, 2006; Saltman, 2014). In this view, the deep structure or underlying significance of schooling could only be revealed through analyzing how schools functioned as agencies of social reproduction, that is how they legitimated capitalist rationality and sustained dominant social practices (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Giroux, 2006). For the first time in educational history and theory for the oppressed, radical educators had a tool to blame the dominant society instead of blaming students and parents for educational failure. Therefore, the social reproduction lens will be applied throughout the paper to illustrate that even though urban schools that serve low-income black youth are producing and reproducing students within *a new set* of economic and social relations, but the outcome is the same, the maintenance of an unequal and highly stratified society.

### III. Methodology: Necropower, Neoliberalism, and Racial Formation as Conceptual Lens

*This thesis will not deploy any of the popular methodological interventions that are conventional in the Euro-North American simply because they are alien to the lived experience of the African subject, its subjectivity and they ratify subjection. It is in these methodologies that the African subject becomes the object of study. - Sithole, T. Achille Mbembe: Subject, subjection, and subjectivity.*

This paper is necessarily broad, occasionally sweeping, as I aim to pull together insights that come from thinking across three or more established empirical and philosophical research agendas. I intend to raise questions and propose relations that remain concealed by a tighter lens. America as the empire historically has used the economy and race to dominate, isolate, store, manage, control, and repress black bodies for non-productive, productive, and reproductive purposes that are both material and symbolic. This section will attempt to unravel a dynamic way in which the empire sacrifice black bodies. The overall agenda is to solidify and reinforce whites faith in an exploitative and oppressive racial and economic caste system.

*A. The Empire Strikes' Back: Necropolitics, Bare-Life and Deathscapes for Black Existenta*  
Mbembe (2003) deploys the concept *necropower* to suggest the process of “conferring life and taking it at free will in the form of killing resulting to death” (as cited in Sithole, 2014, p. 224). When one uses this lens of necropower, one can also utilize the notion of “Empire” as defined by Tendayi Sithole (2014) as the “political formation of the asymmetrical power and geographic location that resides in Euro-North America” (p. vii) that propagates war and violence. Hardt and Negri (2000) state that the empire is the political configuration that controls global exchanges, and it is a sovereign entity that governs the world (as cited in Sithole, 2014, p. vii). Sithole’s (2014) use of Mbembe’s (2003) concept of necropower has the same connotation with the philosophy developed by Giorgio Agamben’s (1998) *bare life*. Sithole (2014) argues, “both necropower and bare life have their genealogical roots from Foucauldian notion of Biopolitics” (p. vii). Although these theories apply necropower and empire to a global context, in



particular one that is situated in Africa's colonial history with Europe, I will argue that the United States utilizes its material, cultural and symbolic power via its structures, laws and ideologies to physically and existentially kill poor black subjects. As argued by Moon-Kie Jung (2011) the United States has never been a nation state but "...has always been a racial state, a state of white supremacy,"(Kindle location 92) therefore an "empire-state" (Kindle location 92). She asserts further that the United States resembles an empire-state because "In terms of belonging or membership, the peoples of an empire-state effectively, through de jure and de facto practices have differential access to rights and privileges" (Jung, 2011, Kindle location 121). Therefore, the empire-state manifesting itself in a racist cultural production machine that portrays blacks as criminal and or violent (Ferguson, 2000; Monroe, 2005; Page, 1997) that justifies black subjection to substandard spatial arrangements and residential patterns which isolates them from all social, civic, economic, and political life (Dinzey-Flores, 2006; Morgan, 2013; Wacquant, 2001, 2009a).

Why the deployment of a necropower against blacks? Manning Marable in his book *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America* answers this question directly as he argues that the underdevelopment of Africa and its descendants created the conditions for European and America's development (Marable, 2000). America's capitalist development has occurred because the brutal exploitation of blacks as workers and consumers (Marable, 2000). This system exists to under develop black people as the accumulation of capital in the west has come from "the extraction of wealth from colonies, piracy and the slave trade" (Marable, 2000, p. 3). Underdevelopment was the direct consequence of this process, "chattel slavery, sharecropping, peonage, industrial labor at low wages and cultural chaos" (Marable, 2000, p. 3) set the state for empire and its colonies. In my view, blacks represent a colonized people. As such, Blacks belong

to what Wacquant (2001, 2002) calls a “dishonored” racial group because of their ethnic/racial membership of what whites deem a subclass of racial species. This is how race contributed to the rise the empire. Wacquant (2009), who argues the prison emerged as a fourth “peculiar institution” for “defining, confining, and controlling African Americans in the United States,” (Wacquant, 2001, p. 98) list this modern regime as the latest in a succession of systems for “the reproduction of ethnoracial hierarchy” (Wacquant, 2001, p. 98) that that has included slavery (1619–1865), Jim Crow (1865–1915), and the racially defined ghetto (1915–68). Blacks therefore are the periphery while America as an empire-state represents the core country. Blacks for the past four centuries have suffered exploration as an occupied people as the ruling class elite has used their bodies for surplus value for the accumulation of capital.

As the most powerful nation in the world, the United States deploys necropower to situate blacks in a perpetual state of social isolation, material, and existential neglect to maintain white supremacy and the logics of Euro-American universalism (Jung, et al., 2011; Sithole, 2015; Vaught, 2011). For Singer (as cited in Cowen and Siciliano, 2011), the empires’ public monopoly on violence is a recent feature of modern nation states of, at most, the past 400 years when the states foreign occupation separated from its domestic force (the military and police force respectfully). However, for racialized bodies, America deploys all of its violence-both military and police to force white supremacy. This manifest itself in the militarization of urban schools and black communities as a response to rebellion, social unrest, economic insecurity, and racial paranoia. What concerns us the most in the empire’s exercise of necropower against black bodies is the states monopoly on violence. The creation of a racial concept has been a violent one and the empire’s violence is almost exclusively against racialized and gender minorities at home and abroad. The state alone determines which life is valuable and therefore worth preserving, and

which life has no value and therefore worth exempting from laws to prepare them for extermination (Agamben, 1998). Public institutions can act violently without discretion and impunity against racialized bodies to support its existence to its valued and desirable subjects while remaining out of legal and judicial oversight for right infringement<sup>4</sup>. The American empire is without equal and therefore not accountable in practice to any international organization and governing body regarding its deployment of domestic and foreign power and capabilities. Having the largest G.D.P., and military budget on earth has given America unlimited free get out of jail passes to dominate all life on earth directly and indirectly without damaging it's relationship with other countries.

This makes necropolitics and necropower important in that they both are referred to in the *politics of death* (Sithole, 2014). As such, *necropolitics* in addition to *necropower* will be used to denote the politics of death performed by the United States or its agents in the form of prison, market economy, and public schools. The concept of necropower and necropolitics is grounded in a constant state of war and violence, where the state not only advocates permanent war but relies on it, as an inherent component of the empire's existence (Agamben, 1998; Moon-Kie Yung, 2011; Sithole, 2014). The racist attitude of the empire, here in the United States federal government, “creates this state of hell” (Sithole, 2014, p. 224) for the black populations accomplished by the politics of *othering* (Sithole, 2014). Racist othering is central to the necro-political state and renders mobility “impossible and entrenches separation” (Sithole, 2014, p. 224). According to Maldonado-Torres, the logics of racism within the necro-political state promote the “complicit character where dehumanization, violence and war are institutionalized and normalized” (as quoted in Sithole, 2014, p. 225). United States dehumanizes black

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<sup>4</sup> Individuals now have no legal right to take another persons' life. That power is only granted to the state and its agents. This is different from how whites operated prior to the 1970s when the KKK and other rogue whites enforced America's racial contact.

populations as they exist in *state of exception*, where legal rules obliterate legal terms, law is suspended, and the actions of the exception are removed from law and judicial oversight (Agamben, 2005; Sithole, 2014). In this, condition the paradigm of “governance creates a state of emergency and ends law to meet or advance an agenda” (Sithole, 2014, p. 225). In America we are always in a state of emergency as the question asked in 1619, “what do we do with black people?” has never been resolved, therefore race-making institutions (Slavery, Jim Crow, Ghetto, Hyper Ghetto + Prison, and now Education see Wacquant below) were and are justified on the grounds that blacks are a social, cultural, political, and existential threat to whites’ existence and their global supremacy.

Under the concept of necropower, Sithole (2014) describes the element of *deathscapes*:

Spaces where death occurs and where the law has been suspended...its places where the life of those who are killed are meaningless and their death cannot be accounted for. Deathscapes are not only war zones but the very existential locations where the everyday life is prone to death as a result of structural violence against those who have their humanity questioned (p. vi).

Death is made possible by the “state of exception” where the notion of “the other” is to fictionalize and justify the very basis of his or hers death (Sithole, 2014). The fictionalized “other” usually occurs when human beings cannot understand something and therefore, explore it and see if it can be integrated it into a familiar way of being, or we exterminate it. These discussions are enough justification for the division of the geographical space into *life-zones* and *death-zones*, where the will to live is to die and the distinction between life and death socially depends on where one falls in the zones (Balibar, 2001). Some Chicago citizens often refer to their neighborhoods as war-zones (the students I taught did), and these areas are marked by the

residents as safe and livable or unsafe and uninhabitable. Deathscapes is applicable to this paper, because the concept focuses on existential violence that is visible, absolute, and structural and that sustains the dehumanization of the black subject which is often ignored when discussing both independently (i.e., the existential and structural in regard to bodies and spaces) (Sithole, 2014). Violence in deathscapes “makes death to be elevated to a natural state...where it is a lived reality” (Sithole, 2014, p. 242) for poor blacks in this country, because we live in an *anti-black* world (Sithole, 2014), which causes/justifies the state’s exclusive material or social eradication of the black subject in a project that creates a hellish condition.

**B. *The New Political Economy: Rolling-Back the Keynesian-Welfare State and Rolling-Out an Authoritarian, Punishing Neoliberal State***

Neoliberalism is an intellectual and political movement that emerged in the late twentieth century to advance a radical market-centered agenda in global and domestic relations (Brown, 2015; De Lissovoy, 2012; Fording et al., 2011; Goldberg, 2008; Giroux, 2008; Harvey, 2005; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Saltman, 2014; Wacquant, 2009, 2010a, 2012). Like all forms of liberalism, it prizes the “possessive individual” and privileges the freedoms associated with private property, market relations, and trade across nations (Fording et al., 2011). Harvey (2005) explains neoliberalism in the first instance as theory of political economic practices proposing that the well-being of human can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. As argued by De Lissovoy (2012), neoliberalism is “both a specifically economic process and a broader reconfiguration of society” (p. 741). In this context, neoliberalism is characterized by three traits: the aggressive pursuit of new markets, an effort to scale back or eliminate obstacles to the mobility of capital including

protections for wages, and a reframing of economic stratification and polarization as the effect of individual choices and abilities (De Lissovoy, 2012).

Unlike most academics who believe the development of a neoliberal project that rolled out all at once in a final and static mode of economic governance, Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell in their article *Neoliberalizing Space* rebuts these claims stating “like globalization, neoliberalization should be understood as a process, not an end-state” (2002, p. 383). This idea of a neoliberal framework in development will be use to situate our discussion of a new political-economy that will ground our understanding of neoliberalism’s stages 1) the philosophical saga, 2) the roll back of the Keynesian-Welfare state and 3) the reconfiguration and roll out of the active neoliberalism we know today as a reaction to 1990’s economic recessions (Peck and Tickell, 2002). I argue that this is a better analytical and conceptual lens for grasping something that seems too omnipresent at times. Meaning neoliberalism seems to be everywhere at once at the same time (Peck and Tickell, 2002). This in contrast to the argument that neoliberalism occurred naturally in totality as a result in changes in the global economy in the 1970’s and our reactionary politics post President Johnson (Fording et al., 2011; Harvey, 2005; Giroux, 2008). One of the risk I run in talking about neoliberalism this way is ignoring and glossing over its local character meaning there are multiple and contradictory “neoliberalisms” at any given time. What Neoliberalism looks and feels like in Chicago, under Mayor Emanuel, is different across various cities in America and different countries abroad. Thus, overgeneralizing and producing sweeping claims of neoliberalism as a new modern metanarrative could appear to be reductionist, determinist, monolithic and omnipresent. This overreaching on my behalf is worth the risk because I am allowed to keep consistency in my paper in explaining micro and macro behaviors, and attitudes of institutions, in a larger nexus of knowledge. Moreover, this sweeping account of

neoliberalism is a useful starting point to explore some of the more generic and abstract features of North American neoliberalism (Peck and Tickell, 2002).

The first shift in neoliberalism occurred in the late 1970s, as it underwent a transformation from abstract intellectualism of Hayek and Friedman to the state authored restructuring projects of its most prominent leaders in the 1980s, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher (Harvey, 2005; Peck and Tickell, 2002). Reagan and Thatcher emphasized the need to liberate markets by reducing regulations and taxes, scaling back worker protections, and giving multinational corporations greater latitude (Harvey, 2005; Peck and Tickell, 2002). Reaganism represented a fundamental departure from the liberal state that had been practice by both Democrat and Republican Parties (Marable, 2000). In Reagan's view, the federal government was the problem. As such, he made massive reductions in social programs (Marable, 2000).<sup>5</sup> This state restructuring as argued by Goldberg (2008) "became the rallying cry as much of the institutions of globalization as of the overdeveloped states of the global north" (p. 331). This move from "proto-" to "roll-back" neoliberalism marked a shift from the philosophical project of the early 1970s (when academics wanted to bring free-market thinking to the foreground in theory) to the neoliberal convention politics during the 1980s (Peck and Tickell, 2002). What was the backdrop to this shift and why the rollback?

From the 1930s, through the 1970s, the America liberal democratic state (The New Deal and The Great Society) and most post WWII European governments had offered more or less

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<sup>5</sup> Marable (2000) details the devastation brought by Reagan's policies on the poor, working and middle classes in America during his tenure as president: more than 400,000 families were removed from welfare rolls; undocumented workers and strikers were declared ineligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); the Department of Agriculture reduced the amount of food served to 26 million children at more than 94,000 schools across the country; \$ 22 million cut from federal housing programs designed for low-income families; and more other federal social programs such as job training, community development and public healthcare clinics were either eliminated completely suffered draconian cuts. This allowed Reagan to shift the governments focus from "welfare Keynesianism" to in what Marable calls "Military Keynesianism" in which the government went billions of dollars into debt building a military complex, therefore creating hundreds of thousand of jobs in the defense industry. See Manning Marable *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America*

robust set of institutional apparatuses concerned in principle at least to advance the welfare of its citizens (Goldberg, 2008). In this period the advancing of social security, welfare safety nets, came in the form of the expansion of and in public education, including higher education various forms of national health systems, worker-rights, increasing unionization, higher class solidarity, and the strengthen of the social contrast between the state and its citizens (De Lissovoy, 2012, Fording et al., 2011; Goldberg, 2008; Giroux, 2008; Harvey, 2005; Means, 2013; Saltman, 2014; Wacquant, 2010, 2012). What neoliberalism did accordingly was privatize, marketize and deregulate: property, revenue generation, utilities services, social support systems, health care, aid, education, school and its services, parking meters, higher education, water, public housing, the police, the military, prison and its services and all urban space in the United States (Alexander, 2012; Brown, 2015, De Lissovoy, 2012; Fording, et al., 2011; Goldberg 2008; Giroux 2008; Harvey 2005; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means 2013; Saltman 2014; Wacquant, 2009).

Goldberg (2008) explains neoliberalism as the political and economic project undertaking the maximization of corporate profits by reducing cost though the lowering taxes and regulations in addition to privatization. This shifted the traditional caretaking function of the modern state to the private individual or for-profit organization. The neoliberal project attempts to get rid of the state, and shift it priorities from social welfare and the integration of all its citizens into the fabric of its democracy to the accumulation of capital through deregulation, privatization and trade liberalization (Goldberg, 2008). This is what President Reagan hoped to accomplish, followed by Bush I, and later Clinton, Bush II, and now Obama. Consequently a deunionizing of labor power in the name of limiting state regulation and reduction public cost has occurred (Brown, 2015; De Lissovoy, 2012; Fording, et al., Soss, 2011; Goldberg 2008; Giroux, 2008; Harvey, 2005; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Saltman, 2014; Wacquant, 2009, 2010a, 2012). Therefore, the result



is the complete roll back for the need for public funding, institutions and resources (Goldberg, 2009). In short, neoliberalism marketizes the public meaning of the commons by incorporating market rationalities into public institutions (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011).

The second neoliberal transformation occurred in the early 1990s, when this philosophy produced perverse economic consequences (Peck and Tickell, 2002). However, neoliberalism did not implode as some on the left would have liked, but reconstituted as the neoliberal project itself as it gradually metamorphosed into “more socially interventionist and ameliorative forms, epitomized by... the Clinton and Blair administrations” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, pp. 388-389). This most recent phase, which articulated by Wacquant (see, 2009, 2010, 2012) is portrayed as one of “roll-out” of neoliberalism which this form of neoliberalism as a centaur-state that is aggressive on its poorest and most disadvantaged populations. No longer concerned narrowly with extending of markets, neoliberalism is now increasingly associated with the political marking of new modes of penal policy-making and the “aggressive deregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 389). State-making is now super reanimated and very continuous. Neoliberal economic management is now normalized and rendered invisibility operative, as the state is now focusing on enforcing market rule on subjects that could threaten the stability of the system (Peck and Tickell, 2002).

