Productive Resistance: Lessons from After School about Engaged Noncompliance

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After-school education programs, owing to their informal nature and limited scope, offer opportunities for targeted instruction of specialized skills and content. One effective design element in after-school programming is an open and responsive structure that allows for ongoing evaluation, evolutionary design, and participant voice. This structure uses participants' resistance and critique in a process of ongoing refinement of the programs. Data are presented to illustrate how education programs using this design channel resistance in productive ways that have social and academic relevance for the child and adult participants.

Background

In 1999, a Southern California school implemented a basic skills computer program in conjunction with legislation ending social promotion (California State Assembly 1998). The legislation required all public schools in California to adopt minimum levels of pupil performance for grade level promotion based on universal use of standardized tests in reading, mathematics, and English language arts. In 1999, the California Senate passed the Public Schools Accountability Act, which provided for ranking California's public schools according to pupils' performance on the standardized tests (Stanford Achievement Test, 9th ed., or SAT 9) as well as other measures included in an Academic Performance Index. In conjunction with these new requirements, schools were both enjoined and funded to provide special interventions, including after-school interventions, for students whose academic performance ranked them in the lowest quarter of their class. The new basic skills computer program was one such intervention.

The new program used powerful and expensive educational software that engaged the children in practice with language and math skills and also provided assessments that informed both the children and their teachers of the children's progress. The children shared their scores verbally and looked at

one another's screens to see and compare the results. Most of the children were interested in making their scores higher. Some children, in particular children whose first language was Spanish, developed an alternate competition. Having little success in the competition for high scores, they competed to see who could take the quizzes and get the lowest scores.

The latter competition, not readily visible to computer lab monitors or to those reading the recorded results from the intervention program, represents a form of resistance that can be described as compliant nonengagement. The children were compliant with the behavioral norms of the basic skills intervention program, but they resisted the program's (and the school's) methods and goals by actively withholding assent to learn (Erickson 1987, 1996). They were compliant but not engaged.

Erickson would describe this act of resistance as both rational and political. On the one hand, the software included questions in clear and simple English. On the other hand, instructions for completing tasks and answering questions were in far more complex language that was beyond the resistant children's English-language level. Whatever else the "low-ballers" learned in the summer basic skills program, they learned that they were doomed to perform poorly on the software's assessments. Unfortunately, while the low-ballers' resistance may have been productive of an identity in resistance to an impossible, or at least unfair, task, their rational and political resistance was not productive in terms of affiliation with school culture, which they must actively engage in order to access resources and educational and employment options (Erickson 1996).

Drawing on qualitative and quantified ethnographic data, this article illustrates cases of resistance being channeled in educationally productive ways that do not require that children take on identities of failure or emotional, cognitive, or cultural deficiency. Maag (2000) argues that noncompliance, defined as active or passive refusal to engage in requested or proscribed behaviors, locates problem behavior solely within the child. He suggests that "*Resistance* is a more inclusive term because it focuses on the interaction of the children's and adults' behaviors" (Maag 2000, 132). He argues that attention and modification of the context of behaviors can reduce or redirect resistance.

Olafson and Field (2003, 141) concur that context, along with event, intention, temporality, and power relations, work together to construct resistance as a struggle for identity or "identity politics." If we take resistant behavior

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as aggression (active resistance) or apathy (passive resistance), Olafson's and Field's Foucaultian analysis of ever-present power and resistance in interaction is reminiscent of Lewin et al.'s (1939) seminal study on the role of social climates in provoking resistant behavior. Lewin et al. found that aggression and apathy occurred 30 times more frequently in autocratic social climates than in democratic social climates. Laissez-faire social climates, while apparently not provocative of resistant behaviors, were less productive than both autocratic and democratic social climates. Democratic social climates produced less work, but higher quality work, than autocratic contexts.

If we take resistance as the struggle for identity, autonomy, and voice, resistance is a natural part of developing the "capacity to frame and effectively act towards one's goals" (Schutz 2004, 22n). The challenge implied in this definition is how to guide development of resistance that is productive, rather than destructive, as in the case of the "low-ballers" who resisted learning the required content but also resisted developing identities as capable learners who had voice and were able to engage their learning context critically, but productively.

Kindred (1999, 218) describes resistance as productive when it produces both cognitive and cultural change. Erickson implies that academically productive resistance produces both cognitive change and identity as a capable, though noncompliant, learner. Both of these conceptualizations inform "productive resistance" as it is used in this study. The concept of productive resistance is based on the assumption that resistance is a natural and desirable reaction to coercion and/or oppression. The negative or positive perception of resistance is dependent on the contexts of resistant behavior and the perspectives of those who experience the behavior, as agents, observers, or participants in social interaction.

