Cross-Pollinating Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning: Toward an Inclusive Pedagogy That Accounts for Dis/Ability

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In this article, Federico R. Waitoller and Kathleen A. King Thorius extend recent discussions on culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) in order to explicitly account for student dis/ability. The authors engage in this work as part of an inclusive education agenda. Toward this aim, they discuss how CSP and universal design for learning will benefit from cross-pollination and then conclude by suggesting interdisciplinary dialogue as a means to building emancipatory pedagogies that attend to intersecting markers of difference (e.g., dis/ability, class, gender, race, language, and ethnicity).

In the spring of 2014, the *Harvard Educational Review* published a symposium on culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), a pedagogy that aims to sustain children's and youth's cultural and linguistic practices (Editors, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2014; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2014). In this article we extend the symposium discussion to account for student dis/ability in addition to race, ethnicity, language, and class. Accordingly, we discuss how CSP and universal design for learning (UDL), a framework that focuses on eliminating educational barriers for students with dis/abilities (CAST, 2012), will benefit from cross-pollination. We draw from the ways cross-pollination has been defined elsewhere in educational research—as an interchange of ideas

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(e.g., Thorne, 2008) and as a way to embrace the strengths of both CSP and UDL as pedagogical frameworks—to argue that it will enable existing elements of each framework to remain intact while considerations from one framework extend and enhance ways in which elements from the other have been defined and enacted.

We offer this cross-pollination in response to two education scholarship trends. First, a new wave of asset pedgagogies is emerging, as reflected in CSP (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014). Ladson-Billings (2014) argues that "it is time for a remix" of asset pedagogies to reflect culture's fluid nature and current demographic and policy contexts, and she "welcomes" CSP "as a way to push forward her original goals of engaging critically in the cultural landscapes of classrooms and teacher education programs" (p. 74). Second, there is a growing interest in and need to interrogate and address educational inequities at the intersections of ability, race, language, gender, and class differences, particularly in inclusive education (e.g., Artiles, Kozleski, & Waitoller, 2011), disability studies in education (e.g., Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013), and special education fields (e.g., Garcia & Ortiz, 2013). This interest is also evidenced in the fact that dis/ability now sits at the "table(s) of social justice and multicultural education" (Connor, 2012) and manifests in some emerging alliances among disability studies and other critical fields (Baglieri, Bejoian, Broderick, Connor, & Valle, 2011).

We use a slash to denote *dis/ability* as not an individual trait but, rather, a product of cultural, political, and economic practices (Davis, 1995). This understanding does not deny biological and psychological differences, but it emphasizes that such differences gain meaning, often with severe negative consequences (e.g., segregation), through human activities informed by norms (Davis, 2013). Dis/Ability is also an identity marker that includes ways notions of ability are relied on and constructed in tandem with other identity markers (e.g., gender, race, language) (Gillborn, 2015). Students with dis/abilities have experienced oppression with great consequence for who accesses learning, whose abilities are recognized and valued, and who participates in decision making in schools. Thus, pedagogies that value ethnic, racial, and language differences simultaneously and intentionally must be committed to disrupting those that have historically pathologized students' abilities.

Formerly a teacher and a school psychologist, respectively, many times we fell into pathological forms of thinking about racially, ethnically, and linguistically minoritized students and students with dis/abilities and were complicit with notions of intelligence that served to oppress, stratify, and pathologize (Cochran-Smith & Dudley-Marling, 2012). Even so, we have been nurtured and developed as researchers and teacher educators who work at the intersections of special education, disability studies in education, and critical and multicultural education fields. Being situated this way requires work to dismantle systems and categories that demarcate and rank who among us have power and privilege and in what contexts. It follows that transformative, inclusive,

and emancipatory pedgogies should attend to these intersections and actively abolish pedagogies that teach racial and intellectual superiority (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013).