Next, one of the disadvantages using current literature on neoliberalism assumes a retracting state or one that is suffering from atrophy (see Harvey, 2005). In the status quo mainstream economist argue the current behavior of neoliberalism is a deviation from or a corruption of neoliberalism rather than seeing it reconfigure to create and establish a different sort of social relationships with its citizens. These relationships differ then ones under a Fordist-

Keynesian economic system (Wacquant, 2009). A neoliberal state that is both guided by market ideology and racial paranoia behaves punitively, authoritatively and paternalist towards its most poor, excluded, marginalized and politically uninvolved citizens (Brown, 2015; De Lissovoy, 2012; Fording, et al. 2011; Goldberg, 2008; Giroux, 2008; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Saltman, 2014; Wacquant, 2009, 2010a, 2012). In this “rolling-out” of the neoliberal state - its even stronger than it was in the past (Peck and Tickell, 2002). For example rather than seeing a state that no longer provides substantial welfare for it’s citizens (see Giroux, 2006; Harvey, 2005) one needs to see the prison as a welfare policy for the poor (Alexander, 2012; Wacquant, 2009). The criminal justice system is a social welfare policy that operates to warehouse those who oppose the white supremacist free-market economic system by refusing to take substandard precarious work. Moreover, the prison simultaneously provides jobs to rural residents through federal funds for the maintenance of the prison, and the prison population is used for census data to provide additional political representation and resources (Alexander, 2012). We need to examine how changes in the global economy led to a radical transformation of the state, and how race was central to the justifications for the changes in welfare policy from a social insurance, collectivist framework to a neoliberal and now emerging paternalism model.

Despite rhetorical commitments to “small government,” neoliberal governance has been marked by a significant expansion of state power. Wacquant (2010, 2012) describes this as the simultaneous erosion of the state’s “left arm,” or social functions, and the expansion of its “right arm” whose capacities concerned with security, punishment, and policing. It might appear that there is a contradiction between neoliberalism’s apparent antipathy to the state in principle, on the one hand, and the growth in the state’s law enforcement, criminal justice, and penal apparatuses on the other (De Lissovoy, 2012). For low-income Americans, the neoliberal turn

has converged with a second critical development: the rise of the new paternalism (Fording, et al., 2011). The neoliberal Leviathan practices laissez faire toward corporations and the upper class, (Fording, Schrem and Soss, 2011; Wacquant, 2009) but it is fiercely interventionist and authoritarian when it comes to dealing with the destructive consequences of economic deregulation for those at the lower end of the class and status spectrum (Fording et al., 2011). Wacquant (2009) argues this is the source of political, social, and economic inequality.

For Wacquant (2012) meshing of workfare and prisonfare partakes of the making of the neoliberal state. He argues that the ideology of neoliberalism is not its reality. The practice of a neoliberalism governance reveals “that it involves everywhere the building of a centaur state, liberal at the top and paternalistic at the bottom with the destructive consequences of economic deregulation for those at the lower end of the class and status spectrum” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 244-245). The neoliberal state is authoritarian, involved, harsh, present, all knowing, punishing, and punitive and paternalist. This paper will argue that the ideology of neoliberalism being “hands off” does not play out in practice in urban public schools that serve poor students of color. In fact, market liberalization and deregulation elements bring only damaging effects not positive ones. Instead of the free participation of the political and economic realm offered to the students of the ruling elite and their parents, students of color and their parents witness and experience the paternal hand of economic liberalism in regards to educational policy that transfer resources to middle and upper-class schools (through the process of educational reform policies enacted by both political parties), and oppressive pedagogical practices that de-skill students thereby shifting boys to prison or the criminal justice system and girls to welfare-to-work programs.

*C. Structural-Materialist Theories of Race: The Persistence of Racial Domination and White Supremacy in American Society*

Scholars have attempted to show how race is embedded within varied historically situated ideological interest (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Fields, 1990; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Wacquant, 2009, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013; Winant, 2000). Race, at the most basic level can be defined as a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies (Omi and Winant, 1994). Although the concept of race appeals to biologically based human characteristics (phenotypes), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Fields, 1990; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Wacquant, 2002, 2009, 2010, 2010a, 2012; Winant, 2000). There is no biological basis for distinguishing human groups along the lines of race, and the socio-historical categories employed to differentiate among these groups reveal themselves upon serious examination, to be imprecise if not completely random and arbitrary (Omi and Winant 1994). Tim Wise an American anti-racism activist and writer whom scholar and philosopher Cornel West calls, “A vanilla brother in the tradition of John Brown (a white abolitionist),” draws a fine but important distinction between race which was defined above and “racism” which is:

the belief that population groups, defined as distinct ‘races,’ generally possess traits, characteristics or abilities, which distinguish them as either superior or inferior to other groups in certain ways. In short, racism is the belief that a particular race is (or certain races are) superior or inferior to another race or races (2014,December 1).

Omi and Winant's (1994) *racial formation theory* illustrates this kind of nuanced shift in attention to issues of race and racism (as cited in Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011). They define racial formation as “the socio-historical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed (55)” (as quoted in Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011, p. 599). Racial formation theories analyze both social structures and cultural representations of race and racism. Brown and De Lissovoy (2011) argue that the framework of racial formation “is largely a structuralism argument that assumes that various historically situated ideological interest reproduce the conditions of racial inequalities” (p. 599).

Historian Manning Marable (2002) argue race was used as an ideological construct to exclude blacks from the political economy in the United States and racism produces different outcomes for racial groups. Omi, Winant and Marable agree that structural racism shapes, and forms material life changes for blacks in the history of the United States. Others articulated by Brown and De Lissovoy (2011) write how the structural constraints of race maintain that race is embedded within the original “contractual framework of civil democratic societies” (p. 599) and that “the oppressive constraints of race are not a deviation from liberal humanism but inextricable tied to its foundations (pp. 599-600).

Mills' (1997) *racial contract theory* draws from this conception of race and racism. Starting from the liberal tradition of social contract theory, Mills (1997) argues that in “civil democratic societies, where whites regulate, control and define the moral judicial standards of society” (p. 11) privilege themselves as a group. This “includes the exploitation of their [black] bodies, [Native] lands and resources, and the denial of equal socio-economic opportunities to non-whites” (p. 11). This what forms and constitutes the racial contract (Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011). White supremacy is a very influential “political system”—and should thus be

treated as a system—that has shaped the modern world in important way (Mills, 1997). “White supremacy is the unnamed political system that has made the modern world what it is today” argues Mills (1997, p.1). “What is needed is global theoretical framework for situating discussions of race and white racism, and thereby challenging the assumptions of white political philosophy, which would correspond to feminist theorists’ articulation of the centrality of gender, patriarchy, and sexism to traditional moral theory” (pp. 2-3).

The consequence of living in a post-racial society ignores the significant disparities between health, unemployment, and incarceration rates between whites and people of color. Racism has been defined in a superficial way unfortunately racism tends to get looked at as a set of prejudiced beliefs or attitudes towards racial or ethnic groups (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000). However, the idea that racism is limited to individual thought and behavioral patterns does a disservice to the examination of its structural roots (Bell 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000). As certain “bad” individuals are blamed for “being racist” this brilliantly works to perpetuate racism because it avoids deeper historical, sociological analysis of what distinguishes a single agents actions from the actions of the state or groups. Racism is built on the framework of racial superiority in the systemic, and ideological disparity in the allocation of social and material rewards, benefits, privileges, burdens and disadvantages based on race (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000). A white supremacist framework has been in place for centuries. This was established in the Greco-Roman-European myths of biological and cultural superiority (Mills, 1997; Winant, 2000). This includes but not limited too access to resources, capital, property and possession of social and political influence (Brown and De

Lissovoy, 2011; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000). White supremacy is the operationalized form of racism in the United States and throughout the western world (Wise, 2014 December 1). Throughout all these changes in form, the fundamental centralization and concentration of racial power has not shifted. In fact, it has only increased under neoliberalism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; De Lissovoy, 2012, Wacquant, 2010). These logics gain power as white supremacy remains a fluid and amorphous system of oppression. Racism and white supremacy have had many “faces” throughout history to fit into different economic, political, and social condition to maintain its relevancy (Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Wacquant, 2002, 2010, 2012). The only change is the systemic form that white supremacy behaves (meaning how is order and control maintained in a particular economic and social situation in a historical era) in the United States. As blacks went from slavery as a form of capital and racial domination to their systemic exclusion under of Jim Crow to the contemporary form of colorblind racism and mass/hyper incarceration, their position on the bottom has remained intact (Alexander, 2012; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Marable, 2000; Wacquant, 2001, 2002, 2013).

Moreover, the motivations for the states’ actions in its retooling its social welfare structures and its commitment to its oppressed and marginalized populations is not purely about dispossessing or capital accumulation but also in the sheer display of dominance (De Lissovoy, 2012, Lipman, 2013). This paper will support the thesis that race, racism, and the racial formation of key institutions play an instrumental role in the rise of deathscapes for poor blacks in the United States. Schools are key institutions where black existence and ontologies are en masse eliminated. Capital in my view has reconfigured education and the prison development as a functional response necessitated by racial domination, rising insecurity, and the crumbling of older systems of racial control (Alexander, 2012; De Lissovoy, 2012; Fisher and Reese, 2011;

Sithole, 2014; Wacquant, 2001, 2002; Winant, 2000). The disciplinary turn in poverty governance under neoliberalism (the roll out of neoliberalism) reflects a systemic need to “contain dishonored, lower-class African Americans” (Wacquant, 2001, p. 121). These institutions have shaped and created race at the same time race has shaped and created these important “peculiar institutions” (Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Wacquant, 2001, 2009, 2010a). Prisons and now schools are solidifying as the “fourth peculiar institution” that is dictated as a consequence of rising economic insecurity as the factory, the hyper-ghetto and old ways of schooling becomes obsolete (Nolan, 2009, 2011; Wacquant, 2011, 2014). The functional control of blacks in this anti-black racist society is not new. The forms and techniques that situate blacks at the bottom of Americans racial and economic caste system looks’ and feels different, and justified by historically contingent discourses and other cultural devices but the logics remain the same. In this regard, this I argue that race and white supremacy has in our society shifted historically and has when needed reconfigured into something else. This should concern us as the older mode of racial dominance did not wither away but color-blind racism as a symbolic form of racial oppression makes this current mode more sinister and draconian than previous forms before it.



## **I. How and Why the Neoliberal Turn in Our Society is Instrumental to Understanding Poverty Control Behaviors in Urban Schools**

*The school is a microcosm of the community in a sense. Although police and disciplinarians are on patrol, kids are parading up and down the halls, socializing, even buying, and selling drugs. The same things are going on inside the school as outside of it.*  
-Elijah Anderson in *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*

### **A. Introduction**

Central to many of the arguments that will be made in this paper is that schools are not merely microcosms of their larger communities, but a relationship exist between the residential areas that students occupy, and the way in which they are perceived, taught, treated, monitored, and tracked in their respective schools. This demonstrates various spatial-social realities experienced by inner-city residents and the children in schools. The alignment between community, residential area, and school is of utmost importance, because of the assumption that schools exist in a vacuum, and if we can just change the students' behaviors and their perspectives, then all the problems will be addressed. This chapter will show that such arguments are not academically honest, as other structural factors play into students' academic success, not just individual attitudes, and behavioral traits.

With all of this being said, this chapter will argue that the consequences of a rising neoliberal paternalism and the structural formation of a reconfigured racism has shaped the schooling of low-income urban black youth for the worst. In education, "children of Color and their communities do not author the policies that shape there schooling. Rather, they are characters written into a subplot by the dominant authors, who can rewrite their intentions at will" (Vaught, 2011, p. 64). Black people and their communities have little or no recourse because their children were incidental objects of education policy shaped by white actors for the maintenance of the white supremacist social order. Education in urban schools filled with low-

income black youth is now practicing poverty control responsibilities. The question is why? The how question is the easy part, but linking structural and ideological elements to micro practices of poverty containment in both social and penal policy is quite the task. In the chapter, I will attempt to unpack this modern phenomenon. But first I will offer a quick overview to this chapter and the paper at large as to why students are now being domesticated as criminals, low-wage laborers or zombies: 1) neoliberal governance provides the back drop to zero-tolerance policies, the securitization of urban schools, the privatization, deregulation and marketizing of public education in this country, 2) larger changes in the global economy has repurposed and radically restructured the entire educational system to operate in a different form of capital accumulation in the capitalist economy, 3) schools in low-income communities of color are used as a means to control its population in a police-state like existence with its mechanisms of hyper-surveillance, which serves to control, contain, and isolate poor people of color, 4) poverty management and control leads to hyper-surveillance instruments in schools and residential areas that are used to protect middle/upper class students and homes from dangers outside of its borders and to contain poor students and residents of color from venturing outside of the predetermined geographic spaces, 5) teachers in low-income urban schools perform different functions than teachers that educate middle-class students and in turn perceive low-income students differently before they even enter the classroom, 6) agreeing with Brown's (2015) interpretation of Wacquant's analysis of neoliberalism, she argues that in the wake of industrialization, a new permanent form of structural unemployment "intensified race-class polarization", whereby, the state apparatus has reconfigured by "unifying social and penal politics into two strands of poverty policy *workfare and prisonfare*" (p. 399), 7) we are now witnessing a shift in resource allocation from social services managed by the state and wrap-around services by the school to police and operations

that manage bodies through military and penal practices and techniques, thus representing a strong relationship between the increase in military and penal expenditures and decreasing traditional social welfare and rehabilitation expenditures<sup>6</sup>, 8) as a consequence schools in which poor students of color attend are often used as “storage facilities” or “warehouses” to contain “disposable youth” (Giroux, 2013) who are viewed as “waste products of a society that no longer considers them any value for labor extraction as the new global economy needs their labor. Many of these youth are pushed out of schools, denied job training opportunities, and subjected to rigorous modes of surveillance and criminal sanctions” (Giroux, 2013, Kindle location 1370). Now more than ever as youth are now viewed as a liability and not a social investment because of this 9) the prison makes some use of this otherwise unproductive waste, but other than that, most students will live their terminal existence as a redundancy (Giroux, 2008) in our racial, social and economic caste system living in temporal realm of “deathscapes.” Deathscapes requires the state to subject humans to inhumane forms of existence. It was told to me by a colleague that both *workfare* and *prisonfare* are the living example of a social death, a sanction by the actors who practice and profit from exploitative capitalism and racism.

### ***B. The School as an Agent of Control***

To understand the need to control students who are now surplus, and whose labor is longer needed in abundance, we must be examine the influences that guided the creation of public schools and consider the social role and function schools are expected to perform. In the nineteenth-century, public school buildings often, resemble prison and asylums because both drew on a common technology of power for improving the “performance” of their inmates (Foucault, 1977, as cited in Simon, 2007). Pedro Noguera (2008) is in concordance with Simon (2007) when he writes that public schools developed in:

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<sup>6</sup> This will be a major theme throughout this paper.

Northeastern cities during the latter part of the nineteenth century, their architecture, organization and operation were profoundly influenced by the prevailing conception of the asylum...Although the client base of early prisons, almshouses, and the mental hospitals differed, those who developed...the institutions shared a common preoccupation with the need to control those held in custody (p. 89).

The role of the asylum was to regiment control and discipline the social outcasts who were housed there (Noguera, 2008). Although schools were designed with a different purpose in mind, the need for them to serve as vehicle for controlling the minds and bodies of youth helped to convince many of those “who question the merits of public education that it was an enterprise worth supporting” (Noguera, 2008, p. 90). Educational historian Lawrence Cremin identified three dominant and distinct agenda among the many that shaped public education at the turn of the century: 1) the need to provide a custodial functional function for children and thereby serve as an agent of social control, 2) the need to “Americanize” large numbers of children born of European immigrants, and 3) the need to prepare future workers for U.S. industry (as cited in Noguera, 2008, p. 90). When we study the history and philosophy of education in our college courses it is framed in humanitarian terms, in reality the need to regiment and control the behavior of students dominated the educational mission (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Noguera, 2008). If schools today are becoming increasingly like prisons, it’s not because of a “renewed faith in the capacity of disciplinary methods” (Simon, 2007, p. 231), indeed prisons and schools increasingly deny their capacity to do much more than sort and warehouse people (Simon, 2007). What they share instead is the institutional imperative that (potentially) dangerous populations are simultaneously the more important problem they have to deal with (Simon, 2007). What we

witness in 2015 is the continuity of themes plus the complexity of agendas and goals of the modern anti-black racist capitalist empire state, which includes the need to control students and prepare future workers while simultaneously warehousing surplus and disposable youth.