Critical theorists view resistance as positive when it confronts inequities in power (Gutiérrez et al. 1995; Schutz 2004). In this paradigm, an identity formed in resistance is positive, though it may constrain the resistant individual or group in terms of access to institutions and institutional benefits. The low-ballers, who complied but did not engage in the goals of the school's intervention program, fit within this framework, and therefore, as Erickson would suggest, their resistance was both rational and political.

On the other hand, the same resistant behavior can be perceived as negative and unproductive in terms of affording opportunities and identity as capable and critical participants in the learning environment. In the case of the low-ballers, there was no cultural change in the context and what cognitive change occurred appeared to be related to devising ways of being both compliant and unengaged. As Schutz (2004) suggests, their resistance allowed the oppressive system of intervention to operate smoothly while denying these learners democratic engagement.

Following Erickson, productive resistance produces cognitive change as well as identity as a capable and engaged, though not compliant, learner. Following Kindred, productively resistant individuals are engaged in changing the context or culture of their learning environment. Both Kindred and Erickson, similar to Maag and Olafson and Field, suggest that productive resistance requires contexts or environments that are both open and characterized by collective willingness to change. Similarly, while neither Butin (2001) nor Fey and Sinith (1999) address Lewin et al.'s work, their Foucaultian analyses of the productive potential of resistance to both domination and uncertainty also support the findings of Lewin et al. and Olafson and Field. In addition to a learning context open to change, productive channeling of resistance requires change in the adults or authority figures who interact with learners, not just efforts or punishments directed solely at learners. This openness and will to change are incorporated in the design of two after-school programs that provided the contexts for this study, the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension.

After-School Programs

Schools and teachers are challenged to provide ever more standardized instruction to large numbers of children in time-sensitive curricular treatments. Even when children are not grouped according to ability and or/experience, there is still a necessary process of homogenization, or official blending of heterogeneous learners into treatment groups, for what Erickson (1996, 100) describes as "batch processing." Some after-school programs, for example, scout troops, have a more individualized, self-paced approach and a higher ratio of adults to children than one finds in other after-school programs, such as football teams and choirs, or in classrooms. This is the case with the two programs described here, the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension, both of which are informal, after-school education programs linking university and community agencies, including schools, as well as learning and play.

The Fifth Dimension

The Fifth Dimension model is a design for the development of after-school programs aimed at improving the academic performance of children who are for reasons of language, culture, socioeconomic status, or labeling as learning disabled not as likely to be as successful in school as those from more mainstream or privileged backgrounds. The model is used to create mixed activity systems: children come to play (and learn), adult students come to learn (and

play), and researchers and community members come to work (and play and learn). There are currently more than 40 applications of the Fifth Dimension model associated with 25 universities in the United Sates, the Americas, and Europe.[1]

Developed by Cole and other researchers at the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition, LCHC, the Fifth Dimension model was originally designed to serve children ages 6–12 as an auxiliary to school or an enrichment learning environment (Cole 1996). Cole describes the Fifth Dimension as a form of design experiment after Brown's (1992) method of designing complex interventions that are placed in classroom settings. Unlike Brown's design experiments, however, the earliest Fifth Dimensions were strategically placed in nonschool settings. This choice was directly related to earlier work of Cole and colleagues that supported the hypothesis that the lack of success in school, in the case of children with no physical barriers, was at least in part due to their construction by the culture of schooling (Cole 1996; Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition 1982).

After refinement of the experimental design, three programs based on the Fifth Dimension model opened in Southern California in 1987, one in a Kids Club. As with most of the later adaptations of the model, this 15-year-old program is a collaboration between a university and a community partner, both of which benefit reciprocally from the joint activity. Computers and telecommunication are the primary instructional tools and are used to provide access to a wide assortment of academic content.

Attendance by children at the Fifth Dimension is completely voluntary. Average daily attendance is approximately 15 children, ages 6–14. Children self-select from the 30–40 children who are at the Kids Club each day. Children come to the Fifth Dimension from one to four days per week, at their discretion. The program serves approximately 100 different Kids Club children each year, 35 percent of whom are from Spanish-speaking homes. While the pattern changes, traditionally the ratio of males to females is approximately two to one.