With this article we aim to contribute to such emancipatory pedagogies that advance inclusive education beyond merely including students receiving special education in general education settings or curricula:

> Inclusive education is a continuous struggle toward (a) the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn and participate in educational programs, (b) the recognition and value of differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools, and (c) the opportunities for marginalized groups to represent themselves in decision-making processes that advance and define claims of exclusion and the respective solutions that affect their children's educational futures. (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013, p. 35)

This definition utilizes Fraser's (2008) dimensions of justice to articulate past and current debates within the international inclusive education literature. Foregrounding economic injustices of redistribution, cultural injustices of misrecognition, and political injustices of misrepresentation, this definition establishes an agenda that acknowledges historical justice claims of the inclusive education movement and expands them with notions of intersectionality (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013). A key premise is that centers and peripheries are in constant flux, and efforts to address exclusion always create new forms of benefit and marginalization, thus demanding relentless and continuous examination (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007). To some extent, this is mediated by policies and practices that narrow students' identities by attending to forms of marginalization based on race, language, ability, gender, and class in separate fashion. "As a concept," inclusive education "can serve as a unifying construct for radical reform of exclusionary notions and practices that reify ideologies expressed in 'regular' education and the construction of the 'normal child'" (Baglieri et al., 2011, p. 2142). This definition of inclusive education can fuse and catalyze tangential pedagogical efforts such as CSP and UDL to dismantle intersecting and compounding forms of exclusion (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013).

In what follows we describe CSP and UDL and provide rationale to justify their cross-pollination, discussing tight connections between racism and ableism and identifying areas of each framework that stand to be enhanced and extended. We use a vignette to show how both frameworks can be enacted in complementary ways to extend both the design and the purpose of each. We conclude with recommendations for the road ahead.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

CSP builds on asset pedagogies, which resist and counter deficit views of students of color, particularly those who live in poverty. Asset pedagogies are

based on the assumption that learning is the lifelong acquisition of overlapping cultural practices and that all students' cultural practices are valuable tools for learning academic content (Nasir, Rosebery, Warren, & Lee, 2006). Key examples of asset pedagogies include culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive pedagogies (Gay, 2000), funds of knowledge (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994), and cultural modeling (Lee, 2007). Paris (2012) introduced the term *culturally sustaining pedagogy* to emphasize that asset pedagogies should be more than responsive to students of color, supporting students to "perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 95).

To expand asset pedagogies, Paris and Alim (2014) provide three "loving critiques," a term that "denote[s] the position of deep respect from which we problematize and extend" previous work (p. 85). Through these critiques, they connect CSP to cultural and linguistic pluralism, issues of social justice, and cultural and social change. Their first loving critique expands on asset pedagogies by calling educators to ask "for what purposes and with what outcomes?" and to question whether the terms "relevant" and "responsive" go far enough to guarantee the conservation and expansion of students' cultural and linguistic repertoires. They maintain that a culturally *sustaining* rather than *responsive* pedagogy "is increasingly necessary given the explicit assimilationist and antidemocratic monolingual/monocultural educational policies emerging across the nation" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 88).

In their second critique, they assert that though culture is dynamic and evolving, traditional asset pedagogies have privileged static practices of cultural, racial, and linguistic groups. Yet youth engage in both traditional and evolving forms of cultural practices (Alim, 2011). This is a crucial consideration that moves students, teachers, and teacher educators to think beyond static notions of being African American, Latin@, or Filipin@, for instance, and toward understanding how youth reshape cultural practices and identities. In their third critique, Paris and Alim urge critical reflexivity and the examination of what is to be sustained, defining critical reflexivity as focusing one's gaze inward to reflect on aspects of one's own cultural practices that may be oppressive to certain groups of people (e.g., students with dis/abilities). They claim that CSP "critically contend[s] with problematic elements expressed in some youth cultural practices" (p. 85). Traditional asset pedagogies understand students' cultures as positive, progressive, and emancipatory, yet youth cultures can also reproduce hegemonic oppressions such as racism, patriarchy, and homophobia. For instance, considerable asset pedagogy research has focused on the emancipatory aspects of hip-hop while ignoring the music's homophobic and sexist aspects. Thus, they maintain that "CSP must interrogate and critique the simultaneously progressive and oppressive currents in these innovative youth practices" (p. 93).