*C. Rolling-Out the Neoliberal Restructuring of our Economy and Educational System*

Over the last three decades, we have witnessed in the United States a profound retrenchment in educational equity, achievement, and access leading to the evaporation of gains made in the 1960s and 1970s (Means, 2013). By retracing the making, of this new government in the form of the neoliberal leviathan that weds the “invisible hand” of the deregulated labor market and contractualized public aid to the “iron fist” of the punitive state, this these two concepts from Wacquant (2009) bring us into the living laboratory of the neoliberal revolution. For the United States has not been content to be the “forge and locomotive of the neoliberal project on the level of the economy and welfare; over the past decade, it has also become the premier global exporter of ‘theories,’ ‘slogans’, and measures on the crime and safety front” (Wacquant, 2009, Kindle Locations 667-673).

Today in the wake of the Great Recession and three decades of neoliberal and neoconservative attacks on the public and the social state, the United States has one of the highest rates of child poverty ranking ahead only of Romania on a scale of 35 developed nations (UNICEF, 2012 as cited in Means, 2013, p. 25). Since the Reagan era report *A Nation at Risk*, which worked to stoke national anxieties over educational performance in the emergent global economy, a neoliberal market ethos has become a broadly shared form of “commonsense” in educational reform (Means, 2013). Part of this story can be traced to concrete attempts to discredit the public sector and equate public investment with the racialized and gendered “dependencies” and “pathologies” of the urban poor (Brown, 2005, 2015; Harvey, 2005;

Lipman, 2011; Means, 2013; Wacquant, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013). Means (2013) argues at length that:

The stated aims of the new educational reform alliance are to break down the ‘public school monopoly’ by supporting privatization, dismantle the teachers’ unions, and to impose a system of corporate management. In terms of policy, this has meant the promotion of school voucher and market-based choice initiatives ...second, it has meant efforts to bring market-based strategies of accountability and institutional ‘efficiency’ modeled on the corporation into schooling at all levels...these reform strategies were codified into law with the passage of George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2001 (p. 26).

Additionally, the main pillar of urban educational restructuring has been the reframing of educational focus in line with the demands of the new economy (Brown, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011; Saltman, 2014, 2015; Simon, 2007). This has meant extensive emphasis on basic skills curricula and high-stakes testing (Anyon, 1980; Brown, 2005, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means, 2013; Saltman, 2015). While educational reform rhetoric focuses on preparing students with twenty-first century skills needed for college and work in the global knowledge economy, the reality is that the vast majority of jobs in the coming decades are projected to be low-wage service jobs that will not require advanced knowledge and/ or college degrees (Anyon and Greene 2011; Brown, 2005, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means, 2013; Nolan, 2009, 2011; Saltman, 2015).

Increasingly, worst, is that a few of these jobs will be in information or STEM fields—science, technology, engineering, mathematics, therefore countering the discourses propagated

by President Obama and The United States Secretary Arne Duncan of a STEM market dominated future (Anyon and Greene, 2011; Means, 2013). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 22 out of the top 30, and 7 out of the top 10, fast growing employment niches over the next decade will be in “low-wage” and “very low-wage” sectors including in-home health workers, food service (including fast food), security guards, retail sales, and customer service representatives (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2012 as cited in Means, 2013). Furthermore, “the jobs the U.S. economy now produces are primarily poverty-wage jobs...Seventy-seven percent of new and projected jobs in the next decade will be low paying” (Anyon and Greene, 2011, p. 367). Even a college degree no longer guarantees a decent job as one in six college graduates is in a job paying less than the average salary of high school graduates (Anyon, 2005 as cited in Anyon and Greene, 2011). Standardized testing and scripted curricula work to shore up and discipline a low-wage, service-oriented workforce by emphasizing rudimentary skills and knowledge (Anyon and Greene, 2011; Brown, 2005, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means, 2013; Saltman, 2015). Brown (2005) and Means (2013) both argue that rather than promoting a broad liberal arts or progressive curriculum that enables youth to develop their intellectual capacities and human potential with others, African American youth are taught to require the mechanistic discipline of “skill and drill” forms of learning, test-based curricula which reduce knowledge to an individualized, competitive, and technical process. In contrast their more affluent peers in the suburbs, or students who attend selective enrollment and magnet schools in large urban school districts, these students are provided with elite academic tracks, arts and culture programs, sports facilities, and clean modern buildings with new science labs, technology, and supplementary resources and services (Brown, 2005; Means, 2013). African American youth treatment inside of schools is directly related to the macro changes in the new

political economy. Now schools in which poor students of color attend are often used as “storage facilities” or “warehouses” to contain “disposable youth” (Giroux, 2013) who are viewed as waste products of a society that no longer considers them any value for labor extraction in the new global economy. As the correspondence between our education system and the economic relations (meaning preparing working-class kids for working-class jobs) both weaken, as jobs become less available, the decline in job opportunities have been a long process occurring for the last two decades (Anyon and Greene 2011). Anyon and Greene (2011) argue that there are not “nearly enough jobs for those who need them” (p. 367) in this new economy.

Lastly, what is and has emerged in the de-fragmentation of the Keynesian-welfarist state is a social-Darwinist survival of the fitness landscape where in urban school districts exist in an inequitable system with a top tier of options for the elite, a middle tier of semi public options for a beleaguered and shrinking middle class, and a large bottom tier of disinvested public schools, and private charter schools that function to sort low-income and racialized youth into a low-wage and no-wage future (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Brown, 2005, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Means, 2013; Lipman, 2011; Saltman, 2014, 2015). Entrenched economic insecurity and the turn to austerity are intensifying these educational inequities, contributing to a precarious future of instability and uncertainty for young people in the neoliberal city (Brown, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Means, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011; Saltman, 2014; Simon, 2007). The contemporary city is a key staging ground for these trends. The urban sphere plays an increasingly central role in managing the flows of finance, technology, information, and labor that are the lifeblood of globalization (Giroux, 2008, 2013; Means, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Wacquant, 2009). The metropolis is a prime site for the implementation of neoliberal logic. Moreover, cities are also contested sites where the global and local coalesce in the everyday and



where dominant sociopolitical processes intersect with various forms of cultural agency, identity formation, and democratic contestation (Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Means, 2013). I focus on the urban metropolitan city for these reasons. In the next section, I outline the production of criminalized spaces of social insecurity and securitized containment in the urban public school.

#### **D. *Securitizing Schools and Criminalizing Black Youth***

School's for the students in the 21st century throughout the United States most frequently punish the students who have the greatest academic, social, economic, and emotional needs (Brown, 2015; Giroux 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011). A through examination of which students are most likely to be suspended, expelled or removed from the classroom for punishment, reveals that minorities (especially black and Latino) males, and low achievers are vastly overrepresented (Brown, 2015; Ferguson, 2000; Ferguson; Giroux 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011; Vaught, 2011; Simon, 2007). The enactment of zero-tolerance policies related to discipline in school districts has contributed to a significant increase in the number of children who are being suspended and expelled from schools (Brown, 2015; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011; Vaught, 2011; Simon, 2007). This section explains why this has occurred.

In the preachment of educational inequality, schools have become implicated in the broader criminalization of youth (Brown, 2005, 2015; Hirschfield, 2008; Krueger, 2010; Means, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Nolan 2009, 2011). With the waning of social democratic policy and the emergence of neoliberal governance, social commitments to schools and to youth have evaporated at the bottom of the race and class structure, while the state has broadly expanded various punitive forms of social control (Brown, 2005, 2015; Means, 2013; Nolan, 2011). In the

post-Columbine and post-9/ 11 contexts, public schools have broadly experimented with new systems of risk management, security, and surveillance that are rooted in the symbolic and material practices of the criminal justice system (Simon, 2007). However, while all schools have to some degree experienced heightened security arrangements over the last ten years, these practices have been much more prevalent and intensive in urban public schools serving high concentrations of low-income minority students (Kupchik and Ward, 2011).

Next, Patricia Krueger (2010) argue that schools with large populations of students of color are much more likely to lock their doors during the school day. The justification for these preemptive security measures situates youth in urban schools as inherently misbehaving and of need of intensified discipline and control. In schools where the majority of their students are low-income, she found an increasing reliance on punitive school safety practices. These messages are both subtle and overt:

When the learning environment of students who are mostly punished for non-criminal behavior are increasingly turned into prison-like spaces, then the combined effects of discriminatory treatment, systemic and institutionalized racism are particularly devastating for low-income youth and students of color. In this current economic production of ‘prison nation’ (Herivel and Wright 2003) schools increasingly feed the U.S. prison system with socially undesired populations to warehouse them as low-wage and exploitable workers (Krueger, 2010, p. 395).

Krueger (2010) does an excellent job of linking the neoliberal punitive state and its incorporation of the prison the micro processes of school safety measures and systemic and institutionalized racism for the summation to produce a prison nation. To farther develop a

connection of two seemingly dissimilar social phenomenon's Krueger (2010) argues "school lockdowns and hallway enclosures parallel an ideological mode of space production that creates physical enclaves to disproportionately exclude poor youth and students of color who increasingly experience 'massive exclusion from the formal economy'" (p. 395). Therefore, through the analysis of Krueger, we grasp the problematic relationship between these students' uselessness in our post-industrial economy to their exclusion from our formal educational system. Schools are incorporating poverty control mechanisms and prison control techniques as urban youth are positioned in our society either "endangered" or "dangerous," (Ferguson, 2000). While arguments on social problems are increasingly framed in terms of supposed criminal pathologies of young black people (Ferguson, 2000; Giroux 2013; Means, 2013).

What situates these morphed modes of oppressive operations in is the era of racially targeted "law and order" policies and their racially skewed mass imprisonment (Wacquant, 2001), in the reigning public image of the criminal that is not just inherently different from us and yourself but *a black* monster of young African American men from the intercity (Wacquant, 2001). African American men have come to personify the explosive mix of moral degeneracy and mayhem (Wacquant, 2001). Black males are represented in our society as criminal (Ferguson, 2000; Monroe, 2005; Page, 1997; Wacquant, 2002), and "at risk" academically (Noguera, 2008). This occurs through media representations by journalist, Hollywood portrayals of inner city black youth as cultural different, or deficient, scholarly research, and public discourses about urban life centered on race and criminality (Ferguson, 2000; Monroe, 2005; Page, 1997). Black males are also portrayed in the media as "incompetents of a violent nature," (Page, 1997, p. 100) as "black males are featured in media images that seems to threaten the body politic" (p. 100), they are consistently depicted as "unembraceable," this leads the

public to justify “costly prisons, instead of homes for the homeless” (p. 100). The target behind “the media constructions of the utterly violent black male criminal”(p. 100) is the youth who reside in low-income communities, and their parents. These citizens are perceived in the same negative light by both middle-class blacks and whites as dangerous with criminal pathologies (Wacquant, 2001). Middle-class citizens view these communities and their students as dangerous and worth avoiding at all cost. In supporting this line of thought, Hirschfield (2008) states, “in short, the gated community may be a more apt metaphor to describe the security transformation of affluent schools, while the prison metaphor better suits that of inner-city schools” (p. 84).

Moreover, because education is a part of social welfare programs that has experienced drastic budget cuts under a neoliberal governmentality, teachers now have to write off students that are “un-deserving” (Ferguson, 2000) for the logic being limited resources invested in failing students is counter productive. It should come to no surprise that teachers view their black boys in a negative and often destructive light. Schools serve as sites for the reproduction of these negative racial representations of black boys by the practices of their teachers and administrators (Ferguson, 2000; Morris, 2007). One factor in the treatment of poor inner-city youth as prison inmates hinges on the proposition that their teachers see these students as unsalvageable (Ferguson, 2000). Implicit in this mode of thinking rest two recognizable structural realities that both administrators and teachers are consciously aware of: 1) That prison looms over the future of African American youth who fail in school 2) Schools have to sacrifice students who are troublesome so teach those who are more deserving or promising because of the lack of resources (Ferguson, 2000; Hirschfield, 2008). Research conducted by Fine et al., (1992) in California find that many students in impoverished schools believes that educators perceive them as “animals,” “inmates,” “or killers” (as cited in Hirschfield, 2008). Moreover, “black males and

females are less than half as likely as their white counterparts to believe their teachers support and care about their success” (Noguera, 2008, as quoted in Hirschfield, 2008, p. 92). The sociology of education tells us that dominant images such as black males being “bound for jail” and “unsalvageable,” (Hirschfield, 2008) can often lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, as students begin to perform a role that they view as preordained by their social realities and as told to them by their teachers. Students are known to modify the performance of their identities to fit the “script” teachers have for them (Ferguson, 2000; Noguera, 2008). In turn, students take this script projected from the teacher to perform roles imaged for adults in the world outside of school. To explain simply, teachers treat their current black students as their future adult selves, who will occupy a spot in a prison cell or who will become teenage parents on government assistance (Ferguson, 2000; Morris, 2007). These realities are often internalized by school staff and incorporated into the schools disciplinary process as early as fifth or sixth grade (Ferguson, 2000; Hirschfeld, 2008). To preempt arguments made by those who claim “these students” commit more behavioral infractions, Means (2013) argues “research...notes...racial bias in punishment is largely unreflective of behavioral differences across geographical and racial lines” (p. 31).

This phenomenon becomes more pathetic when we discover the treatment of these youth is a general practice nationwide and not atypical, or isolated events in our society. (Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2009, 2011; Wacquant, 2001). What experiences black boys and girls face appears to be common practice in inner city, public schools (Brown, 2005, 2015; Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2009, 2011; Wacquant, 2001). My argument making connections to the main thesis of the this paper illustrating the relationship between *workfare*, *prisonfare*, and the deathscapes is supported by the NYCLU (New York Civil

Liberties Union) report which compares one map illustrating neighborhoods where police most frequently stopped and frisked school-age youth with another map illustrating rates of suspension by zip code:

Students who live in neighborhoods that have high rates of stop-and-frisk are more likely to be suspended than students who live in low stop-and-frisk zones, regardless of where they go to school,' explains Lieberman... In New York City, children in certain neighborhoods are subject to the same aggressive police tactics that dictate daily life in their broader communities The NYCLU report paints a picture of communities whose young residents are subjects of police control *whether they are in school or on the streets, and whose most vulnerable young people are targeted rather than supported (italics added Knefel, 2013, November 7).*

Students are subjected to control either in school or in the streets, meaning their bodies are permanently subjected to extensive security and law enforcement twenty-four hours a day. Means (2013) states is it impossible not to notice the dozens of police surveillance cameras that are part of the hyper-modern technologic urban landscape that occupies the lives of poor residents of color in urban city cores. The gaze of law enforcement is virtually Godly in its supervision of black populations, along with police persistence, CCTV, and hyper-surveillance instruments now replace God as having all three attributes of divinity: being all knowing (omniscient), all seeing (omnipresence), and all powerful (omnipotent). Overall, whomever one worships in these communities should be jealous of the power the police state has over individual lives as occupied territories.

On entering the school, one is greeted by uniformed security guards, armed police in bulletproof vest, airport style x-ray screeners, scanning wands, and metal detectors. Inside the school, metal cages on the windows, steel cages over the door...cages expand during 'lockdowns' ubiquitous surveillance cameras, and dim fluorescent lit hallways-all conjure prison aesthetics...When visiting CHS in the morning one will find two lines on opposite ends of the building one of the female students and the other of the male students (Means, 2013, pp. 59-90).

For the youth in this school, analogous to how the authoritarian punitive neoliberal leviathan subjects poor youth of color in their communities equals, “ a jail because it is all locked up” (Dinzey-Flores, 2006, p. 8) or as another student in Dinzey-Flores study quotes “my apartment is a jail because there are grates on all sides in the first floor” (p. 8). There is a sense of “fortressing” that distinguishes both academic institutions and housing situations for low-income youth of color (Brown, 2005; Dinzey-Flores, 2006,). What draws these two landscapes together is the conscious feeling that youth are “*contained, confined, restricted and monitored* in a space that *does not* feel like their place” (*italics added* Brown, 2005, p. 277). Students who attend similar schools have no sense of ownership as public schools in the “hyperghetto have similarly deteriorated to the point where they operate in a manner of *institutions of confinement* whose primary mission is not to educate but to ensure ‘custody and control’” (Wacquant, 2001, p. 108). Agreeing with Means, Wacquant (2001) argues, “the main purpose of these school is to simply ‘neutralize’ youth [they] consider unworthy and unruly” (p. 118). The “prison aesthetics that appear in urban schools fulfill the agenda of domesticating these youth in a carceral atmosphere to become accustomed to the constant presence of armed guards in uniforms in the lobbies, corridors, cafeteria and playground” (p. 108) to the “demeanor, tactics and interactive style of the

correctional officers whom many of them are bound to encounter shortly after their school days are over” (p. 108). An argument can be made that students who attend low-income high schools are situated in spaces of struggle against a post-apocalyptic future pre-ordained from birth. I believe that students understand fully after twelve years of scripted lessons, simplified rote memory call and response curriculum, vocational preparation courses, ancient equipment and textbooks, few college preparatory electives, (under) unqualified teachers and administrators, no access to libraries, computers that they are being prepared and conditioned to encounter a form of death in their future (Giroux, 2008, 2013; Sithole, 2014).