A key element of the Fifth Dimension is the active participation of college students. While most Fifth Dimension programs are associated with schools of education, this program is associated with a Human Development program and a Communication department. (Another course and in-school Fifth Dimension are associated with this university's teacher education program.) Between 15 and 20 upper-division students in Human Development and Communication are enrolled in a six-unit course called Media and the Design of Social Learning Contexts. They spend three hours per week in a lecture class reading sociocultural theories of development and case studies on the role of diversity in development. In addition, they spend three hours per week at the

Fifth Dimension (which runs for 1.5 hours, four days per week). The students are closely guided in their interactions with the children.

The design of the Fifth Dimension links learning and play but emphasizes the play elements by creating a "playworld" in which academic content, for example, literacy, math, problem solving, and reflection, are embedded in a gamelike structure (Nicolopoulou and Cole 1993). While learning is one of the key goals of the Fifth Dimension, the shared rhetoric of the adults who run and work at the site is one of play and participation in activities. The adults focus on the diverse children's potentials. Power is consciously distributed with the children. Researchers and college students are encouraged to assume near-peer or older sibling roles and to help children "just enough." Children are encouraged to make changes to paper materials, to argue verbally and in writing for changes they believe will enhance the program, and through both interviews and reports in the field notes of the adults, their voices inform ongoing refinements of the program's design.

The Explorer's Dimension

Like the Fifth Dimension, the Explorer's Dimension was a collaboratively run program linking university and community agencies. The Explorer's Dimension was designed and implemented in 2000 by the Action Research Collaborative and funded by the university system's Office of the President. The collaborative consisted of representatives from LCHC, the Kids Club, the housing commission, and two elementary schools. The program, which served children from a public housing complex located in an affluent community, ran one day per week in each of the participating schools and two days per week in a Learning Center operated by the Kids Club at the housing complex. During the 18-month period on which this study is based, 66 children between the ages of 5 and 18 actively used the Learning Center. Their families were diverse in language, culture, and ethnicity and had met federal poverty guidelines in order to qualify to live in the housing complex.

Unlike the Fifth Dimension, the Explorer's Dimension made only incidental use of computers as instructional tools (although a computer component was under development). Rather, the activities at each of the Explorer's Dimension's three program sites consisted of assisted homework time, snack time, and then play with games like Boggle, 24, math bingo, antonym/synonym bingo, Life, and Mad Libs, or organized art or cooking activities. Average attendance was 10 children per session at each of the two schools and 20 at the Learning Center. There was some overlap of children attending both a school site and the Learning Center. Participation in the Explorer's Dimension, like the Fifth Dimension, was completely voluntary. Two-thirds of the 66

children who were members of the Learning Center were regular attendees. They ranged in age from six to 14. The ratio of males to females was approximately three to one.

As in the case of the Fifth Dimension, the participation of college students was a key part of the Explorer's Dimension. Approximately 10 upper-division students per quarter from a Human Development field methods internship course worked with the Explorer's Dimension as junior members of an LCHC research, teaching, and outreach project.

Shared Elements

While the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension are very different programs, they do share certain elements. Both programs are community based and link a university and community agencies. Both serve children of diverse genders, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, languages and cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and learning styles. Both rely heavily on the regular and engaged participation of researchers as well as college students who are learning about children and development. The presence of these college students and other researchers at both programs allows for high ratios of adults to children.

Another element shared by both programs is an open design informed by the university-community collaborations and an ethos of reciprocity that requires that the projects change in response to the changing needs of the collaborating partners. Two examples are the frequent need to adjust program schedules to the schedules of the schools and Kids Club and the ongoing need to train new staff due to frequent staff turnover, not only in the host institutions but in the university classes as well.

This ethos of reciprocity, consistent with Brown's (1992) and Rogoff's (1994) concept of teaching/learning in a community of learners model, also extends to the college students and children. The college students are encouraged to engage critically with the design structures of both the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension. Their critiques and suggestions inform the ongoing refinement, or evolution, of program design. Similarly, the children's reflective comments and suggestions, as well as their complaints, inform program design.