Universal Design for Learning

Coming out of a different field of research and teaching, inclusive education, the development of UDL has paralleled that of CSP and other asset pedagogies. However, we consider UDL as much an asset pedagogy as those we have already discussed. Emerging in the early 1990s from advancements in public policy and architecture focused on individuals with dis/abilities, universal design is the design of products and spaces so that all individuals are able to access and use them. Examples of universal design include, but are not limited to, power doors that can be accessed by all people, touch lamps that do not require a switch, and an ATM offering audible, visual, and tactile feedback (Center for Universal Design, 1997). Soon, application of universal design to education—universal design for learning—began contributing to a framework aimed at dismantling participation and learning barriers for all students by centering learner variability in curriculum development (Rose & Meyer, 2002). UDL emphasizes that any curriculum not designed with the range of student diversity in mind is "disabling," rather than the students being dis/abled. The central purpose of UDL is to support all students in becoming expert learners—strategic, skillful, goal directed, knowledgeable, and motivated to learn more (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Through educators' articulation of goals that account for "learner variability" (Rose & Meyer, 2002), expert learners engage with a wide range of pathways and tools for accomplishing mastery within more discrete curricular goals for distinct learning activities. Educators distinguish desired learning outcomes from the means of achieving them so that there are multiple options for every learner (Smith, 2012).

UDL provides three guiding principles for design and implementation of flexible curriculum goals, materials, methods, and assessments (Rose & Meyer, 2002). The first, *multiple means of representation,* addresses the "what" of learning; it accounts for various ways learners perceive and comprehend information. This principle guides teachers to present information in multiple, flexible formats so all students' ways of understanding and making connections across content are honored. The second, *multiple means of action and expression,* addresses the "how" of learning, accounting for the various means by which students navigate the learning activity and demonstrate their knowledge. The third, *multiple means of engagement,* focuses on the "why" of learning, addressing different ways students' interest is recruited and sustained; this principle guides teachers to build into the learning activity multiple sources of motivation and engagement. Together, these principles guide educators to account for the widest range of learners from the start, contrasting common practices of developing curricula for "middle" students and then retrofitting them to suit the assets and needs of students outside this range. Disability studies scholars have argued that such normalizing practices are ineffective in mediating access to general education curriculum (Hehir, 2002). Special and inclusive education scholars have asserted that modifying and making accom-

modations to curriculum for students with diverse abilities maintains the status quo (Edyburn, 2010) and the myth of the normal child (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010). Thus, UDL resists deficit views of students with dis/abilities and can contribute to expanding other asset pedagogies.

The Troubling Friendship of Racism and Ableism (Whiteness and Smartness): Why the Cross-Pollination?

We argue that it is futile to dichotomize race and dis/ability or other markers of difference when addressing educational inequities. Recent work at the intersections of disability studies, special education, and critical race studies in education have examined and emphasized the relationship between racism and ableism as one of interlocking forms of exclusion (e.g., Annamma et al., 2013; Sullivan & Thorius, 2010; Thorius & Tan, 2015). While racism is generally understood as a concept, ableism is discrimination informed by the eugenics-grounded assumption that it is better to be "normal" than disabled (Baker, 2002). Hehir (2002) notes that ableism is realized in uncritical assertions "that it is better for a child to walk than roll, speak than sign, read print than read Braille, spell independently than use a spell-check, and hang out with nondisabled kids as opposed to other disabled kids" (p. 1). From this scholarship we build four arguments that offer theoretical and empirical bases for a UDL/CSP cross-pollination.