*E. The Death Scythe: Learning in Deathscapes Where Being Redundant, Surplus, and Disposable is a new Reality*

In connection with necropower and its deployment of deathscapes, Henry Giroux’s (2013) concept of *zones of abandonment* is fitting in the description of an existence where particular populations under neoliberalism are disposable, surplus, and therefore subjected to the violence of disciplinary procedures that erase any vestige of agency, subjectivity, or self-recognition. Giroux (2013) argues that these violations “point to the ongoing and growing fundamentalisms and ‘rule of exceptions’ in the American polity that bare witness to a growing militarization of American society (Kindle location 779). I believe Giroux’s (2013) concept of zones of abandonment is explicitly about blacks and other oppressed communities experiences in both our educational system and in the larger society. Necropower/Necropolitics and deathscapes explain the consequences of America’s policies of domination, market- fundamentalism, capital accumulation, and racial formation at the macro and micro level.

Our next step is to take these concepts to contextualize the correspondence of the penal arm into the social policy against the poor under the neoliberal leviathan and agenda of urban schools, whose purpose is to systemically exclude, the black body from the public sphere



through the creation and maintenance of Deathscapes (Sithole, 2014). Deathscapes therefore, have assumed a very complex character, under the practice of necropower, to illustrate the condition of violence as both absolute and structural not just discursive and symbolic (Sithole, 2014). These objective realities manifest itself in the quality of education black and brown youth receive in their schools and their treatment by the repressive state apparatus in their own communities. Sithole (2014) on the condition of violence against the black body writes:

According to Wilderson (2010: 75), deathscapes do exist simply because the nature of violence precedes and exceeds the life of the African subject. *The empire kills its targets through police brutality, mass incarceration, segregated and substandard schools, housing and health facilities, astronomical mortality rates to name but a few.* These are the lived experiences of most of the African subjects, and they demand a grammar of suffering that is crowded out as there will be a demand for empirical facts, stats and complexity of race and class. *(italics added Sithole, 2014, p. 243).*

America, like the African subjects ruled by their colonial motherlands' killed black bodies by subjecting them to police brutality, mass incarceration, segregated schools, and housing. Not only do black subjects die in the material and actual sense of the word through objective and structural violence but from the perpetual suffering as a consequence of being a person of color in America. Secondly, on this point, white racism impacts its subjects not as isolated acts of prejudice or discrimination by individual whites but by its very logics *par excellence* creates and sustains the ongoing ontological, existential, material, and metaphysical eruption of violence on the bodies and souls of black people. Moreover, most black's experiences of being a person of African descent in America involve these objective structural

realities (Marable, 2000). Deathscapes shape and monitor the existence of blacks' and this is literally the case even to the surprise of most "liberal" education theorist, as this form of social existence, represents the black subject on the continuity of racial domination from the *intra-colonial* encounter of the white supremacist empire as slaves (1619-1865) to their historical exploitation under the next three "peculiar institutions" (Jim Crow, South 1865-1965; Ghetto, North 1915-1968; Hyperghetto + Prison, 1968-)" served the purpose of both *labor extraction and social ostracization* (Wacquant, 2011). To keep the mutual correspondence of the neoliberal punitive prison apparatus and the low-income urban school we are able to witness the *social ostracization* element of the peculiar institutions is still valid, as poor black youth scare the living hell out of middle-class people and need to be isolated based on "assumption that safety and order can be achieved by removing 'bad' individuals and keeping them away from other who are presumed to be 'good'" (Noguera, 2008, p. 114). Not surprisingly, those most frequently targeted for punishment in school look in terms of race, gender, and socioeconomic status -alot like smaller versions of adults who are most likely to be targeted for incarceration in society (Noguera, 2008; Wacquant, 2001, 2002, 2009, 2010, 2012).

In 2015, black students are in a perpetual war under the exercise of necropower where death is permissible and cannot be accounted for (Sithole, 2014). It is in this condition of war, that is, war against racialized bodies (black), that their existence maintains the smooth running of the machine and creates the conditions of wealth dispossession and capital accumulation for Europe and America (Marable, 2000). As historian Manning Marable (2002) argued how race was used an ideological construct to exclude blacks from the political economy in the United States and racism produces different outcomes for racial groups. Race is now used to exclude black and brown youth from both the formal economy and formal education (Vaught, 2011). The

construction of a racial contract (Brown and De Lissoy, 2011; Mills', 1997) is parallel to Noreaga's (2008) idea of a *social contract of schooling* "that serves as the basis for maintaining order in schools. In exchange for an education students are expected to obey the rules and norms that are operative within school and to comply with authority of the adults in charge (p. 115)." For black youth know that "the rewards of education-namely, acquisition of knowledge and skills...are not available to them" (p. 115). Therefore, "students have little incentive to comply with the school rules" (Noreaga, 2008, p. 115). This can explain some part their seemly ambivalent and nonchalant view toward education as they age and are able to interpret reality what it really is.

The youth that attend the schools, I am analyzing who are not shuffled to low-wage work or the prison will live life with out meaning or purpose. This is not the case 100 percent of the time, but more often than not these youth who avoid prison or who perform low skill jobs will live as redundant and surplus. In the contemporary political order to be systematically exterminated by the state in the form of a mass killing, by the empire-state would be both *extra-excessive* and redundant for the logic being already "socially dead" in their current form. Small government transfers (in the form of food stamps and subsidies for housing) will keep most afloat, but that is it, just enough to exist but not contribute to the shaping of human events or to radically change their material condition. Deathscapes are not just geographic spaces but also a *space of being* where one walks with the marker of death even though one walks. In this *walking*, it is equal to how a zombie walks on popular television programming. In this existence, surviving, as an intra-colonial subject is the only necessity, other than that, urgency lacks. Simultaneously, there is no urgency to die- an existential and ontological purgatory, which is the curse for being both a black and poor person in this society.

F. *the Many Shades of Death: Workfare, Prisonfare as Possible Outcomes for Low-income Black Youth*

In this chapter, up until this point I argued that neoliberal education reform has decreased access to high quality public education for black students. This is one manifestation of how the political economy retooled to sure black children suffers a social death dealt through capital and race terrorism. Maintaining the symbiotic relationship between students bottom status in our economic and racial ladder and the second class schools' that low-income students attend, upon further inspection, we witness how lack of value we have for these students in our society correlates to our society inadequate investment in their education. Now we should discuss the outcomes and futures for these youth.

I would like to introduce Enora Brown's (2015) notion of *edufare* (*italics added*) to add to *prisonfare and workfare*. I will argue that education is where youth participates in the active social and penal policy state making as the left and right hand couples for discipline training. This agenda includes sorting poor populations based on gender into *prisonfare or workfare* market and racial discipline mechanisms of the Leviathan. Students will either be subjected to the low-wage market or the prison. Both operating under the logic of neoliberalism's necropolitics, as they are forced to a substandard education that extracts life and humanity from them as method to accept free market logic, ruling class ideologies, and white supremacy (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Giroux, 2013; Vaught, 2011). To be clear I want to illustrate clearly that *edufare* doesn't affect all students equally, this paper has and will continue to argue that these *'fares* are hyper-particular to specific racial and class groups in America. Brown's (2015) eloquently argues that the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), and Race To The Top (2009) like welfare added "strings attached" to receive benefits (which were just provided on needs based in the past) and created the discourse of deserving schools and students and non deserving schools

and students based on meeting “objective” measurements of accountability. Brown (2015) concept will explain in detail how *edufare* to complements *prison/workfare* .

I look to Enora Brown’s “Systemic and Symbolic Violence as Virtue: The Carceral Punishment of African American Girls” insight on what happens to girls shifted to low-wage, low-skill labor market under the concept of “school-to-labor pipeline” (Hextrum, 2014). Although, penal state modality driven policies are complementary as argued by Brown (2015), as neoliberal educational reform policies “No Child Left Behind” and “Race To The Top” “setting them [African American mothers] up for workfare education sanctions under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)” (Brown, 2015, p. 400) as cost cutting measures for example school closures affect these students the most. Wacquant’s gender distribution between the *prisonfare and workfare* argument is persuasive enough for me to believe that, although there is an increasing number of girls and women behind bars (Alexander, 2012; Brown, 2015; Davis, 2003) the gender segregation of our institutions for welfare is girls and women and prison or the criminal justice system for boys and men (Haney, 2004; Wacquant, 2009, 2010, 2012). These black girls’ are subjected to the neoliberal litigation of *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act* (1996) (Brown, 2015). This law passed on the idea that poor girls cultural and individual deficits caused teen pregnancy and joblessness (Brown, 2015). Brown (2015) continues to argue that PRWORA’s aim was to limit welfare dependence, out-of wedlock birth, promote work, and self-sufficiency. As such, black girls will face “obligatory subpar work in exchange for social support” (Brown, 2015, p. 400) as a consequence of neoliberal restructuring the “mantras of ‘individual responsibility’ and ‘market fundamentalism’ withdrew social goods and expanded retributive discipline, through workfare” (p. 400).

This linking welfare to work supplies “cheap labor to big money markets for example Wal-Mart...employs many people eligible for assistance. Those employees are provided no medical benefits or retirement” (Watkins, 2011, p. 352). Watkins (2011) argues’ that the state picks up the cost of providing wages and benefits for these poor employees as the corporation makes “super-profits”. Many companies now offer part-time positions, which provide limited or no benefits relying on the government to pick up the cost (Watkins, 2011). Even if these low-income girls are not on welfare, because of their lack of preparation for the few highly cognitive skilled positions that are available in the labor market, most adults will work service sector jobs or entry-level positions for companies where the glass ceiling of advancement looms over their heads in absence of a college degree. Therefore, these girls will “perform increasingly narrow and compartmentalized task all day,” (Knopp, 2012, p. 14) with “specialized machines to perform one tiny task over and over again all day” (p. 14). For example, McDonald’s and other fast food restaurants have one person work the French fry station, where another works the cash register, another fills the orders, and another keeps the dining area clean. Even avoiding the welfare system altogether, most girls will work jobs that produce within the individual “powerlessness, meaningless, isolation and self-estrangement” (Bowles and Gintis, 2011, p. 73). *Powerlessness* is caused as the job treats the worker as another part of the machinery, *meaninglessness* occurs as the work is divided into fragmented task where the final product is impersonal and *isolation* occurs as the work encourages competition rather than cooperation (Bowles and Gintis, 2011).

Sarah Knopp a high school teacher in Los Angeles and an activist argued that capitalism has fundamentally changed the communal relationship human beings have established before the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the way that work is organized (2012). As described above by Bowles and

Gintis (2011) there is now a separation between mental and manual labor. The negative consequence of this is “alienation” (Knopp, 2012). Knopp uses Marx notion of alienation to argue that we are becoming more “dehumanized” as people become more separated from which makes us human because “our ability to plan and control what we create...unlike animals...humans...bring creativity, forethought and collective effort to our work” (2012, p. 14). Being self-estranged from one's work is the opposite of what we did before industrial capitalism. As the new status quo strips billions of people around the globe of their relation to work and the materials they produce as a collective process that is creative and humane thereby furthering the process known as dehumanization which is a “psychological and sociocultural process that strips stigmatized groups of their humanity” (Brown, 2015, p. 402). Through unconscious actions, one of the many consequences of dehumanization results in stripping of stigmatized groups of their humanity that “mark[s] indelible boundaries between humans and animals--The dehumanized are reduced to less-evolved animals and machine-like objects...incompetent, illogical, instinct-driven, uncultured” (Brown, 2015, p. 403). Therefore, the worker experience a sense of alienation from one's work and ones life, which is a form of social death under necropolitics.

*Edufare* works in relationship with *prisonfare* to ensure boys who do become trapped in our criminal (in)justice system , solidify oppressive social, political and economic arrangements for poor blacks’ victims of “...the precarious and deproletarianized fractions of the... working class in the dualizing city” (Wacquant, 2009, Kindle location 3929-3960). Additionally, Wacquant (2009) provides a detailed description of the micro-processes by which the interaction between the structures, agency and cultural production leads these youth and men into prisons or penal surveillance apparatus. What agency these boys exert will conclude in a sad fate “be it that they cannot find employment owing to a combination of skills deficit, employer discrimination,

and competition from immigrants, or that they refuse to submit to the indignity of substandard work in the peripheral sectors of the service economy” (Kindle location 3929-3960).

Wacquant (2002) argues that the prison is the pre-eminent institution for “signifying and enforcing blackness” just as much as slavery was during the first three centuries of US history (p.57). Blackness is therefore tied with our relation to the prison and now the prison defines what it means to be black in this country. Why does this matter? For the conversation of social death and deathscapes, the prison is *par excellence* the functioning of a death politic for black men under its control. Wacquant (2002) explains, “just as bondage affected the ‘social death’ of imported Africans...mass incarceration also induces the civic death” (p. 57) by those entangled through the process of excluding them from the social contract. Dr. Lisa Guenther a professor of philosophy at Vanderbilt University argues civic death is not the only death suffered for those incarcerated, but a social death too (2013, July 31). Social death is the effect of a “social practice in which a person or group of people is excluded, dominated and/or humiliated, to the point of becoming dead to the rest of society” (Guenther, 2013, July 31). For Guenther:

Social death is the condition under which some people can be condemned to civil death, while the rest of us fail to care or even to notice. It is the condition under which entire groups of people may be exposed to disproportionate state violence, neglect, and/or exploitation, without provoking the concern or support of other members of the community. Social death is both a condition of civil death and one of its effects; they amplify one another in a vicious circle that is difficult to interrupt. Together, civil death and social death name the position of those whose status is always already perceived as criminal and labeled as a “security threat” (Guenther,2013, July 31.)



This corresponds with schooling for black youth, as they are removed and excluded from school and the broader education system they are interpolated as superfluous, redundant, rebellious, and expendable (Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Giroux, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Saltman, 2014). It makes sense within this framework to spend an obsessive amount of money on prison beds than to spend resources on quality affordable housing and world-class academic institutions (Alexander, 2012; Davis, 2003). Prisons are an exercise of Necropolitics, so are schools for poor black boys. Moreover, these young males are in an environment of inhumanity that denies of all forms of life and interpersonal recognition. Thereby, making schools and prisons the purest form of deathscapes or necropolis. This paper should shape a new understanding on why poor blacks are purposely singled out for extermination and hyper-marginalization by the gentry in the new neoliberal city.

**G. Conclusion: *A Permanence of Precarious Futures and Disposable Populations***

In conclusion, black youth in America are no longer seen as a social investment but a liability. The poor black youth who enter an educational institution are perceived as a threat before they even enter the walls of a school as the color of their skin create negative perceptions in the people who suppose to care about them the most. We witness the practices of necropolitics through the behavior and actions from the neoliberal leviathan in the creation of a social death from both welfare to work, the prison and the production of human zombies because of the poverty management function of the urban school for black and brown youth. Students who come from low-income housing in communities with extreme poverty are viewed as suspicious and potentially dangerous as certain neighborhoods have reputations that others do not. In Chicago, there are usually negative reputations that come with living in a particular community, and because students come from such adverse environments, it only makes sense that we contain, and isolate these children from the mainstream, for the potential threat they serve to the

establishment and the accumulation of capital. Administrators and security officers see students coming from low-income neighborhoods, and say, "Oh, Dominique comes 'that' neighborhood," therefore, we believe we need more security, as he is potentially dangerous or criminal in his behaviors and dispositions. This perception happens before a child walks into kindergarten (Ferguson, 2000; Hirschfeld, 2008). Society views poor black kids not as innocent like white children but as potential inmates or low-wage income workers in the ever-demanding service industry. The capitalist cannot acquire capital from people who live in subsidized housing, and receive subsidized food. As the public is sold to private interest and corporations, these people become increasingly disposable as the social contract and the social safety net become systematically and methodically eroded by neoliberalism and reinforced by racial domination. Poor black kids scare the hell out of middle-class families who would enjoy spending their capital in shopping centers, upscale retail stores, movie theaters, and expensive niche food markets<sup>7</sup>. As people in power see this, they make it difficult for low-income youth to walkabout the public making it psychologically impossible to feel welcome in public environments and while instituting curfews thereby limiting the amount of time they spent outside their homes and small communities. Although these policies, behaviors, and practices may impact working and poor youth white youth too, they are indirect casualties in the never-ending war against poor black bodies in public spaces (Alexander, 2012; Giroux, 2013; Lipman, 2013). If we return full circle to the arguments discussed throughout this paper, we can now see why black youth attend schools behind gates, barricades, 24-hour security, hyper surveillance and postmodern instruments of control from womb to tomb.

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<sup>7</sup> Trader Joes, Whole Foods, and Treasure Island are proper examples.