Method and Data

The present study used three sets of data from the two projects: student field notes and a web-based threaded discussion from the Fifth Dimension associated class and student and researcher field notes from the Explorer's Dimension. These data were archived by LCHC in project databases and are

TABLE 1

Fifth Dimension Field Note Analysis

Program Design Element Negotiation	Resistance	Negotiation
Structure: use of design elements	24	11
Tasks: completing nonwriting program tasks	15	14
Writing: writing indicated on task cards or in games	35	28
Total	74	53

NOTE.—These findings were drawn from a keyword search of 366 college student field notes gathered over two academic quarters. Keywords used were "maze," "write," "hint(s)," "task card" (program design elements). "Resistance" refers to challenges to using the design elements. "Negotiation" refers to those cases in which the resistant behavior was engaged and discussed and in which the actors continued to interact.

used with the informed consent of the students and project participants. The field notes were written to conform to templates that include fields for general observations on the sites, focused observations on interactions, and reflections on the behaviors described in the observation sections. While any single field note is necessarily subjective, it represents a firsthand account of interactions. The corpus of field notes, with multiple lenses on child and project development over time, provides multivoiced documentation of events and exchanges in the projects, from which emerge patterns and trends.

In addition to these sources of data, I drew upon personal ethnographic field notes gathered as a weekly participant observer at the Fifth Dimension over a three-year period and at the three Explorer's Dimension sites over an 18-month period. Other qualitative data in addition to these notes, and those of the students and researchers described above, included interviews with adult and child participants as well as videotapes, still photos, and documents from all four sites.

Fifth Dimension Field Note Analysis

The first analysis was conducted on a set of 366 field notes produced by 30 students in the Fifth Dimension related course between September 24, 2001, and March 11, 2002. After several preliminary keyword searches of the database, searches were conducted on the keywords "maze," "write," "hint(s)," "cheat," and "task card." These keywords were suggested by their frequent emergence in student field notes, class discussions, and student research papers. Results of the keyword searches are listed in table 1.

Keyword searches and analysis of the 366 field notes yielded 74 field note excerpts in which resistance was described. These excerpts were written by

24 of the college students and discussed 28 children ages 6–12, nine of whom were female and nine of whom were from Spanish-speaking homes. In these 74 excerpts, children at the Fifth Dimension resisted the project's design elements (coded as "Structure"), completion of program-related nonwriting tasks (coded as "Tasks"), and writing tasks (coded as "Writing"). In 53 of the 74 cases (11/24 Structure, 14/15 Tasks, 28/35 Writing), there was negotiation which resulted in the child completing or continuing to engage in the task. Below are three examples:

> *Negotiating resistance to design elements:*
> In the beginning, he would tell me that he didn't need his folder and didn't want to use it or the "stupid task card." I asked him if he wanted pizza slices [representations of completed program tasks] and he said yes. I explained to him how his logic did not make sense and that if he really wanted to become a YWA [complete the program] he would have to use the task card. So he said, "Fine! Then you get it for me!" I told him I wouldn't. He said, "PLEASE, get it for me." I told him that I would make a deal with him and get the task card if he got his folder. He agreed to this and we went to get the respective items. (mo.02F.11.4)

> *Negotiating resistance to task completion:*
> We took out Yukon Trail. I told him to read the task card. He didn't want to and he told me to read it. I told him that I would read a sentence and he would read the next and so forth. And we did. (rj.02.11.3)

> *Negotiating resistance to writing:*
> I told her that we should probably write the first two lines of text for the page. She sort of sighed, so I asked her if maybe she would like to dictate while I typed what she came up with (I didn't want her to get bored, especially given how long it took her to type the title!). Agreeing readily, she started with "Once upon a time there were two girls." I wrote each word out and checked it with her to make sure she thought my spelling was correct, allowing her to assume the "teacher" role that I had taken before. She appeared to take this role seriously, diligently reading through each word and approving the spelling before we moved on. (ac.01F.1.2)

These three examples illustrate the emergent category of "negotiation." In all three, the college students invoke elements of the Fifth Dimension curriculum and engage the children's overt resistance. Interactions were coded with "negotiation," when the notes documented (1) discussion of the behavior between an adult who engaged the resistant behavior and the child with whom the adult was interacting and (2) continued interaction with change in the behaviors of the interlocutors. In the process of negotiation, a new division of

labor is arranged, and interaction and communication as well as work within the program's curriculum continue but according to newly codeveloped rules, which the program's open structure allows. For instance, in the writing example, a new goal, careful reading versus writing, is codeveloped. While the relation of negotiation and productive resistance will be addressed in greater detail in the discussion, it is useful to point out here that negotiation, as it emerged in this analysis, was indicative of change in the adults interacting with the children, as well as the children. In addition, negotiation was indicative of change in the context of learning, for example, changes in the division of labor. Therefore, negotiation was associated with resistance that was productive of both new frames for the learning activity and new goals. The emergent category of "Negotiation" was the key finding of this analysis and was used in coding in the second analysis.