First, intertwined scientific, political, and economic purposes historically have solidified the relationship between racism and ableism. For instance, in the 1800s scientific developments dis/abled and pathologized people of African descent, justifing economic exploitation through slavery. Phrenology and craniometry established that the size and shape of people's skulls indicated personality and intelligence; skulls were measured to create racial hierarchies, establishing similarities between enslaved African people and gorillas and chimpanzees. Similary, enslaved African people who were careless in their work were said to suffer from the "disease" dysaethesia, while those who ran away from their masters were labeled as drapetomanic. Further, early conceptualizations of dis/ability were operationalized through such labels as "imbeciles" and "idiots" and used to restrict unwanted immigration (Davis, 1995). And mid-1800s "ugly laws" forbade public display of dis/abilities and "unsightly" physical characteristics, and racial and immigrant groups were frequently included in that group (Schweik, 2009). In the 1900s, statutes prohibited the education of "feeble-minded," "mentally deficient," and "nauseating" youth with dis/abilities in public schools despite compulsory public education laws passed in all states early that century (Yell, Rogers, & Lodge-Rogers, 1998). Also, the eugenics movement of that time consolidated the ethos of prior eras in tools still used broadly today (e.g., IQ tests, bell curve) (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010) to establish hierarchies in which race and dis/

ability are interwined (Davis, 1995), as reflected in the overrepresentation of racial minority students in special education and more segregated environments (USDOE, 2014).

Second, both racism and ableism are based on social constructs within a relational system (Davis, 1995); dis/ability cannot be defined without defining ability and smartness, just as black has no meaning without white and whiteness (Leonardo, 2009). Just as smartness is involved in constructing the able and smart, whiteness is involved in creating white as a racial identity (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). As Artiles (2011) states, "Intermingling of social class, disability, disease, and racial segregation drilled leaks in the taxonomic economy of deviance and disease, due in part to the reliance on White subjects to determine visually the other's identity essence" (p. 435). Thus, race and dis/ability have been constructed in tandum (Annamma et al., 2013) and have origins in their attribution of otherness and deviance resulting from cultural beliefs about what bodies should look like, be, and do.

Third, the consequences of racism and ableism are tangible. These interlocking systems of oppression in schools and society (Erevelles & Minear, 2010) together produce and reproduce hierarchies of difference in which white, able, male, middle-class bodies are desirable and create the "normative center of schools" (Baglieri et al., 2011). Thus, they are founded in individualism and meritocratic ideologies that locate deficits, successes, and failures within individual traits; they position students as smart, dumb, misbehaving, or low achieving, among other labels, without taking into account contexts that mediate label construction (McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 2006). Some students are given explicit messages about their intellectual supremacy by individuals and through structural features of schools and society, while others are taught their inferiority. For example, messages about whose discourse style counts as "proper grammar" as codified through teachers' grading of written work have consequences for students' access and sense of entitlement to resources and benefits and contribute to a more systematic recognition of certain forms of cultural capital over others. More broadly, racism and ableism regulate and justify inequitable distribution of social goods like education by invoking individual biological deficits as the main cause of students' academic performance (Erevelles, 2011). This is further aggravated by how whiteness and smartness function as property enjoyed by and benefiting those who own it, simultaneously blocking others from such privileges and rights (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). For example, it is widely acknowledged that families of color have been excluded from school governance structures that are accessible to white families (e.g., parent-teacher councils) and provide them a political mechanism for ensuring their children receive quality education (McGrath & Kuriloff, 1999). Restriction of agency and authority is further magnified when dis/ability intersects with families' minoritized race, class, and or language (Harry & Klingner, 2006), and research suggests that racial and other

minority families may be less successful in accessing appropriate special education services and placements for their children (Kozleski et al., 2008).

Fourth, racism and ableism need to be interrogated and abolished together in order to address complex equity issues. For instance, examing racism *or* ableism cannot explain why black males are disproportionately overidentified for special education services and placed in segregated educational environments (USDOE, 2014). To engage in this interrogation, one must move from focusing on people with dis/abilities and/or of color to examine the construction of normalcy (Davis, 1995) and whiteness (Leonardo, 2009). This shift is necessary because the problem is not the person of color and/or the person with dis/ability but the ways normalcy and whiteness are constructed to generate certain groups of students as problems (Davis, 2013).