## Chapter 2: Reconfiguring Reproduction Theory in Education for the 21st Century Black Urban Precariat<sup>8</sup>/Sub-Proletariat<sup>9</sup>

*Schooling has been at once something done to the poor, for the poor, and for the poor...The unequal contest between social control and social justice is evident in the total functional of US education.* -Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America*

### A. Introduction

This chapter is important as it acknowledges reproduction theories and its various explanations have been invaluable in contributing to a broader understanding of the political nature of schooling and its relation to the dominant society (Giroux, 2006). Moreover, Giroux stressed that this theory “has not achieved its promise to provide a comprehensive critical science of schooling” (Giroux, 2006, p. 3). For Giroux (2006) his main criticism of reproduction theories lies in the “over-emphasis[ing] the idea of domination in their analysis,” (p.4) and “continually patterned themselves after structural-functionalist version of Marxism,” (p.4) which stresses that history is made behind the backs of the members of society. Giroux (2006) argues that the idea that people do make history has been neglected, while human subjects “disappear amidst a theory that leaves no room for ...mediation and resistance” (p. 5). While I agree with Giroux that

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<sup>8</sup> “Precariat” is a social class formed by people suffering from precarity, which is a condition of existence without predictability or security, affecting material or psychological welfare as well as being a member of a proletariat class of industrial workers who lack their own means of production and hence sell their labor to live. Specifically, it is applied to the condition of lack of job security, in other words intermittent employment or underemployment and the resultant precarious existence. See Wacquant, Loïc (2014). “Marginality, ethnicity and penalty in the neo-liberal city: an analytic cartography”. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37 (10): 1687–1711 and Standing, Guy (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Bloomsbury Academic

<sup>9</sup> “Sub-proletariat” It refers to people who are marginalized within the economic system. It also indicates that there is a class of people, identifiable in terms of their relationship to the means of production, who fall below the proletariat in the social structure. It relates the description of the proletariat under Marxist class analysis. See Øyen, Else. January 2006. Poverty: An International Glossary;2006, p198. <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/reference-entries/31487239/sub-proletariat>

<sup>10</sup> I used both of these terms as blacks are both suffering from precarity in the labor force and in their own psychological states, in addition blacks are marginalized in this Anglo-American capitalist system that situates them outside/under the means of production in a class structure between the capitalist and the proletariat.

previous reproduction theories frame schools as factories or prisons and the actors in this institution as pawns, I disagree that this is one of the current weaknesses of reproduction theories in education. In fact, this is a realist account of how urban schools perform and function in an anti-black racist capitalist society (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014). As argued in the previous chapter, schools for low-income youth of color *do* act, perform and behave like factories and prisons, maybe not for working and middle-class white students, but ethnographic research and empirical data proves for poor black youth attending low-income urban schools this is the case (Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Nolan, 2011). However, taking a structural framework (See Bowles and Gintis, 2011), which is grounded in a race-class conflict approach between, blacks and whites (Bell, 1995, 2005; Brown and De Lissoy, 2011; Marable, 2000), and the black experience (Bell, 1995, 2005; Sithole, 2014), I believe these theories have some merit. For once, we are able to shed light on the subtle and invisible ways necropower is deployed at black people, therefore making an “Orwellian fantasy” using the words of Giroux (2006) sound not-so extreme at all. Especially when schools, as described by Means (2013), resemble something out of George Orwell’s *1984*: “On entering the school, one is greeted by uniformed security guards, armed police in bulletproof vest, airport style x-ray screeners, scanning wands, and metal detectors. Inside the school, metal cages on the windows, steel cages over the doors” (pp. 59-60). Moreover, while this paper discuss the actions and choices of students and as a believer in student agency and resistance, I nonetheless agree with Ferguson’s (2000) conclusion of the structure vs. agency debate:

I have found it rewarding to utilize both approaches to demonstrate the interplay between the effects of social structure and the creative response of individuals in everyday life that reproduces a status quo, but that sometimes produce

change...My conviction is however that the balance tilts heavily in favor of determinants (p.22).

For this reason I will argue that: 1) Central to the economic-reproductive position is the notion that schools can only be understood while analyzing the structural effects of the work place and linked to the correspondence principle developed by Bowles and Gintis. Moreover, the position I take in this thesis, is there is a relationship between domination, schooling the economy and power, 2) economic-reproductive social reproduction theories are not relevant in their current form as new configurations of our economics of race in the past three decades have made pure forms of social reproduction theory in application to the lives of poor black youth irrelevant, 3) in agreement with Saltman (2014), reproduction theories must be “selectivity revived” as it now accounts for the ways in which a two-tier education system is emerging, 4) race must be centered into the discussion of reproduction theories and Marxism while de-centering the white male working-class subject from urban inequality, advanced marginality and urban education, 5) the new production of youth is not as workers but as criminals. Factory like schools pre-1970s are now manufacturing/producing criminal subjectivities as the penal apparatus now looms over poor youth of color existence for racial and economic domestication and cohesion, 6) with modifications of social reproduction theory, this framework can address material and subjective changes in the lives of urban youth. In order to better frame social reproduction, an overview and explanation of the economic-reproductive model of social reproduction will be discussed next as this lens set the foundation in most debates (Giroux, 2006).

**B. *Schooling and Theories of Reproduction: The Economic-Reproductive Model***

The political-economy model of reproduction has exerted the strongest influences on radical theories of schooling (Giroux, 2006). Developed primarily around the work of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, it has had a major influence on theories about “the hidden curriculum, educational policies studies and a wide range of ethnographic research” (Giroux, 2006, p. 8). At the core of the political-economic approach are two fundamentally important questions that focus on the relationship between schooling and society, as argued by Giroux (2006); 1) ”How does the educational system function within society?” (p.8) And 2) “How do schools fundamentally influence the ideologies, personalities and needs of the students?” (p. 8). While theorists who work within this model provide different answers, they agree frequently on the relationship between power and domination on the one hand, and the relationship between schooling and the economy on the other (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Giroux, 2006; Saltman, 2014, 2015). Power, in these accounts, as defined by Giroux (2006), is examined primarily in the terms of its functions to mediate and legitimate the relations of dominance and subordination in the economic sphere. For political-economist, power becomes the property of dominant groups and operates to reproduce class, gender, and racial inequalities that “functions in the interest of the accumulation and expansion of capital” (Giroux, 2006, p. 8). This becomes clearer in the way as economic-reproductive theorist analyze the relations between economy and schooling.

Central to the economic-reproductive position is the notion that schools can only be understood while analyzing the structural effects of the work place and linked to the correspondence principle developed by Bowles and Gintis. Bowles and Gintis (2011) will be quoted at length as they describe the correspondence between education, and the hierarchical division of labor with the end result being the adjusting of young people to a set of social relationships similar to those of the work place :

As we have seen the lowest levels in the hierarchy of the enterprise emphasize rule-following, middle levels, dependability, and the capacity to operate without direct and continuous supervision while the higher levels stress the internalization of the norms of the enterprise. Similarly, in education, lower levels ( junior and senior high school) tend to severely limit and channel the activities of students. Somewhat higher, up the educational ladder, teacher and community colleges allow for activity that is more independent and less over all supervision. At the top the elite four year colleges emphasize social relationships conformable with the higher levels in the production hierarchy...As they 'master' one type of behavioral regulation, they are allowed to progress to either the next or channeled into the corresponding level in the hierarchy of production. Even within a single school, the social relationships of different tracks tend to conform to different behavioral norms. Vocational and general tracks emphasize rule-following and close supervision, while the college track tends towards a more open atmosphere emphasizing the internalization of norms (p. 132).

The relationship between the lowest level of occupational structure and the schooling processes for students who attend these schools situate their desires and aspirations a conformist mindset in order to accept rules of those higher up the ladder. Those of the upper-level have to internalize the enterprise and manipulate others to accept their position in the hierarchy. This difference in the social relationships among and within school in part reflects both the social backgrounds of the student body and their likely future economic positions. Thus blacks and other minorities are concentrated in schools whose repressive, arbitrary, and generally chaotic internal order, coercive authority structure and minimal possibilities for advancement mirror the

characteristics of inferior job situations (Anyon, 1980; Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Brown, 2005; Noguera, 2008; Saltman, 2014, 2015; Wacquant, 2001). Similarly, predominantly working-class schools tend to emphasize behavioral control and rule-following, while schools in the well to do suburbs employ relatively open systems that favor greater student participation, “less direct supervision, more student electives, and in general, a value system stressing internalized standards of control” (Bowles and Gintis, 2011, p. 132). Working class schools in both white and black working-class communities are subject to punitive, rigid, disciplinary reforms that for Saltman (2015) “is designed to instill in students submission to hierarchical control,” (p. 228) which occurs through the daily pedagogical practices of “scripted lessons, direct instruction, strict bodily codes demanding students keep their feet on the floor and their hands on the desk and eyes on the teacher” (p. 228). The overall agenda aims to make docile disciplined subjects who will submit to authority of the teacher to later submit to the authority of the boss. As the new service economy produces more and more flexible, precarious, low-wage, low-skill labor, working-class students like their parents before them were conditioned and prepared at an early age to consent to free-market rule and embrace its ideologies by accepting worsening work conditions in a deregulated globalized economy. In this view, the underlying experience and relations of schooling are hyper-(re)animated by the power of capital to provide different skills, attitudes and values to students of different classes, races and gender (Giroux, 2006). In effect, schools mirror not only the social division of labor but also the wider society’s class structure.

What is important to remember, as articulated by Bowles and Gintis (2011), is the differential socialization pattern of schools attended by students of different social classes do not arise by accident, as the economy can only be ongoingly recreated in this view if workers learn to take their place and play their role in the production process (Bowles and Gintis, 2011).



Rather, the pattern reflects the fact that the educational “objectives and expectation of administrators, teachers and parents differ for students of different social classes”(p. 132). This leads to a more harmonious reproduction of the class structure by arguing that in the day to day operation of the schools as illustrated by Bowles and Gintis (2011): 1) the working class parents favor more structured education methods which is not only a reflection of their own work experiences of demonstrating submission to authority as an essential ingredient in order to get a stable well paying job, 2) the professional parents “prefer a more open atmosphere and a greater emphasis on motivational control” p. 133) that is similarly a reflection of their position in the social division of labor, and 3) the higher-status parents are more likely than their lower-status neighbors to choose open classroom for their children for the justification that this allows for the development of capacity for sustained student work and other characteristics required for adequate job performance in the upper-levels of the occupational hierarchy.

The harmonious social relations come in the production of parents who value particular schooling pedagogies that reflect their work and the expectations that their children will take their place in the labor, social and economic hierarchy. This is embedded within a larger nexus of ideological absorption by the poor, working and middle-class communities. The ruling class domination, of the cultural and knowledge apparatuses in our society (Bourdieu and Passerson, 1977) persuades the masses that the unequal sorting and sifting that a society does is a “matter of either merit or natural talent,” (Saltman, 2015, p. 228) thereby shifting the blame from structures and institutions to individuals behaviors and particular groups of peoples’ cultural norms and beliefs systems (Bourdieu and Passerson, 1977; Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Saltman, 2015). Bowles and Gintis (2011) debunks this myth of meritocracy by arguing empirically that the determinant of students future wealth and income is a students class position and family wealth

and income rather than either intelligence or amount of schooling. This main insight into our schooling system offered by reproduction theory in America with regard to the relationship between schooling and poverty have largely been ignored by both Liberals and Conservatives (Saltman, 2015). Rather than recognize the extent to which schooling has been and continue to be implicated in the recreation of the class and racial hierarchy across the political spectrum, politicians and teacher experts' alike make a simple yet false connection that more schooling not only leads to greater inclusion into the capitalist economy (especially for at-risk students, low-income students and minorities) but is vital to making society more egalitarian by providing everyone with equal opportunities (Saltman, 2014, 2015). Matter of fact, education seems to stabilize society by reproducing its inequality throughout generations, not disrupting it.

### *C. Saving Marxism from White Maleness in Reproduction Theory*

We need to place race and gender from the outer ring into reproduction theory's logic by making other identities centric. In the reverse action we need to de-center the white working male body from our discussions of the reproduction of urban inequality and urban marginality and center those who belong to the black and brown communities. The working-class white no longer makes up the populace of the metropolitan city and the shop floor no longer makes up a reality for white working class males. This exclusion of other voices and experiences has led to a symbolic violence being perpetrated on to the bodies of black people. Secondly, this also acknowledges the objective reality that gender and race is produced in schools along with class (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Ferguson, 2000; Hextrum, 2014; Morris, 2007). For instance, Bowles and Gintis (2011) assume a male subject and assume that members of the same class will have the same experience in school and/or in labor. This theory, therefore, cannot account for the fact that women were historically subjected to different curricula that prepared them for non-labor in the home (Arnot, 1994 as cited in Hextrum, 2014). Moreover, this ignores our new reality in a

service economy that is situated within the governing logic of an authoritarian-neoliberal-racial penal-logic where the Leviathan splits genders into welfare to work programs (women) or the prison (men) (Wacquant, 2009). The consequences of this are the reproduction of a gender inequality, where poor women are in the subordinate position of doing lifeless low-wage, low-skill service labor (“school-to-labor-pipeline”) (Hextrum, 2014) and men subjected to the security or penal apparatus (Wacquant, 2009). The background for the exclusion of women from reproduction theory rest on the fact that under Marxism, “class relations are something to be done and experienced by men” (Hextrum, 2014, p. 96), as women are classless subjects, only experiencing domination in the home (Acker, 1988; McLaren, 1998; McRobbie, 2000, as cited in Hextrum, 2014). Since social and cultural reproduction theories rely on Marxist understandings of class and capitalism, these theories also privilege a male subject and ignore gender (Arnot, 1994 as cited in Hextrum, 2014). Women across race and class categories graduate high school and college at higher rates than men (U.S. Census Bureaus, 2012, as cited in Hextrum, 2014), yet women are still unequal. Feminists interested in gender and patriarchy within schools conducted a variety of empirical studies in the 1980s and 1990s to understand the reproduction of women’s inequality (Hextrum, 2014). The combined efforts in this area showed that patriarchy is produced and reproduced in both schools and labor through the structure, curriculum choices, and teacher-student interactions within the education system (Arnot, 1994; Clarricoates, 1981, as cited in Hextrum, 2014). Scholarship on gender inequality in education revealed the following findings that closely paralleled the work of class reproduction theorists.

On the centering of the white subject, Nolan (2009) writes that not only did reproduction theories take place before the dramatic shifts in the political economy, described earlier, but it also “focused on the reproduction of a white labor force,” (p. 39) which should force us to ask

different research questions. De-centering the white subject is difficult when one of the most prominent social critics and critical theorist, Henry A. Giroux, lists the exclusion of race and gender from theories of reproduction and resistance as “rarely taking into an account... issues of race and gender” (2006, p. 33) and not the denial of recognition from a strongly Eurocentric academic scholarship. Reinforcing the exclusion of black bodies in the discussion of “subjects” (Sithole, 2014), and explicit exclusion of women as they are just ‘private bodies’ (Hextrum, 2014) which has been persistent in education scholarship. The problem with current scholarship and discussions of the “working class” is that this is a category that is universal and of transcendental quality (Haymes, 2002), which is beyond “any particular lived context or situation of existence” (p. 156). Stephen N. Haymes criticizes Freire on the grounds that “Freire failed to see that working class identities, and class identities more generally, could also be ‘black’” (p. 156). I think this too applies to Giroux as his whole literature review about the working-class subject and resistance was absent of any scholars of Color women, as the academics he cited were all white males and the subjects of their scholarship were all Europeans. An erasure of black consciousness that is also class fits the scholarship perfectly as blackness is viewed as a threat to whiteness that has to be exterminated. For those of the Marxist family and all of its branches, class is viewed as an objective reality while race is subjective and founded in economic relations. Consequently, race is dismissed or diminished as the body is only an economic one (a material body) and not a phenomenological, ontological or epistemological one (Haymes, 2002). Moreover, we are not allowed to fully understand “the relationship between racial subjectivity and bodily consciousness, particularly in the case of black oppression and liberation” (Haymes, 2002, p. 156). This in turn as Haymes (2002) argues ignores “the

potentially existential emancipatory role that reflective consciousness” (p. 156) if we were to use the black experience as “racialized embodied subjectivity” (p. 156) for liberation.

Giroux in his the *Giroux Reader*, the “Sociology of Education and Theories of Reproduction and Resistance” chapter claims “European cultural studies, resistance theorist” (2006, p. 5) as the foundational scholars who have attempted to demonstrate “the mechanism of social and cultural reproduction are never complete” (p.5). He goes on to argue that this was the first time the idea of “agency” and “human action” have been debated and discussed in education while systematically ignoring the contributions of people of color have not only made in revolutionary theory but also educational theory. Moreover, he quotes Willis (1981) endlessly as someone who challenged the traditional paradigm of economic reproduction theories with the introduction of cultural studies and the concept of “cultural production” (Giroux, 2006). Although Willis wrote his book on the working-class white male youth in a small British town in the 1970s, this communicates to readers that these British youth experiences in their homogenous cultural environment are generalizable to other contexts. What makes matter worse for Giroux includes the lack of recognition that these “Lads” displayed strong racist views towards immigrants and highly sexist and anti-woman views behavior and action towards their girl classmates (Willis, 1981). In *Learning to Labor* on the seven and a half pages sub-section<sup>11</sup> titled “Sexism” and the other “Racism” Willis explains the lads<sup>12</sup> relationship with women and minorities as the “Two other groups...their own superiority is enacted are girls and ethnic minority groups (p. 43). The lads only received a feeling of superiority by subjugating groups to an inferiority status as a defensive mechanism to offset their own fragile, unstable white males identities, which is located in both their maleness and economic insecurity during that time.