Explorer's Dimension Field Note Analysis

Resistant behavior of the children at the Explorer's Dimension sites was a frequent topic of discussion in the college students' field notes and at the weekly research group meetings. Field notes from the fall quarter, 2001, were collected, and their contents were coded during the summer of 2002 for instances of resistant behaviors by participating children. Resistant behaviors ranged from direct ethnic slurs and throwing cards at the interacting adult to jumping into the wastepaper basket in the classroom, refusing to come into the Learning Center, or refusing multiple offers of assistance. Initial analysis of 88 field notes written by seven undergraduates who were Human Development interns (71 notes), one doctoral student (14 notes), and a recently graduated student researcher (4 notes), yielded 124 separate references to instances of resistant behavior in field notes describing interactions with 50 children between the ages of 5 and 14. Further analysis of those instances produced the emergent categories of "Aggression," "Disruption," and "Homework." The definitions of these categories and the results are listed in table 2.

The resistant behaviors were coded as "Aggression" (physically or verbally aggressive behavior targeted at other individuals as well as passive-aggressive behaviors like not responding to questions or invitations or turning one's back and departing when approached), "Disruption" (nontargeted horseplay or disruptive noise), and "Homework" (resistance to doing homework). Negotiation occurred almost exclusively in the cases of resistance to homework, where that negotiation resulted in completion of the homework in 25 of 33 events. For example:

> Barry continued to stray from his work. . . . He'd ask, "Can you read the next question?" or "What does U-Haul mean?" I would tell him to

TABLE 2

Explorer's Dimension Field Note Analysis

Resistant Behaviors	Occurrences	Negotiation
Aggression: targeted physical and verbal attacks, nonresponse to direct questions or invitations, turning or moving away	58	0
Disruption: nontargeted horseplay or disruptive noise	33	0
Homework (33): avoidance of homework	33	25
Total	124	25

NOTE.—Results of analysis of 88 field notes written over one academic quarter.

> look the words up in the dictionary in the back of his book, but he refused to do so. . . . [later, after the college student had worked with other children]
>
> Barry, who had been quiet all this time, asked if I would check his work. As I did so he was jumping around once again. I noticed he would need to check his work and correct a few problems. He quickly sat down and tried to fix them. He did not put up a fuss or complain like he did before. When he didn't understand a word, he looked it up in the back of the book on his own. Barry quickly finished his work and started to play with the other kids outside. (rs.10.9.01)

In this example, the child's negotiation with the college student regarding homework does not result immediately in a new division of labor. The college student does not take on doing part of the homework but, rather, remains available and, when approached later, points out errors and makes recommendations, which the child uses in completing the task. There is no ultimatum and the choice to comply as well as engage is left up to the child, as the context, in this case the Learning Center, is one of voluntary participation.

In addition to the interesting result regarding negotiation of resistance as related to the relatively structured task of homework completion, another interesting result of this analysis was the distribution of references to resistance across the Explorer's Dimension's three program sites. School 1 and school 2 are K–6 elementary schools both located within a mile of each other and both about two miles from the Learning Center. All three sites are in an affluent community, where a public housing project was constructed in 1995. Reflective of the community, the schools' populations are predominantly Anglo and from upper-middle-class homes. The Learning Center site and the Explorer's Dimension program serve the multi-ethnic and low-income population from the housing project. During the period in which this study took place,

the Explorers' Dimension ran 1.5 hours after school on Mondays at school 1 and Wednesdays at school 2 as well as Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Learning Center.

At school 2, one second-year teacher participated, and the program took place in the teacher's sixth-grade classroom. The room was bright, airy, and quiet. At school 1, two teachers, a veteran of several years and a first-year teacher, participated along with a newly credentialed substitute teacher. School 1 is built in an open design favored in the sixties and seventies. Several classrooms radiate like pieces of pie from a central shared space used as a computer lab. The rooms each have at least one partially open wall, providing access to the center and sometimes to other classrooms. Here the program was held in the first-year teacher's fifth-grade classroom. The room was open on one of its three sides to another classroom and the shared central space. It was often noisy and, though open, appeared dark and crowded.

The children who attended the two schools were bused to and from the sites by the school district. In order for them to remain after school for the Explorer's Dimension, the Kids Club provided transportation home after the program. Because the children had been at school all day, a healthy snack was provided during the program. The timing of the snack was different at the two schools. At school 2, children had snack at the beginning of the program and in the classroom. There, the snack was accompanied by casual socializing with the teacher, researchers, and college students. At school 1, the children had snack after homework, approximately 45 minutes into the program. There, snack was offered outdoors, in uncomfortable conditions on park benches or a blacktop. Snack time at school 1 was characterized by rambunctious behavior and frequent disciplining.