Our Loving Critiques of CSP and UDL: What Might Be Extended?

While we aim to communicate our appreciation for CSP and UDL as emancipatory tools in the struggle toward inclusive education, we also apply loving critiques (Paris & Alim, 2014). In doing so we draw from our prior discussion on connections between ableism and racism to point out ways in which the particular elements of CSP and UDL stand to be extended.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

We identify three areas in which CSP can be extended through cross-pollination with UDL in order to attend to both ableism and racism as intertwined forms of oppression. First, as groundwork for a cross-pollination, CSP must explicitly attend to dis/ability as a constitutive and essential component in the construction of fluid cultural identities—an activity much CSP work overlooks. A major contribution of CSP is that it accounts for contemporary and evolving conceptualizations of youth culture and identity. This contribution creates the opportunity to understand dis/ability as a fluid, heterogeneous, and unstable identity marker (Davis, 2013) that, as it intersects with racial, gender, and class identities, generates a complex process of identity construction. Ferri and Connor (2010) documented this process when examining the experiences of young women of color receiving special education services. They found that these women negotiated intersections of race, class, gender, and dis/ability by swapping labels and taking different positions across contexts. It is findings like these that point to the importance of exploring the cross-pollination between CSP and UDL to account for the ways that dis/ability and other markers of difference interact as youth define themselves.

CSP is a framework for valuing and sustaining youths' cultures, including the cultural aspects of dis/ability. Many scholars and advocates have argued that dis/ability can be understood as "cultures of disabilities" (Brown, 2002) and "culture as disability" (McDermott & Varenne, 1995). That is, on one

hand, people with dis/abilities have developed diverse cultural patterns, tools, activities, values, common experiences, and identities in response to social and cultural demands. "Cultures of disabilities" acknowledges that there is not *one* dis/ability culture; rather, people with dis/abilities are a heterogeneous group with a wide range of experiences and identities. On the other hand, "culture as disability" acknowledges how people use institutional tools and resources to create scenes in which some students are shown to be dis/abled (McDermott & Varenne, 1995). We are encouraged by CSP's potential to explicitly account for dis/ability as a constitutive and essential component in the construction of fluid cultural identities formed in dialogue between the self and cultural tools available to individuals in their communities (Holland & Lave, 2001).

Second, to call out ableism's normalizing function, CSP's attention to cultural aspects of dis/ability (including identity construction) needs to be materialized in school curricula, explicitly including "ability pluralism" within the existing goal of "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 88). CSP extends asset pedagogies given the increasing and taken-for-granted assimilationist stand of current policies and practices. Yet, insofar as policies, practices, and underlying ideologies push for assimilation into dominant culture, they also push for normalization. Students with dis/abilities have been forced to assimilate to certain abilities needed to function in school and, in turn, within a capitalist economy based on individualism and meritocracy. For instance, normalizing efforts can be found in the high-stakes accountability context, which assumes that all students should learn the same academic content at the same pace and demonstrate learning in the same manner regardless of diverse abilities, or in expectations of what a child should be able to do and know at a given grade level.

Through cross-pollination with UDL, CSP would be extended to provide students and teachers multiple pathways and various and flexible means to engage in a meaningful interrogation of ableism and racism. Although goals, materials, instructional methods, and assessments built into the learning activity could challenge racial and ethnic hierarchies, without critical reflexivity they would still unintentionally sustain ability hierarchies. People with dis/abilities have been subject to discrimination across history from people of all races, genders, social classes, and ages. Current cultural imaginaries reinforced by literature, movies, and music continue to reproduce narratives about people with dis/abilities as "completely incapable," as "in need of charity" (Schur, Kruse, & Blanck, 2013), as "inspirational heroes," as "evil or magical" (Charlton, 2006), and as "asexual" (Kim, 2011). Ableism is so foundational to society that it is completely imperceptible to most nondisabled people. Therefore, CSP should take a cue from universal design's emergence as a solution to the physical and social exclusion of people with dis/ability in the design of products and spaces (Center for Universal Design, 1997) and UDL's emergence in response to ableist functions of curriculum (Rose & Meyer, 2002). This move

will extend CSP's critical reflexivity to interrogate how otherwise emancipatory pedagogies and curricula that center innovative youth practices may not respond to or even engage in new forms of ableism.