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<sup>11</sup> That’s both sections combined in the Morningside edition book that is 225 pages

<sup>12</sup> The Hammertown working-class white male high school students Willis used as participants in his ethnography that displayed oppositional behavior and cultural appropriation and production.

Being a woman and being colored were somehow a threat to their white maleness. Women, for the lads viewed their opposite sex classmates as “sexual objects and domestic comforters,” (p. 43) as the girls are viewed as objects by the lads, who as a commodity, she is “actually diminished by sex; she is literally worthless; she has been romantically and materially partly consumed” (p. 44). For students of Color, Willis suggests “The mere fact of different colour can be enough to justify an attack or intimidation” (p. 48) and this difference creates a “derogatory view of other racial types is simply assumed as the basis for this and other actions” (p. 48) like “verbal, if not actual violence shown to the ‘fuckin’ wog’, or the ‘bastard pakis’” (p. 48). We should view those who use this text and who locates their political orientation as radical suspect if they consciously site work that is extremely sexist and racist and is uncritical of this. It would be dishonest to discount these actions as being blinded by capitalist false ideologies. Working-class male chauvinism and misdirected hyper-masculinities is an overt reflex created by white control and domination.

Giroux and the Marxist family of reproduction and critical theory center the white male in their analysis of the human subject who is gifted inherently with revolutionary potential (Marx and Engels, 1948). This is surprising as those who are supposedly of the “critical” tradition are coincidentally uncritical when it comes to issues of race, white racism and exclusionary nature of European epistemologies. Nothing about their positionalities is located in their philosophy. This becomes inherently problematic as it recreates and maintains oppression whereby scholars standpoint fail to relate to the subject matter and the lives of those who they claim to speak or advocate for (Alcoff, 1992). Therefore, we need to place race, and gender out of the margins and into the center and recognize that these are co-produced and interconnected logics that control and dominate non-privileged social identities (Collins, 1990; Morris, 2007). As subjects, white-

working males' creates problems in a world that no longer need their representation as a universal signifier. This should lead to their replacement, I prefer a poor Woman of Color as they are excluded and oppressed by their class, race and gender in turn creating a "triple marginally"(Collins, 1990). One can not separate race and class from each other, and although they have historically operated differently throughout history to exploit racial minorities we must at the same time reconfigure our conceptualization of race and capital so they these two form of operations are analyzed together to create an "economics of racism" (Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011). These criticisms do not totally invalidate the contributions of these theories especially Giroux who has written invaluable information in the fields of critical pedagogy, critical media studies, cultural studies, and the sociology of education but the reader of his works and others' should be highly critical before he/she appropriates this literature for the struggle.

Additionally, Giroux argued that cultural production theories take into account working class culture but he does not situate race and whiteness as tied to the white worker ethos and pathos and how this is fundamentally anti black and embedded within the European psyche (Haymes, 2002; Sithole, 2014). White and European academics maintain and reinforce the anti-black racist, and sexist status quo by pushing these bodies and their knowledge's to the margin for the hope that once white men come to a "critical consciousness" they will liberate and emancipate all humanity (Freire, 2000; Marx and Engels, 1948). This has not happened and never will as whites, in particular heterosexual white males have too much invested in the natural order of things (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991; hooks, 1981) and their whiteness evokes a sense of property as something belonging exclusively to white people (Harris, 1995). Therefore, blacks can never fully enjoy the American Dream that white's seem to be exclusively entitled too. To fight race we need to theorize race and racism. Without this radical commitment to fighting

against racial oppression, black people on the planet under the specter of necropower could potentially face extermination. Haymes (2002) cites in his argument about Freire “his conceptual limitation regarding race that must be called into question” (p. 155); the same should go for Giroux. While it's partly true that we cannot understand racism without class (Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Haymes, 2002) the reality for African-Americans “in an anti-black racist society is that they live class though race and therefore as ‘black people’” (Haymes, 2002, p. 155). Within this context, the oppressive order will remain as long as white men remain our hope, which is why we should decenter and place them at the margins of our analysis of reproduction theory and our debates about emancipation, liberation and global revolution. Although reproduction is still valid, it should be reworked to fit a contemporary world where dispossession and domination is global and grander. The people in this universe are becoming governed by a neoliberal Anglo-American economic logic strengthened by a global white supremacy. A new language is needed to address these new phenomena.

#### **D. *New Prison Realities for Poor Black Youth***

The justification of the prison production mechanism of the capitalist system for the 21st century urban school is related to the United States ranking in incarceration rates in the world, which is number one (Alexander, 2012; Davis, 2003; De Lissovoy, 2012; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011; Means, 2013; Nolan, 2011; Simon, 2007; Wacquant, 2009). Moreover, this new surplus human economy under neoliberalism has brought with it, rapid science and technology manufacturing that utilizes automation more than human beings (Brown, 2005). Globalization reflects a new reality than our past when America had the largest manufacturing industry in the world (Massey and Denton, 1993; Wacquant, 2001, 2013; Wilson, 1987, 1996). In attempt to understand the dramatic rise in incarceration rates since the early 1980s, and the punitive turn in crime policy, some scholars have emphasized how in a post-industrial period marked by high



unemployment and underemployment (Wilson, 1996), the prison and the criminal justice system have become a means for managing economically superfluous populations (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011; Nolan, 2009; Wacquant, 2001, 2009). When thousands of jobs disappeared from the urban landscape between the 1960s, and the 1970s, and government funded social programs eroded in the early 1980s, the imprisonment rates in the United States skyrocketed (Wacquant, 2001, 2002a, 2009, 2010a, 2012). Research by Western (2006) demonstrated a strong correlation between concentrated poverty and increased incarceration rates (as cited in Nolan, 2009). As the prison, witnessed a hypertrophic increase these past three decades, manufacturing jobs on the other hand have declined, especially in the northeast and Midwest in the United States (Fording et al., 2011; Lipman, 2011, Nolan, 2011; Massey and Denton, 1993; Means, 2013; Simon, 2007; Wacquant, 2001a, 2009; Wilson 1979, 1996). These jobs were mostly replaced with lower paying service jobs or work in the informal economy for inner city residents (Davis, 2003; Lipman, 2011, Massey and Denton, 1993; Pattillo, 2005; Wacquant, 2001, 2009, 2012, 2013; Wilson, 1987, 1996). In connecting to high unemployment, Wacquant (2002) argue that this post/de-industrialization for the urban proletariat has resulted in a “stupendous expansion of America's penal state in the post-Keynesian age” (p. 44) for the need to “shore up an eroding caste cleavage” (p. 44) of blacks. To whites, blacks lack cultural capital; lack of use for wage labor and their potential to enter the illegal street economy has lead to American law-makers to create and establish “a facto policy of ‘carceral affirmative action’ towards African Americans” (Wacquant, 2002, p. 44).

Next, there are 2.3 million people in the United States in prison— a 500 percent increase over the past thirty years (Nolan, 2011). This dramatic increase in imprisonment has had its greatest impact on poor black men and other people of color (Alexander, 2012; Davis, 2003; De

Lissovoy, 2012; Fording et al., 2011; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Lipman, 2011, Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2011; Means, 2013; Simon, 2007; Wacquant, 2001, 2002, 2002a). One in ten black men between the ages of twenty- five and twenty- nine is behind bars (Nolan, 2011). For Latinos in the same age group, the ratio is one in twenty- six, and for white men, one in sixty- three (Nolan, 2011). Blacks and Latinos constitute 62% of the prison population in contrast to the 25% of the national population, while one third of black men between the ages of 20 and 29 were incarcerated, on parole or probation in 1995 (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011). These empirical stats supports Wacquant (2002a) claim that the penal state is necessary in that it complements the rolling back of the social state. Of the five dimensions he listed as the justification of the penal states' rise, three of them *Vertical expansion, Horizontal expansion and Carceral affirmative action* is of concern to me in this paper. Wacquant (2002a) writes the prison has both increased its admissions as the United States is the “undisputed world champion in imprisonment” (Wacquant, 2002a, p.19)<sup>13</sup>. While simultaneously widening of the penal net<sup>14</sup> as there are 6.5 million Americans under the criminal justice supervision representing one adult male in twenty, one black man in nine, and one young black man (ages 18 to 35) in three; and an estimated 55 million criminal “rap sheets” (p. 20) have been amassed by the authorities (Wacquant, 2002a).

Third, the prison and the criminal justice system as a whole operate as an affirmative action policy for lower class or unemployed black males “via the differential penal and spatial targeting of ghetto neighborhoods and lower-income urban residents” (p. 20). For example the “War on Drugs” led to African Americans “unprecedented demographic predominance” (Wacquant, 2002a, p.20) among confined populations: black men make up 6 % of the national drug users but 35 % of persons arrested for narcotics offenses and 75 percent of state prisoners

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<sup>13</sup> The vertical expansion.

<sup>14</sup> The Horizontal expansion via “enlarged probation, restricted parole and growth of electronic and genetic databases (Wacquant, 2002a, p.19) which has allowed an increase surveillance at a distance as argued by Wacquant.

sent behind bars after drug conventions (Wacquant, 2002a). High school dropouts are particularly vulnerable in this new carceral reality (Nolan, 2011). Some 60 % of black male high school dropouts born in the late 1960s served time in prison by the end of the 1990s— a rate four times higher than that of their college- educated counterparts (Nolan, 2011). When situated within a necropolitical-neoliberal, anti-black context governed by logics of efficiency, and profit maximization, the mass disposability of black populations restructures the prison and policing sector to “absorb populations made redundant by industrialization and the growth of high-tech and professional industries” (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011, p. 1516). As such, one of the consequences of these new surplus populations is the positioning of their bodies somewhere away from their communities to be stored for future use. The prison does this with efficiency, as it has become a warehouse for racialized bodies of predominantly young male labor (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011).

**E. *The School was a Factory and Now It's A Prison: The Reproduction of Criminal Subjects***

In an economy, that becoming less able to provide its students with full time work, schools produce subjects that accept the conditions of a fragmented, unstable lower-class as criminalization and low-skilled labor becomes reality for black youth. If these students do not work they will accept their positions as a pre-determined life, one where authority expressed by punishment is to be exercised to its fullest, in the hopes that their potential for rebellion and resistance are repressed. My argument is as follows: as work becomes less of a possibility for black youth, the state under the specter of the empire will continuously deploy all of its power in all forms to ensure the function of capitalism and white supremacy. This is the proper response to advance marginality created by the roll back of the welfare state and the celebration of market fundamentalism by our lawmakers and ruling elites. Moreover, for the past three decades we have witnessed declining financial support for the education of children from minorities groups

and low-income families which leaves more resources to be devoted to the children of those with more commanding roles in the economy (Vaught, 2011). Middle and upper class white families use their political influence to shift educational resources to their children and away from poor students of color on the notion that students who are redundant and disposable should not limited funds devoted to them (Vaught, 2011). In addition, Giroux's (2006) disappointment in the determinism of the political-economy model of reproduction should be viewed as secondary to the everyday reality of black youth, who experience the strong arm of the neoliberal leviathan which erodes, snatches possibilities and encloses them in Orwellian like conditions.

The question why urban schools are performing poverty control responsibilities in a neoliberal society was discussed in the first chapter. Consequently, massive amounts of bodies are simply now surplus in a service, globalized, technological economy where capital and jobs move with the push of a button. New markets are instantaneously created on laptops and mobile phones which a decade ago would have been unimaginable. We need to now reconsider theories of social reproduction in education to incorporate the penal functions of low-income minorities urban schools so one can illuminate the fact that while some schools “reproduce traditional social class hierarchies<sup>15</sup> schools in low-income neighborhood of color now assist in the production of a *criminalized class*” (Nolan, 2009, p. 29). This supports Bowles and Gintis (2011) thesis that the reproduction of the class system is not perfect, absolute nor without its problems, because the reproduction process is often contradictory as the people who function it are too. For Nolan (2011) the upper half of the class and schooling ladder reproduction still produces similar social relationships, it's the lower half that needs to be updated or replaced. Therefore, educational theorist and activist should not disregard the whole framework just to acknowledge that schools are now poverty storage warehouses for 21st century youth. The urban school now is “a kind of

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<sup>15</sup> Say in the middle-class suburbs

auxiliary penal institution in which some of the city's most marginalized youth spent their days under heavy police surveillance" (Nolan, 2011, location in Kindle application 143). This is fundamentally different when "teachers and school administrators in a working-class school" (Bowles and Gintis 2011, p. 133) are forced into a "relationship that fairly closely mirrors that of the factory" (p. 133).

The numbers and research around increasing prison rates and a declining manufacturing sector should cause alarm for those who are invested and passionate about public education and issues of race and equity. However, since the 1980s, the prison system has become increasingly settled in the economic, political, and ideological life of the United States and the transnational trafficking in U.S. commodities, culture, and ideas (Davis, 2003). The consequences of carceralization of all life is the rapid creation of these new penal institutions producing and reproducing criminal subjectivities as formal education centers remain the major conduits to prisons. To offer a counter argument, one that is grounded in the reality of the students who this paper is more interested in, the relationship between the urban public school and the prison system is not a simple one (just as the relationship between the class system and schools was not absolute or pre-determined), nor is there necessarily a direct path from one institution to the other, as the school-prison track or "pipeline" metaphor used by advocates suggests (Nolan, 2011). The school-prison track is a well- documented phenomenon, but what it looks like on the ground needs to be illuminated. Nolan (2011) argues that students do not generally go from school to prison based on one run- in with the law, in the school hallway. Instead, students are subjected to heavy policing in various domains of their lives— in the streets, on public transportation, and, in the case of hallways in large urban public schools. Nolan (2011) illustrates how indirect this path from school to prison is:

As they accumulate summonses for minor violations of the law and school misbehavior, they ultimately miss court appearances, and warrants are then put out for their arrest. In some cases, students have another confrontation with police in school. At other times, they get caught up in low- level criminal activity on the street, and when it is discovered that they missed a court appearance (after receiving a summons in school), they spend time in jail. So although it is true that disproportionately high numbers of poor and working- class youth of color face prison sentences, it is equally important to note that many more are subjected to low- level forms of penal management without ever doing serious time behind bars (Location 338 in Kindle app).

A direct pipeline between schools and prison does not exist even though the demographics of students who attend these low-performing public school and those who attend prison are similar. I would like to take time to rebut and shift the discussion on this phenomenon. First, I want to question this popular mainstream concept of a “pipeline” used by school and prison activist. In essence, not surprisingly, the boundaries between the education system and the criminal justice system have become so close that youth, varying from preschool to high school are subjected to a set of practices, laws and policies that criminalize their behaviors, mostly through zero tolerance policies (Noguera, 2008). This active system is referred to as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP) by its proponents. While this is true on the surface that this nexus plays an integral role in perpetuating racism, a false sense of progress, fear, and a continuing drama of human disposability in this country, what is not true is that it works perfectly and is a single all encompassing mesh that all black boys will experience some time in their lives. Essentially, STPP proponents argue that there is a system that narrows the boundaries between schools and

prisons for youth of color and is a network of disposing poor youths of color, predominantly those living in low-income communities and students with disabilities into prison, so they are nearly invisible to society (Brown, 2005, Noguera, 2012). While the prison disposes a very select few of these boys, what happens to others in their participation of the symbolic production of their criminal selves and who somehow escaped a run-in with the law should be of primary concern for scholars and activist.

Secondly, it is not a "pipeline" from here to there (school to the prison or the cradle to the prison) as in this new century's super complex capital and culture exchanges moves beyond time in space. For me, it is outdated to speak of something as dynamic and layered as state crafting and the racial and economic reconfiguring of all life as we know it in the form of a single pipeline for black youth. Now "here and there" have become "t/here", which may or maybe be within or apart of a single organizational continuum. As an illustration, lets think of a bridge that we often see in movies, where the characters have to cross it order to get the other side. The deteriorating bridge is often ten seconds or a step or two away from falling apart and absent of another path this way is the only way across. It is usually life or death. For most young males, they will not get this far into their journey, thus not landing in a prison cell. Their run ins' with the law may not turn into something permanent, and most will find creative ways to struggle and avoid the criminal justice system. What is important for this group is their occupation by the police state and their permissiveness or consenting behavior in what they understand as the natural order of things being black in an anti-black white supremacist society. Their race and class justifies their occupation by the police state, and because criminals are only occupied, the mainstream accepts this as the only way to create harmony and security in our society. In jail or not, all poor black and brown youth are criminals, their schools and communities reflect this by

the over-policing of their bodies. So, what does this mean for the rest of the students who do not do serious time behind bars? Alternatively, those who drop out or graduate but who lack the hard skills to work a semi-skilled job? What does this mean for reproduction theory in education? For the first two questions, Nolan (2011) in her critical ethnography *Police in the Hallways* noted that students routinely expressed a deep sense of frustration, ambivalence, or uncertainty about their current and future employment prospects. Indeed, unlike the “lads” of Paul Willis’s classic study, who had a vision of working in local factories, the students who attended the school she studied were quickly losing hope of finding an after- school job and had no solid vision for future employment (Nolan, 2011). Many of those who did have a vision held a somewhat unrealistic one— a third- year student reading at a fourth- grade level, for instance, stating he or she wanted to go to college and become a lawyer (Nolan, 2011). Others, she argued boys in particular, dreamed of being professional ball players or accomplished rap artists. The most frequent question she received from students was, “Can you get me a job?” (Nolan, 2011, Kindle location 2651).