Based on a needs assessment and the experience of the principals and teachers in the action research collaborative, the Explorer's Dimension was designed to mix play and group activities with homework assistance. While the order of the activities was different at the two schools, the program at those sites included snack time, homework assistance, and play with games. At both schools there were several occasions when the children and college students went outdoors and played large motor games like basketball or "traffic." When children said they did not have any homework or had completed their homework, they were offered books and asked to read and respond to comprehension questions. Children frequently asked for assistance on longer-term classroom projects like essays and reports.

The Learning Center is a chartered branch of the Kids Club located within the public housing complex. It operates in a single-level housing unit originally designed for a potential disabled resident. As such, the space has a kitchen and two bathrooms, as well as what would have been a small living room and three bedrooms. The Explorer's Dimension at the Learning Center was

led by a doctoral student who was supported by one student research assistant from the university. While the Explorer's Dimension was held in the living room, Kids Club staff supervised other areas and ran programs like cooking and computers, as well as free play outside on a small playground and basketball court. All children and youth from the housing complex were able to come to the Learning Center in the afternoon, and in keeping with the Kids Club philosophy, attendance was completely voluntary and the door was open, meaning that children could come and go as they pleased. This site was generally crowded, noisy, and characterized by the regular movement of people coming and going.

The Explorer's Dimension at school 1 was very school-like in appearance in that it was most often teacher centered. In comparison to the other two sites, rules were strictly enforced, with children being given both time out and "talkings to" by the teachers or the principal. Those running this site chose to reduce or eliminate play time in favor of homework time. Snack was served after homework time as a reward for staying on task. Undergraduates frequently criticized this site as "too structured" or "too rigid."

The Explorer's Dimension at school 2 was less school-like in appearance. The teacher moved frequently around the room, sitting alongside the children and undergraduates as they did homework or read. The teacher also played board games with the children and college students. Play was a consistent part of this site's structure of activities, and snack time came first in the afternoon. During snack children socialized with the undergraduates, researchers, and teachers and often chose to take out and begin their homework while munching. A sixth-grade male at this site came regularly but at times actively disengaged by removing himself to a picnic table just outside the room. When he was ready to return, he did, and he persisted in coming all term. Undergraduates frequently compared the school 2 site favorably with the school 1 site, commenting on the pleasant atmosphere and the lack of resistance from the children.

The Learning Center is famed in undergraduate and researcher notes as a site on the edge of chaos. The physical makeup of the site makes it difficult for adult staff to be present in all spaces and very rapid staff turnover leads to frequent understaffing and a chronic need for training. Consequently, the power structure is not consistent and is rarely clear. Rules are enforced inconsistently. As is the case with the Fifth Dimension, children can come and go at will. In contrast, at the two schools, once children voluntarily appeared in the programs, they remained until transportation home was provided.

When the data on resistance and negotiation were compared across the three Explorer's Dimension sites, differences in both the number and relative frequency of references to resistance emerged. These results are listed in table

TABLE 3

Differences in Explorer's Dimension Sites

| | RESISTANT BEHAVIORS/NUMBER OF FIELD NOTES | | |
PROGRAM SITE	Occurrences	Negotiated	Related to Homework
School 1: hierarchical: more teacher control, rules strictly enforced	26/24 (95/88)	5	5
School 2: learning community: control shared with students, rules enforced after discussion	36/21 (150/88)	8	7
Kids Club/Learning Center: inconsistent: rules often not enforced, but sometimes enforced severely	62/43 (126/88)	17	13

NOTE.—For ease of comparison, the ratios of references to resistance to the total number of field notes from all three sites are also listed in parentheses.

3, along with a comparison of characteristics of the program at each of its three sites.

In the first column, each site is listed along with its style of management and rule enforcement. School 1, which had three teachers who ran the site in a hierarchically controlled manner, is characterized as "teacher centered." School 2, as the example of the sixth-grade boy above as well as the teacher's engagement in play and socializing suggest, is characterized as a learning community. Roles shift and all participants, including children, have voice (Brown 1992; Rogoff 1994). The Learning Center, with its open doors, competing activities, and harried and changing staff, is characterized as having an inconsistent power structure. At times, adults were not visible. At other times, they were demanding and even expelled children from the site.