Third, the extension of CSP needs to interrogate what cultural aspects of dis/ability should be "sustained." Dis/Ability labels have been used in myriad ways—to oppress, affiliate, explain impairment, and access benefits (Thomas, 2007). So, should students labeled with learning, behavioral, and/or emotional dis/abilities be supported to sustain and develop an identity that marks them as deficient and misbehaving? In maintaining and extending critical reflexivity, CSP can support students in interrogating the function and purpose of labels used by adults, peers, and institutions, including how labels are used by those who claim them for themselves. Such explorations support students' critical navigation of identity formation amid multiple (and sometimes deficit) labels.

Universal Design for Learning

UDL can be enhanced by a cross-pollination with ideas from CSP in three ways. First, its goals can be extended to nurture expert learners who interrogate multiple forms of oppression and who apprentice to be key participants in a pluralistic democracy. UDL goals differ from those of uniform content mastery and performance common in standardized curricula, focusing instead on students becoming expert learners. From an inclusive education standpoint, however, this goal does not go far enough to dismantle racism and ableism and thus challenge assimilationist and normalizing cultures of schools. Therefore, UDL would benefit from cross-pollination with CSP because it would take on a more critical and reflective stance in its notion of expert learners. Borrowing from the long-standing debate between the fields of reading research and literacy studies (Snow, 2006), such cross-pollination is illustrated in the difference between the goals of "reading the word" and "rewriting the world" (Au & Raphael, 2000, p. 139). That is, in the cross-pollination, of central concern are aims of student empowerment and dismantlement of histories of marginalization via educators' positioning of learners as experts in and about their schools and communities.

Second, critical reflexivity, another aspect of CSP, would strengthen UDL's critique of curriculum beyond barriers to access. While UDL explicitly accounts for dis/abling functions of curriculum, its noncritical construction of dis/ability as a form of diversity simultaneously and tacitly accepts ability hierarchies and norming curriculum at the intersection of racism and ableism (and other -isms). UDL has been cited by its founders as emerging out of the necessity of "providing options for access and learning" for "students in the margins of the bell curve" (Chita-Tegmark et al., 2011, p. 17). This assumption about margins is also reflected across a number of videos produced by the National Center for Universal Design for Learning in which students with dis/abilities and

"gifted" students are positioned at opposite ends of an ability continuum.[1] Yet, such use of language reinforces the faulty assumption on which special education is predicated—the normal curve—even when UDL attempts to dismantle ability hierarchies. Historical liaisons between racism and ableism serve as cautionary tales for reinforcing and teaching such hierarchies. UDL scholars and advocates need to be very careful about language use so that deeply rooted beliefs about students' abilities held by researchers, teachers, youth, and teacher educators are brought to the surface and reflected on critically.

Related, although UDL accounts for dis/ability by designing multiple pathways to learn, some scholars suggest that UDL falls short of moving educators "beyond the acceptance of disability as diversity" toward a critique of constructions and outcomes of dis/ability in schools and in curriculum itself, "including its history, its culture, and the ways in which many people are disabled by physical and attitudinal barriers" (Connor & Gable, 2013, p. 108). Currently, while the UDL 2.0 guidelines assert that the "what" of curriculum can be disabling, the focus remains on curricular limitations in teaching "information that requires an understanding of dynamic processes and relationships, computations, or procedures" (CAST, 2011, p. 8). Yet, racism and ableism are learned and perpetuated via rhetoric (Cherney, 2011); thus, they need to be unlearned. We suggest that this "what" needs also to attend to CSP's focus on alternate curricular content—for example, a curriculum in which children of color and with dis/abilities have been neglected or positioned as inferior (Connor & Gable, 2013). This includes guiding teachers and students to interrogate constructions of normalcy and whiteness, how they materialize in classroom curriculum and their relationship to oppressions students experience in schools and society.