These kinds of remarks from students about their difficulties finding jobs, their inability to envision a realistic or satisfying future of employment, and their feelings towards their own abilities reflect the political economy in which they lived (Nolan, 2011). Moreover, incarceration rates, as this paper described earlier, have skyrocketed for young black and Latino men and increasingly for women, and the poorer they are and the less education they have, the more likely they will spend time in prison (Nolan, 2011). Thus, more than ever before, the life experiences of young adults— blacks’ in urban centers like the Chicago are shaped not only in relationship to work, or the lack of it, but also (and perhaps in some instances even more so) in relationship to the criminal- and juvenile- justice systems (Nolan, 2011). As students’ relationship to the job



market change and schools become restructured in accordance with economic necessities; the meaning of reproduction and resistance shifts and becomes more complicated. For men, the urban school is where men “could” be shuffled to prison as a welfare program, but not all boys who encounter the law and its enforcement will spend time behind bars (Nolan, 2011). Although urban schools still have a reproductive function<sup>16</sup> the concept of reproduction as traditionally rendered in the industrialized Fordist era, when the large neighborhood public high school predominated, may be less pertinent than it was twenty- five or even ten years ago (Nolan, 2011). Put simply, for schools that are populated by poor black youth, their primary function is perhaps not the reproduction of a working class but the production of a whole population of criminalized, excluded youth. Krueger supports this claim (2010) when she argues that blacks face mass unemployment in the formal economy (see Wacquant, 2001, 2009, 2010, 2012), thereby making the youth surplus and redundant (Giroux, 2008, 2013). Next, increasing the deployment of the carceral institution for Wacquant (2001) offered itself as a “substitute apparatus for enforcing the shifting color line,” (p. 103) while “ containing the segments of the African American community devoid of economic utility” (p. 103). The “*labor extraction*” argument laid out by Wacquant (2001) earlier in explaining the previous three particular institutions is not as strong in this neoliberal information service economy, especially since production in the 21st century can be done efficiently with new technology and less human bodies (Brown, 2005).

Those who are no longer needed for labor extraction, are sent to a space “of pure custody... a human warehouse or even a kind of social waste management facility, where adults and some juveniles... are concentrated for purposes of protecting the wider community” (Simon, 2007, p. 142). Protecting the wider community is actually an illusion with a stronger symbolic

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<sup>16</sup> Frequently preparing children of low- wage workers for less lucrative jobs in the service sector while preparing children of middle- class parents for higher- paying professions and managerial positions.

function than objective reality of rampant crime. The purpose of the “waste management prison” (Simon, 2007) manages poverty by “provid[ing] a public good that is directly aimed at insecurity, the form of public need that crime legislation as made both visible and compelling,” (p. 142). Simon continues his persuasive argument by writing “...and to reconfigure the domination of African Americans and /or discipline the margins of the labor force to support the increasing demands for exploitation of the neoliberal economic order” (pp. 157-159). Remember the prison under Wacquant’s analysis of *prisonfare* is not only about incarceration, for it extends to include the development of “social, educational, medical and other agencies of the welfare state to the extent that it operates in a panoptic and punitive mode” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 243). This new agenda is not about serving the poor’s needs but is about “exerting supervision that is disciplinary over trouble categories and territories” (Wacquant, 2012, p. 243). This corresponds to urban school’s, as they are no longer about education just as social services are no longer about serving the needs of the poor. Schools for poor black and brown youth place “concerns about safety and control...over concerns about teaching” (Noguera, 2008, p. 107). Wacquant (2001) to support Noguera arguments states “over the years essential educational programs have been cut to divert funds...for more security personnel...it is hard to maintain that educating them [students in the hyperghetto] is a priority when half of the city’s [Chicago] high schools place in the bottom 1 percent on the American College Test” (p. 108). The neoliberal educational agenda along with the regulatory and disciplinary surveillance of students and teachers creates a disadvantage for poor youth and encourages narrow pedagogical practices that stifle learning and “jeopardize young people's ability to think critically” (Ossei-Owusu, 2012, p. 300). This should not come as a surprise when over 75 percent of Chicago’s Public School students come from families living under the official poverty line and nine out of every ten are black or

Latino (Wacquant, 2001). My argument is therefore: although prison is a reality for a few youth, the schools core function is to serve as a mass detention center that habitué all poor youth into accepting panoptic punitive supervision. Sending students to prison remains epiphenomenal, to the schools core function of police and military domestication. These techniques used by the police incorporate subjects into the empire-state. The empire-state expects compliance and consent as a precondition of neoliberal citizenship and “democratic participation.” Schools that serve low-income youth of color increasingly produce and maintain a social and economically insecure society where racial domination and market fundamentalism run amok.

How does this shape our rethinking of reproduction theory can be answered by Kupchik and Ward (2011) “The existing research on school security follows the logic of social reproduction, asserting that school security is disproportionately applied to low status youth and that it reinforces and reproduces this low status” (p. 4). Although, this theoretical perspective is most often applied to understanding social class differentials in academic achievement scholars have also used this framework to describe the unequal distribution of school security, arguing that “schools serving disadvantaged children (especially poor and nonwhite youth) have tighter security (including criminal justice-oriented practices such as police officers in school, locked gates, and metal detectors) than schools with predominantly middle-class white students” (Kupchik, 2010 as cited in Kupchik and Ward, 2011, p. 5). Thus, a reproduction in education perspective suggests that youth who are socially, economically, and politically marginalized – poor and racial/ethnic minority youth – will have different experiences than other youth via school security and discipline (Kupchik and Ward, 2011). Marginalized youth are presumed to be young criminals and treated as such through exposure to criminal justice oriented practices (e.g., police surveillance and metal detectors), while youth with social, political and cultural

capital are presumed to be well-behaved, treated as such, and empowered to be productive citizens (Ferguson, 2000; Giroux, 2013; Kupchik and Ward, 2011; Means, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2009, 2011; Ossei-Owusu, 2012). There are good reasons to believe that existing critiques of school security as a form of social reproduction are valid. Perhaps the most important fact that a mountain of evidence finding that individual students who are “poor or racial/ethnic minorities are more likely than others to be punished in school, even while controlling for self-reported misbehavior rates” (Kupchik and Ward, 2011, p. 8). Schools might also implement security in response to practical issues in a way that supports the social reproduction thesis. Since schools with large concentrations of poor youth and racial/ethnic minorities tend to be located in higher crime areas, schools might respond pragmatically to an elevated local crime threat by implementing tighter security (Kupchik and Ward, 2011). In sum, there is good reason to expect that reproduction theory describe how school security measures are distributed across schools, as schools need to tighten down on the authority to control populations that are now surplus and redundant while domesticating students as criminal and not factory workers, as they were in the past.

#### F. *Conclusion*

If scholars continue to explore how schools legitimize and reproduce unequal social structures, then a new approach is needed to understand gender, race, and class. Reproduction theories are insufficient to explain how the schooling experiences of black youth in a punitive neoliberal post/de-industrialized world relate to the production of social, political, and economic inequality. The educational environment for low-income black youth now resembles a prison factory for the 21st century. Instead of producing working subjects who identify with an industrial capitalism, these students are being produced as criminals who strongly identify with

the presence of a security, penal and military apparatus (Brown, 2005). There is a need for a framework that reveals how gender and race still operates in schools, creating negative effects for male and female alike. I would recommend using reproduction theory alongside theories of punishment (Garland, 1990; Nolan, 2009; Wacquant, 2001), crime and security (Simon, 2007), Intersectionality (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991; Christensen and Jensen, 2012; hooks, 1981; Morris, 2007), structural theories of race (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Marable, 2000, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000), and analysis of the new political economy and its impact in relation to the reconfiguration of the state, race, the urban city and advanced marginality (Brown, 2015; De Lissovoy, 2012; Fording, et al., 2011; Giroux, 2008, 2013; Goldberg, 2008; Lipman, 2011, 2013; Marable, 2000; Means, 2013; Saltman, 2014; Wacquant, 2009 ,2010,2012). This will allow us to shed light on the reproduction of material subordination in the form of race, class, and gender, through their infusion of the criminal justice system and their responsibility of crime and poverty control. At the macro- level policy, scholars can unpack the motivations and outcomes of these inequalities while situating them within a governing logic of capital and racial domination. This will allow us to see why and how particular groups of students are either afforded or denied access to highly cognitive curriculum and critical thinking skills, positive attitudes about their sense of self, real expectations and aspirations for their futures, and pro-social behaviors in society at large.

The theoretical framework of reproduction theory in education is as valid today as it was in the past (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Ferguson, 2000, Kupchik and Ward, 2011; MacLeod, 2009; Morris, 2007; Noguera, 2008; Nolan, 2009; Saltman, 2014, 2015; Wacquant, 2001). Bowles and Gintis, following Marx provided us, as critical scholars in education, with a powerful tool for unearthing the dominant ideology of class and social inequality in our society. The

reason why it is important is that it centers the political economy in the logic of reproduction. In this chapter, I argued that schools are still important as sites for the reproduction of social inequality. Although the class structure is not as clearly defined as it was in the past and students employment possibilities are not necessarily aligned to linking to one's class position, the reproduction of the middle and upper-classes still rings true. What do we do with one of the most used theories to explain social inequality in education and within our society at large? We must critically analyze large urban public schools and the forms their behaviors, and actions at the micro-level to get at the logic of their operations. Bowles and Gintis (2011) wrote that for the blacks and other minorities, their schooling conditions them for their possibility of occupying a permanent position in the underclass in our economic structure. But blacks did work in factories as was argued earlier and they suffered the most, as most of these jobs were located in the center urban core where de/post-industrialization had the most severe impacts for inner-city life, thus creating large pockets of concentrated poverty and a black underclass (Wilson, 1987, 1996).

Moreover, theories about reproduction centered the experiences of white working-class youth (Bowles and Gintis, 2011; Willis, 1981). I spent substantial time arguing for the de-centering of white males from the universal “working-class” subject. Moreover, I argued that their move to the margins should be replaced with a group of people who are the least likely to reinforce the exclusion of different voices. The white working-class youth are not walking into factories as they did in the past. For the future of reproduction theory in education, the incorporation of the prison techniques can be used as a way to illustrate how low-income schools perform poverty control in a neoliberal economy. With much nuance, not every student who does encounter the law or the police in their youth will end up behind bars. What we should be most concerned about is the types of subjectivities that are now being shaped in our nation's public

schools. For it to fail, we will have to produce a new society where wealth is equally distributed among all races and classes, and where one's background paid very little in terms of what occupation you will perform in the future. We must take theory to inform our actions and inform our actions with good theory. Social reproduction theory is a key first step for it tells us what we need to know now. What we need next is what we need to know in the future. In sum, hopefully this future is not too utopian and far removed from our present, as our very own existence depends on it.

### **Chapter 3: A Racial Realist Perspective: Resistance for Youth as a Practice**

*Neoliberalism seems to be everywhere...One of the most striking features of the recent history of neoliberalism is its quite remarkable transformative capacity...[The] political durability of neoliberalism been repeatedly underestimated, and reports of its death correspondingly exaggerated...For some sections of the neoliberal elite, the underlying power structures of neoliberalism remain substantially intact. - Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, *Neoliberalizing Space**

*The choice for Blacks is either socialism or some selective form of genocide. - Manning Marable, *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America**

*This article offers no solutions to the crisis; in fact, our fundamental premise is that there is no crisis because each institution—the educational system and the criminal justice system—is functioning per their design and the demands of the society. Racial and ethnic disparities, therefore, can best be understood not as dysfunctions of these important and foundational social institutions but rather as expected outcomes. -Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner, Roland W. Mitchell, Lori L. Martin and Karen P. Bennett-Haron, *Beyond School-to-Prison Pipeline and Toward an Educational and Penal Realism**

#### *A. Introduction*

I am writing this chapter from a Racial Realist Framework, under the belief that racism in America is permanent, “‘integral’, and an indestructible component of this society” (Bell, 2005, p. 74). Prominent legal scholar Derrick Bell who coined the term “Racial Realism” is its most fierce advocate. The central argument to his thesis is that as oppressed people, we as blacks should fight for our humanity while simultaneously acknowledging the permanence of our subordinate status as blacks under an anti-black racist and economic exploitative system in America. (Bell, 2005). I will adapt this framework of racial realism for the sole reason that a realist perspective is supported with 500 years of concrete evidence of white actions, attitudes, and behaviors towards populations of color. The readers should not expect a utopic or optimistic outlook in this chapter. To justify this I will quote Derrick Bell at length:

Black People will never gain full equality in this country. Even those herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary ‘peaks of progress,’ short lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must



acknowledge it and move on to adopt policies on what I call: 'Racial Realism.' This mind-set or philosophy requires us to acknowledge the permanence of our subordinate status... The subordination of blacks seems to reassure whites of an unspoken but no less certain property right in their 'whiteness'...We need to recognize that a yearning for racial equality is a fantasy (Bell, 2005, pp. 74-76).

At first, this chapter was titled "*A Brave New World: Resistance as Outcomes for Black and Brown Youth*," and I kept this as a placeholder for almost a month. Something inside of me could not press the letter on the keyboard to begin finishing this final section of my paper. Initially I thought I would end on an optimistic tone, on the premise that the research I have gathered will lead me to offer a platform to start or continue previous discussions of ending, fighting, or resisting global-white supremacy, anti-black racism, capitalism, Empire, deathscapes, and necropolitics. A split has occurred in my thinking as of late, on one hand a *utopic radicalism*, meaning we can fight and radically change the status quo for a liberation politics and *realism* meaning the attitude or practice of accepting our anti-black, white-supremacist, capitalist, patriarchal universe as a permanent fact of existence and being prepared to deal with it accordingly is the best strategy for blacks in this nation (Bell, 2005; Curry, 2008).

Most critical theorist, radicals, and others on the left will accuse me of fatalism, despair, and nihilism. Today it is a crime as a black radical intellectual to both engage in the critique and accept the status quo. I am committing both errors in this chapter. The reality of most blacks in the world does not grant us the privilege afforded to both black and white bourgeoisie, where Europeans come to a realization that they need to save themselves and not black people (Bell, 2005, 2005a; Marable, 2000). No sane rational person foresees this occurring in our lifetimes or the far future. Racial realism addresses this fatal flaw in radical thinking by freeing us to imagine

and implement racial strategies that can bring fulfillment and even triumph (Bell, 2005). Agreeing with Derrick Bell that racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of this society, we should start seeing race in America not as a black but white problem (2005a). A new narrative on race needs to develop in which whites need their own leader to deliver a message about race that meets their concerns and interest (Bell, 2005a). A Neo like figure whom like in the Matrix fought on behalf of the citizens of Zion with the ability to end the war between humans and the machines, this White leader can potentially liberate the precariat and sub-proletariat white populations from their capitalist political ruling class masters. This dialogue must focus on the cost, which that burden of race exacts from whites (Bell, 2005a). Racism burdens whites too as they have suffered “economic harms, social disadvantages, and lost opportunities that white people have suffered,” (Bell, 2005a, p.329) as a result of the “pervasive and corrosive effects of social neglect which are linked directly to institutionalized racial inequality” (p.329).

Black should not be solely burden with the task to dismantle every form of oppression that was erected and sustained by whites. This liberation from civil right’s discourses of equality, desegregation, progress, and overcoming only offered by racial realism, transforms the hyper-surreal-reality Matrix <sup>17</sup>to the dystopian Zion<sup>18 19</sup> thus allowing our fight for freedom and

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<sup>17</sup> The world in which we are told is free of prejudice racism, classism, exploitation, colonialism, just as the humans in the Matrix were told they are actually living when in reality they were in a life pod in a post human universe living in a dream-like state of existence. Poor, working and Middle class Whites are in a deeper dream-like state in the Matrix when they believe that their capitalist and political class overlords will share enough of their resources gained from their labor with them. Non-elite and political ruling whites keeping winning negligible , token , consolation prizes for their participation in a white racial capitalist system but never the key prize of a equally shared political, and economic system among all those who identify as white. For more on this concept of whiteness as proipoerty and a prize read Harris, C. (1995). Whiteness as Property. In K. Crenshaw, N. Gotanda, G. Peller, & K. Thomas (Eds.), *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement* (pp. 276-291). New York: New Press :

<sup>18</sup> The real, in which humans are free the machines control of the Matrix. These free people live fighting day to day against knowing the struggle is a perpetual one and this way of being is the chosen alternative to living in a life pod used as a energy by the machines in a video-game like dream like state. This is not giving up in despair but craving out s slice of humanity in order to defy the murder of black selfhood. In

emancipation to continue in the realist world. Whites as a group not only believe in these systems unconsciously, subconsciously or consciously but they directly participate in its maintenance by not rejecting the system outright, accepting the status quo or consenting to its ideologies (Bell, 2005; Marable, 2000). The non-racist in my view is no better than the racist as both ideological positions support global white supremacy and anti-black racism. Whites as a group are both spectators and leading actors in the exploitation and oppression of the world's black people, and their leaving this gladiator game in the Roman Coliseum where blacks are shot, beaten, tortured, and slaughtered does nothing to stop the games from continuing. It will only stop when whites storm the center of spectacle and engage in an active struggle against those who are operating the game, which will most likely be those who belong to their own racial group. Whites should risk their own lives knowing that after blacks are eliminated they too can become subjects to the ultimate fetishistic form of brutality – commodification in the grander conquest of capital accumulation. Only then, can whites be free from the reincarnation<sup>20</sup> of sins brought forth by their forefathers: global white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. Then as whites destroy their damaged, fragile, unstable and violent white identities will they be able to call themselves human, and wake up from their own exploitation.