Enforcement of rules at the three sites reflected the style of management. The rules at school 1 were strictly enforced. At school 2, rules were enforced after discussion. At the Learning Center, rules were often not enforced at all and sometimes were enforced with severity. School 1, which had a hierarchical style, had the least reports of resistant behaviors, 26 in 24 notes. Reports of resistant behaviors were more frequent in field notes from school 2, which had the reciprocal style of a learning community, than in notes from the other two sites (36 in 21 notes). The Learning Center site had a smaller ratio of reports of resistance than school 2, but more than school 1 (62 in 43).

The Learning Center had a higher ratio of negotiations of resistant behaviors than both school 1 and the more positively perceived school 2. Recall that negotiation was conceived in this study as joint discussion by child and

adult of the resisted task or resistant behavior as well as continued engagement in the task or completion of the task with changes in behavior in both the adult and the child. At all three sites, negotiation was associated most frequently with resistance to homework.

Findings

There were four major findings from this study:

Children displayed overt resistance at both the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension.

Children's resistance was accompanied by negotiation when it was directed at school-like design elements of the Fifth Dimension, for example, set instructions for defined writing tasks, or homework completion at the Explorer's Dimension.

Negotiation occurred more in the relatively chaotic environments of the Kids Club and Learning Center than in the more structured environments of the two schools (though the most references to overt resistance occurred in the less structured of the two school sites).

Negotiation led to the codevelopment of both productive behaviors and new rules (including new divisions of labor) more frequently in the Fifth Dimension, where learning tasks were more hidden and less traditional and the rules more flexible than in the Explorer's Dimension's clearly defined homework activity.

Discussion

In both after-school programs the children felt free to display overt resistance, whether at the school sites, the Kids Club, or the Learning Center. They used language and behaviors that most likely would not be tolerated at school and did so freely in front of the college students who, in both programs, were guided in assuming near-peer-like or older sibling roles. This overt resistance was accompanied by negotiation with the college students when it was directed at the overt learning task of homework completion and the more "hidden" or covert learning tasks in the Fifth Dimension. In both cases, these learning tasks, even when resisted, served to organize joint activity and communication, including articulation of feelings of injustice or, in the case of the Fifth Dimension, recognition of the inherent contradiction of embedding structured learning tasks in a context that was ostensibly defined by play.

Nicolopoulou and Cole (1993) describe the Fifth Dimension as a culture of collaboration dependent on collective acceptance of rules inherent in the

activity. They stress that compliance with the rules and goals of the Fifth Dimension is not dependent on authority. The present study suggests engaged noncompliance, or organized and productive resistance to those rules, resulting in communication and negotiation. The negotiation of rules, guided by the undergraduates, who are enrolled in a university class for credit and who often themselves engage in negotiation directed at persuading the children to comply, suggests that there is actually an indirect authority at work in the Fifth Dimension, that is, that of the professor. Similar to the case reported by Fey and Sinith, in which preservice teachers who resist a practicum in democratic math instructional contexts, the authority of the professor, in conjunction with openness to resistance from the adult students, led those adult students to move from complaining compliance to engagement in the new practice. In Fey and Sinith's study, the preservice teachers recognized both their resistance and the productive negotiation of that resistance. Similarly, in the Fifth Dimension, the college students came to practice at the program sites negotiation behaviors that reflected their own negotiations of their personal resistance to Fifth Dimension structures in class and in the threaded web-board discussion. Both groups of adults responded productively to authority that respected and gave meaningful room for their resistance and their voice.

Similar to the adult students, for the children at the Explorer's Dimension there was an indirect authority associated with the physically absent, but psychologically present teachers' reactions to completion or noncompletion of the homework task. That negotiation of resistance occurred more in the chaotic, laissez-faire environment of the Kids Club Learning Center is, however, surprising. It is possible that the more democratic environment of school 2 encouraged communication and negotiation that was ongoing, rather than specifically associated with resistance, while at school 1, the more authoritarian social climate repressed both resistance and negotiation. This explanation is consistent with Lewin et al.'s findings that resistance that met authoritarian and highly structured social climates was expressed in aggression but expressed more often in apathy. In democratic and open social climates characterized by the presence of adults who were willing to change, there was far less aggression and no evidence of apathy. The greater number of references to nonnegotiated resistant behaviors at school 2 suggests that the situation is more complex and bears further study.