Our third loving critique is that UDL must cross-pollinate with CSP to actively address how power and privilege shape and block learning opportunities at the intersection of raced/abled identities. Recently UDL scholars have expressed the need for UDL to account for the "cultural dimension of learning" (Chita-Tegmark et al., 2011, p. 17). However, this recommendation is informed by a static and oppression-free conceptualization of culture. Schools are fraught with ableist, racist, and classist practices. To illustrate this, we examine one of thirty-one UDL checkpoints within current guidelines, "Checkpoint 8.3: Foster Collaboration and Community," which focuses on sustaining student effort and persistence (CAST, 2011). The educational context in which this checkpoint is to be enacted is one in which students of color and dis/abled students have been segregated from and marginalized and excluded by their white nondis/abled peers (Wessler & De Andrade, 2006). In this context some students have experienced success and been taught their superiority, while others have been taught their inferiority. UDL may be extended to provide artifacts, structures, roles, and responsibilities that reposition and empower traditionally minoritized learners within cooperative learning groupings and thus sustain students' identities with a critical stance.

The Cross-Pollination of UDL and CSP

In this section we illustrate the cross-pollination of these two frameworks with an example of an English language arts activity adapted from our own experiences and observations in US classrooms. First we provide a vignette to serve as a holistic snapshot of the learning activity. Then we discuss how the activity's design is informed by a CSP/UDL cross-pollination that attends to intertwined oppressions of racism and ableism and is framed by the four components of UDL curricula—goals, materials, instructional methods, and assessment.

Writing an Argument: A CSP/UDL Cross-Pollination Vignette

Ms. Torres teaches writing to an eleventh-grade class in an urban high school. Most of her thirty students are Latin@ and speak Spanish as their primary language, and six have various intellectual and physical dis/ability labels, ranging from Autism to emotional disturbance. Recently, the city's newspaper featured a debate among local residents about the relationship between the school district's high rates of discipline referrals, incarceration, and unemployment in the surrounding community. The highly publicized debate emphasized perceived deficits in students' home communities as well as how three years of the district labeling the school as "failing" has affected students', families', and teachers' morale.

A local resident herself, Ms. Torres wishes to facilitate students' sense-making and response to the current context. She selects one of the English language arts Common Core standards: "Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010). Noting that this goal focuses on a skill but does not restrict students to a medium of communication or a particular topic, Ms. Torres interprets "writing" in a broad sense, including writing blogs, podcasts, play scripts, songs, or poems. She divides the lesson into four segments. First, she has students brainstorm topics and cultural data sets to serve as their main topic for their arguments. She then uses examples to highlight critical features of a quality argument. Next, students conduct research on their topic and, finally, complete a culminating project.

— Brainstorming Topics and Cultural Data Sets

Ms. Torres starts the lesson by empowering students as experts on their lived experiences through a brainstorming session about concerns affecting them and their school and home communities. She has students work in triads and then share their ideas with the whole class. Students express their concerns using their choice of modalities; some share their thoughts out loud, others describe their markups and illustrations made on large school and community maps, and still others text their responses using a polling application projected onto the classroom wall. After Ms. Torres mediates a discussion about

all the students' ideas, the class decides on four related topics: high rates of school discipline referrals, high rates of incarceration in their community, access to good-paying jobs, and high-stakes testing.

Next, Ms. Torres provides students with materials that are flexible in the ways they were designed to be used, such as iPads, to search for and share examples of blogs, songs, and social media posts that express an argument. These examples are used as cultural data sets (Lee, 2007) to bridge students' cultural repertoires to content-area knowledge that contributes to their development as key participants in a pluralistic democracy.