This is a prerequisite that people of color should establish before whites begun building a sustainable reality free of exploitation and asymmetrical relationships (Marable, 2000). I think this should happen, while simultaneously thinking it will never occur. One should recognize that

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Zion those who are ready to be freed from the Matrix are liberated, and those who are not will continue be used as energy by the machines, This is a perfect analogy in how we as blacks can decided to live our lives. Moreover, this is also true of whites, if they are not ready to be freed then we or one should not waste energy and resources attempting to save someone who is not ready, and whose rescue will only put the greater community in jeopardy.

<sup>19</sup> *The Matrix Trilogy*. 1999-2003. Directed, Written and Produced by Andy and Lana Wachowski.

<sup>20</sup> I use this term “reincarnation” expect to describe the reconfiguration and morphing of racism, capital and sexism throughout the ages in various historical, cultural, social and economic epochs, to operate differently than the stage previous but performing the same functions of domination, isolation, capital extraction, social stigmatization, dis-honorment, and object creation.

its not a matter of choosing between the persistence of racism or achieving a society free of racism but the fact that both of these race perspectives have utility in the lives of black people (Bell, 1995, 2005, 2005a). Only leaving us with the status quo, but a different one if we have not choose to fight and carve out a slice of humanity to fully exist. If this is true, then new questions should be asked: “If there are not opportunities for black and brown youth, and resistance is not an outcome, what should we do? ” and does the answer mean we should not fight for better schooling conditions because both school failure and prisons provide “remarkably stable and predictable market opportunities” (Fasching-Varner, et al., 2014, p. 214) that in turn furthers “the economic imperatives of the free market” (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014, p. 214).

For me, part of the answer to these questions is embedded in ideological war zones that have engulfed in the field in education as whites as a group have had the need to “reconcile the contradiction between their material and historical existence...and the millions of people defined by racial exclusion,” (Curry, 2008, p. 36) thereby strangling our ability to imagine something outside of the white imagination. For centuries as argued by Curry (2008) European thinkers, and their contemporary white followers have run rampant “in the halls of academia prematurely championing the success of liberalism,” (p. 36) all without asking those who are suffering, are their material and existential experiences better under this new “progress”. Every time I have questioned the goals, agenda, and practice of this “success” as it remains a strategy for black and brown communities to gain access to an America it causes others to get uncomfortable. Granted this is a very complicated debate and has many sides, but the fact that it is not a national debate speaks volumes to how those in power deploy their influences to silence other possibilities. The irony is chilling as whites, when polled, voice support for integrated residential arrangements and equal access to public schools, but if voting with your feet and pocketbook is still a useful

analogy then they have done that quite well by doing the opposite of what they “believe in”. Whites as a group have zero desire to live among blacks, moreover, they isolate themselves in exclusive neighborhoods and create zoning laws to exclude working and poor people from moving into their communities (Dinzev-Flores, 2006; Morgan, 2013; Wacquant, 2001), thereby redefining education and whiteness to as something to be only possessed by those with both racial and economic privilege (Vaught, 2011).

### B. *Still We Are Not Saved: The Ever Elusive Quest for Racial Equality*

Derrick Bell and other critical race scholars argue, and rightfully so, that black civil right lawyers and the larger white public denied real change for blacks by fighting for piecemeal reforms under anti-black racist laws and a oppressive capitalist economic system (Bell, 2005; Curry, 2008). African-descended people have therefore been collapsed into a single ideological goal, namely how to mold blacks into “more functional and productive members of American society under the idea of equality establish by *Brown v. Board of Education*” (Curry, 2008, pp. 36-37). Under this new normality, schools that serve poor students of color operate with the normative endeavor to base their identity formation around how they sound act and ought to be as Americans, with the end goal of creating *good Negro citizens* (Curry, 2008). This stance is problematic as equality means achieving likeness; those for whom the system is working in the first place- meaning whites (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014). This stance is even more troubling as it bolsters the relative position of those in power and puts the onus for change on those already oppressed “suggesting to them that the goal is to be like your oppressor” as the only avenue of social mobility (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014, p. 424). Equality is insulting as a strategy for blacks to fight for as it works<sup>2</sup> to create winners of those most willing to sell out their race and for the boys to model white lower-middle-class beliefs (Fordham, 1996, 1998; Fordham and

Ogbu, 1986; Young, 2007, 2010 as cited in Fasching-Varner et al, 2014). This goal is bankrupt unless the purpose is to have those from dominant groups receive the same and equal access that those of color currently receive not only is this solution not likely, as “it works against the free-market, which, as we have already articulated, will always win...schools and prisons do not seek equality; they seek equal replication of the society” (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014, p. 424).

The reality of racism demands that the education of blacks be tailored to our particular racial status in America- regardless of how educators feel about the saliency of racism in American society (Curry, 2008). Blacks cannot afford to educate ourselves and live life’s on the delusion of an integrated and non-racist white America, when we know that our reality is fundamentally determined by white racism. In America, white and black relations are systemic and reproduced culturally, institutionally, and socially from generation to generation (Curry, 2008). If victories occur and the students who attend the schools described in this paper reach success in their goals, then it will produce no more than temporary peaks of progress, which will only be short lived irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance (Bell, 1992 as cited in Curry, 2008). Resistance for students is therefore grounded in practices of struggle for existence. Wherever there is youth there is the possibility for resistance. We should utilize this framework for resistance as a practice, a way of life and not a scientific predetermined outcome articulated and planned by ivory tower intellectuals. One lives, breathes, walks, and practices resistance, as the alternative is to die. One does this, knowing the outcome cannot be predicted nor planned.

Support for resistance as a human practice for freedom and sovereignty for youth and not as a method to end all oppression is grounded in two facts: on the micro level: the well-intendant, middle-class, white females who make up the bulk of the U.S. teaching force enter prepared to

teach their subject matter but are clueless about how to work in communities of color, and they lack a measured purpose “for entering the profession and more importantly meaningful understanding/critical consciousness about their positionalities” (Fasching-Varner, 2012 as cited in Fasching-Varner et al, 2014, p. 423). When most of these teachers in their pre-service program cite their explanation for wanting to become a teacher their response lacking any depth, critical thought, grounding, and sophistication voice, “I love kids” (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014). As such, these well-intended teachers become co-opted into being cogs in a system that produces/supports the type of race and class based stratification in society we have discussed throughout this paper. On a macro level: as a consequence of the former and all that we have discussed in this paper, for many urban students, the training they receive in schools involves preparing them to be either prisoners, low-wage labors, or conditions them to get accustomed to such a fate as this training is as important to the “welfare” of the free market as is training the future presidents, scientist and businesspeople (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014). The separation and sorting of classes and peoples is refined in the 21st century through schools and recycled through prisons. Moreover, this new economy is the driving force behind the maintenance of oppression. Although, there is billions to be made through educational reform and penal institutions, schools and prisons allow the society to select who will have access to the economy and at what levels (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014) while race is used to scare white people that their material interest is fundamentally different and at odds with black people (Bell, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown and De Lissovoy, 2011; Marable, 2002; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1994; Winant, 2000). For blacks, this has always been the case as our integration into American Capitalism secured the financial wealth of whites (Marable, 2000). Our exploitation is directly tied to our status at the bottom of America’s racial and economic caste system (Marable, 2000), while white advantage

is tied to black disadvantage and will continue to do so as long as capitalism remain the method of how America redistributes its wealth and resources.

## **Chapter 4: The End**

### *A. Weaknesses, Limitations, and Potential Areas for Exploration*

One of the most obvious disadvantages of doing a conceptual paper is the lack of empirical data in the practice of fieldwork to back up the arguments that were explored in this paper. I could not examine personally and on a ground level the culture, and experiences of those who are subjected to the brute structural, symbolic and epistemic violence of white supremacist capitalist hegemony. I witnessed so many events working in the schools that I am describing in this paper that would have been purposeful. As an advantage, I was able to focus on gathering more ideas and digging deeper in the literature providing a robust, comprehensive understanding of often contradictory and dynamic historical, social, political, and cultural practices that seem to have accumulated an advantage for whites with economic privilege dis-accumulation and dispossession of resources and opportunities for blacks.

Secondly, I did not address the fact that black youth in the suburbs are subjected to the same penal and social discipline measures in their schools. Zero-tolerance laws and anti-crime legislation impacts all schooling opportunities for youth in every K-12 academic institution in this country. This is a post Columbine school shooting and 9/11 reality we live in. Although, I did not discuss prisonfare, workfare and resistance opportunities for black and brown youth in the suburbs, I do recognize the objective reality that the suburbs are becoming more diverse, and as cities become more expensive to live in and as affordable housing becomes less available suburban school districts are now dealing with populations they have little experience with. The main reason I centered the urban space is that I believe that larger metropolitan areas are ground



zero for neoliberal. In reality, the majority of poor black students are not only trapped in large urban cities but attend school there also. Cities like Chicago are a laboratory for neoliberal education restructuring and resistance to it, so that is why it was my focus, as a case study for the political economy of urban education today.

Finally, I focused exclusively on black youth. However I understand that Latinos and our brothers and sisters from the Caribbean who are more phenotypically, and culturally similar to African Americans than to Europeans are treated by the authoritarian state in ways that blacks have too (Massey and Denton, 1993). Because of this common heritage, Giroux argues that the crude war on youth is collapsing racial and ethnic boundaries (2006, 2008, 2013) as this, and the education of both black and Latinos are ever more similar (Noguera, 2008). My justification for the exclusion rest upon multiple realities, first my use of Sithole and Mbembe as African philosophers situate their ideas in the lived experiences as African and therefore black subjects. It would have been haphazard of me to just apply this to Latinos and add in, stir or a mention a token of oppression when in reality it is not applicable. This means, how poor whites and Latinos are oppressed is different than how blacks are oppressed by the same system. Next, Wacquant, who frames the key ideas in this paper, writes and studies the black experience in this country and their relationship to America's sociology of the state. He argues, along with others I used in this paper that the black experience is exceptional in their treatment by whites and the state. Lastly, it will be interesting to see as Anglo-American capitalism become standard therefore hegemonic and homogeneous, how whites react to this oppression, which was directed solely at the global south and the orient. Will they see their plights similarly leading to a critical awareness of capital exploitation or will they redirect their outrage created by their insecurity to populations of color. This is worth studying at length as poor whites are increasing their prison

numbers too while their schools increasingly prepare their children for criminal and redundant realities.

### B. *Summary*

In this paper, I attempted to reconfigure academic scholarship in an attempt to place macro government policies central to the reconfiguration of urban schools behavior and their practices under the theatrical frameworks of neoliberal-paternalism, and racial structural formation. I argued that the creation and maintenance of life eradication on black subjects occurs to manufacture criminal and therefore disposable populations, as a result these, students are hailed by the state to participate in the low-wage labor market or the prison to reproduce existing social relationships among humans. Moreover, I grappled with the concept that social policies under neoliberalism are disciplining unstable fractions of the black working class exposed to all manners of insecurity, aggravated by the state. The punitive neoliberal state directed exclusively towards the precariat and sub- proletariat populations (in particular black people) in our society played a pivotal role in the retrenchment of social protection but to the spatial production and the distribution of urban precariat as well (Wacquant, 2014). In the daily interactions with the state, education for poor and precarious black youth serves the function of poverty control in the neoliberal city defined exclusively not only as market conditioning practice but racial stigmatization and containment as well (Wacquant, 2014). Next, one should see in depth the permutation of social policy and penal policy that as a custom were kept separate, now these two coupled, aimed at the same populations (destabilized black, white and Latino wage laborer created by government retrenchment, market de-regulation, liberalization, privatization and a shift in the production process) deploy the same techniques (surveillance, panoptic disciplinary objectives) (Wacquant, 2014). The schooling process of black youth *par excellence* illustrates the

meshing of the social and penal policy in the United States as the resurgence of the prison and the protective disciplining practices of the welfare and education (workfare and edufare respectfully) is not a response to criminal insecurity as argued by Simon (2007) but to the social insecurity created by unstable, unpredictable loose wage labor and racial anxiety generated by the destabilization and crumbling of previous institutions that formed capital and ethnic formation domination (Wacquant, , 2009, 2009a, 2010, 2010a, 2012, 2013a). This is a corrective of the collapse of the black ghetto in the United States (see Wacquant, 2001, 2001a, 2002, 2002a). Fourth, these macro reconfigurations in state policy influence schools that serve black youth by enacting penal security applications to function as poverty management (education is a form of welfare and social policy), as the factory is no longer needed to produce more laborers. Like Wacquant's structural analysis of the hyperghetto and the prison, schools perform the same responsibility as both an institution that is created by race and that creates race.<sup>21</sup>

There were plenty of analytical tools deployed in this paper to analyze, diagnose, and conceptualize social phenomena. As such, I defined and unpacked Wacquant's concepts of *workfare* and *prisonfare*, this was juxtaposed with Sithole's (2014) concept of *deathscapes* and his appropriation of Mbembe (2003) necropolitics, and Agamben (2005) state of exception coupled with a discussion of the ontological, epistemic and existential consequences of structural racial violence, as it relates to neoliberalism and outcomes for poor youth of color in a post welfare society. The consequence of the change in economics and market ideologies was argued as a stable system of governance that functions with the morphing reality of race and is fused with decade old state policies that control, constraint and repress black populations (Wacquant, 2002, 2009; Winant and Omi, 1994).

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<sup>21</sup>The rise of the penal state molds race as a system of classification and stratification by associating blackness with being devious and dangerousness, while manufacturing the symbolic notion of deserving and underserving black populations. See chapter 1.

In the second chapter, I argued that reproduction theory in education in regards to class is an outdated model, that rests on the assumption of a low-skill labor market that poor white students are being prepared for working class blue collar jobs. Previous reproduction in education theories are insufficient to explain how the schooling experiences of youth of color in a punitive neoliberal post/de-industrialize world relate to the production of social, political and economic inequality. I examined how the educational environment for low-income youth of color resembles a prison in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is similar to the factory under Keynesian's-welfare-Fordism. Instead of producing working subjectivities that identify with industrial capitalism, these students are being produced as criminals in both a material Marxist and the French sociological view of the *symbolic* production of particular populations. These students now identify with the repressive state apparatus in its manifestation in their lives in the form of prisons, police, and the criminal justice system. My analysis is that the production of the symbolic is equally or more important in the 21st century than the material and objective since a strong symbol can force others to consent, or comply to assumptions, ideologies and worldviews that goes against their actual objective interest. The criminal scary black person or juvenile delinquent threatens our very way of life. This as a rhetorical tool forces whites as a group to support a racial and capitalist order that only serves those in the capitalist class. The number of black men in jail is of less importance than the actual number of images portraying black criminal or underclass members violating social rules of conduct. Their appearances on our television screens create rules and regulations that ensure white people feel secure in an age of massive social and economic insecurity. Here we see the relationship between the discursive, symbolic and the material constructions of bodies and how each of these support a reinforce each

other to maintain oppressive and asymmetrical society. This is a new precondition for citizenship under neoliberal governance.

Lastly, this paper concluded that one should embrace a realist perspective in thinking about the future and the possibilities for resistance. I attempted to wrestle with key issues throughout this paper and in this section about conditions for about and black humanity. Just as actual change and a radical transformation of society is not currently possible and will never happen in our lifetime that does not mean one should wait for death waiting for death. Youth work tirelessly to fight for their and our right to live and be human. In all, I hope the reader of this paper is compelled to begin the laborious, but still critical, work of “simultaneously disjoining and reconfiguring the political economy of schooling, incarceration and the free market system in the United States” (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014, p. 425). There is no happy ending to the work of racial, penal and educational realism (Bell, 1995, Fasching-Varner et al, 2014), but seeing the world this way frees us from the constraints of illusion that has blunted our progress for real change. As we lose hope that whites will engage in anti-racist strategies of resistance and disinvest in both from supremacy and capitalism we awake from the Matrix therefore gaining more agency.

Imagining [a new society] it does little good, but confronting oppression day by day and step by step in an unapologetic way may help us towards a more equitable end, and in the short term at least annoy the hell out of those with power and the threat of this solution. Bell (1992) reminded us that confrontation with our oppressor... can bring about unexpected benefits and gains that in themselves justify continued behavior...this in itself should give us hope for the future (p. 378) (Fasching-Varner et al, 2014, p. 425).

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