It is clear, however, that while school 2 was perceived as an optimal environment by many of the college students, the Learning Center, in spite of chaos, was a site of resistance that was channeled into negotiation and task completion. Additionally, at this program site, negotiation of homework resistance did, in some cases, produce productive changes in identity. Barry, for example, began the academic quarter by informing an undergraduate that he was the second dumbest person in his class. He had great difficulty re-

maining on task and completing homework. By the end of the quarter, he had learned to self-regulate his behavior. If the Learning Center was noisy, he asked the college student to move with him to a different room. He later made that move by himself, completing his homework independently, even when invited to do other activities by the staff, such as make soap-bubble rockets. His productive channeling of his earlier resistance was collaboratively supported by adults and children at the Explorer's Dimension and was publicly acknowledged.

While the Explorer's Dimension was a site of productive resistance in terms of completing homework, the rules about and goal of completing homework were not flexible. Children were rather gently encouraged to comply with the norms of school practice, which critical theorists would view as a form of "pastoral" (as opposed to oppressive) domination by mainstream culture (Schutz 2004). As noted at the outset of this study, however, failure to engage, even critically, with school culture limits the opportunities of minority children to frame and accomplish goals. The openness of these after-school learning contexts allowed the contexts to make productive changes in response to the children's and the college students' resistance at the same time that individuals in both groups experienced productive changes in both cognition and identity.

More open than the Explorer's Dimension, the Fifth Dimension, with its learning curriculum obscured by an emphasis on play and its more flexible rules, was a site where negotiation of resistance regularly resulted in changed rules and goals, for example, the shift from a writing goal to a reading goal and the new divisions of labor cited above. In both after-school sites, the contexts' engagement with the children's resistance promoted negotiation.

Negotiation appears to have been key in making the children's resistance productive. In the examples presented above, negotiation was productive of ongoing coparticipation and codevelopment of the contexts of learning. Providing the space and opportunity for negotiation allowed resistance to be channeled into engagement in the learning context as well as goal formation. The process of negotiation was dialogic. It allowed space for the "competing discourses and epistemologies of the different social actors" (Gutiérrez and Stone 2000, 157). These discourses included those of the diverse children, the college students, the researchers, and school. By channeling resistance into dialogue, negotiation, and participation, the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension allowed children to engage productively with structured learning tasks in ways not available to the low-ballers described above. At the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension the children learned they had voice and were guided in using that voice productively with adults who occupied positions of relative power. This occurred most often in the most open and informal learning environments but also most consistently around school-like elements. That negotiation occurred most often in relation to school-like

elements and tasks in informal and non-school-like settings suggests that learning contexts that are open to change have something to teach us.

Conclusions

Whereas educationally nonproductive resistance is being present and compliant, but not engaging with program content and/or goals, productive resistance is overt noncompliance actively engaged in meta-communication about rules and goals with others in the learning environment who have more power. Rather than the construction of identity solely in opposition to rules and goals, productive resistance is resistance and negotiation in an open context with potential for the construction of identity as capable learner and participant and codevelopment of new cultural rules and goals.

In the Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension, resistance was channeled productively when (1) school-like or structured learning tasks were promoted, (2) overt resistance was accepted and engaged, and (3) there were ample opportunities for negotiation, that is, high ratios of adults to children and latitude in orienting to rules and goals. At the Explorer's Dimension, where learning goals were overt and very clear—for example, complete homework—resistance was channeled productively not only into engaged compliance but also into identity as a capable learner and participant. When the learning goals were "hidden" in the program's emphasis on play, but the "learning tasks" were encouraged, as in the Fifth Dimension, resistance was both provoked and productively channeled not only into compliance and identity as capable learner and participant but also into codevelopment of new social rules and goals.

The Fifth Dimension and the Explorer's Dimension, as after-school learning environments, face fewer constraints than schools in creating sites for productive resistance. They have the luxury of allowing diverse children to work at their own pace with a very high ratio of attentive and tolerant adults. Compared to schools, they have greater latitude in tolerating resistant behaviors and promoting high levels of expression and communication. This allows for individualized teaching/learning and a focus on potentials. Acknowledging these profound differences, this study, conducted in both schools' after-school and youth clubs, suggests that it is not the structured requirements or proscribed learning tasks themselves that promote unproductive resistance. Rather, as in Lewin et al.'s work, it is the degree of openness with which resistance to those structured elements is engaged by those in the positions of power. Openness and willingness to communicate, negotiate, and change the social context of learning supports productive identity and culture development based on the productive potential of resistance. Given the natural and ubiq-

uitous occurrence of resistance as a by-product of power relations, accepting and engaging resistance as potentially productive provides a valuable tool for learning.

Notes

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1. For information on U.S. and international Fifth Dimension programs, see http://www.uclinks.org and http://www.5d.org.

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