— Highlighting Critical Features of the Cross-Pollination Vignette

Using the local newspaper's editorials, Ms. Torres critiques and highlights the central aspects of a well-written argument and then connects these features to those in the students' cultural data sets. She then provides them with examples of other argumentative pieces that identify societal barriers, rather than individual or group characteristics, as primary factors shaping problematic social outcomes of disproportionate discipline and incarceration of students of color with dis/abilities,[2] as well as the other topics. As students discuss these examples, Ms. Torres points out how the authors of these pieces emphasize assets of traditionally marginalized groups and asks the students to make connections to assets they can identify in their own communities. Among these assets, students name a residential neighborhood and community center built by and for Latin@ residents where some students live and which has among its alumni prominent city activists as well as city council members and state senators. The current revitalization of a large urban farm and community kitchen and the constant presence of a well-loved afterschool program are features of a community that takes pride in the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its members, students conclude.

Then Ms. Torres provides students with various materials that account for dis/ability as well as race, gender, sexual orientation, and other forms of "difference" traditionally marginalized in curricula in order to sustain cultural practices and memberships at the intersection of her students' identities. For instance, she allows students thirty minutes to explore in race- and ability-diverse pairs images and multimedia links in *Leaving Evidence* (Mingus, n.d.), a blog by Mia Mingus (who describes herself as a "queer physically disabled Korean woman transracial and transnational adoptee"), focused on interdisciplinary community organizing and activism, and to watch a video performance of the poem "Black Disabled Art History 101" by Krip-Hop Nation founder LeRoy Moore after selecting and reading with text-to-speech software entries from his blog.[3]

As a critical reflexive move, Ms. Torres asks students to share ways in which the content and authors of these sources raise issues that connect with their own personal experiences. Jaycee, a black student with cerebral palsy, talks

about having been perceived as incapable of participating in a group art mural project in fourth grade. Her classmates and teacher failed to consider how, given her mobility differences, she would participate in making ceramic tiles that every other student designed and made on their own; she was relegated to observing and told by her teacher that she was playing an important supervisory role for the project. She knew even at that young age she was being patronized. Jaycee shares and wonders aloud how other students with physical dis/abilities may have been steered away from careers as artists, like the ones Moore (Moore, 2015) talked about in his video. She also shares that this was the first time in her schooling that a person with cerebral palsy, let alone a black man with cerebral palsy, had been presented in the curriculum as a source of knowledge. Ms. Torres apologizes personally for this and says that, as a nondisabled person, she has not been attentive to positioning people with dis/abilities as important sources of information and contributors to society.

— Researching a Topic of Interest

The next day, and again with Ms. Torres's support, students work in pairs to find information on societal contributors around one of the four issues of concern selected by the class using multimedia interactive sites such as the interactive map of the US Census Bureau.[4] While some students elect to work independently, others choose to engage as pairs. Throughout the activity students are allowed to move throughout the classroom to access resources and materials, and students use their first languages (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese) as a legitimate tool for communication. Ms. Torres assigns each group specific roles and responsibilities, which she changes each day so that power is more equitably distributed.

Once students collect and document information, the class engages in a discussion about what everyone has found. Ms. Torres helps students make connections to overlapping forms of oppressions informed by racism and ableism, mentioning Jaycee's astute connection made the previous day. She then shifts the discussion to how ability is defined in high-stakes tests, for what purposes, and for whose benefit, and the students talk about how and why this matters to them in regard to how their school has been labeled as "failing." She helps students connect this issue with access to jobs and the incarceration of youth of color, including those with dis/abilities, introducing concrete examples from their school district and communities.

Further, with Ms. Torres's mediation, the students also explore implications of labeling students (e.g., learning disabled, misbehaving) and schools (e.g., failing, achieving) for students' identity development, access to good-paying jobs, and the reputation of their community. The class discusses how high-stakes testing and zero-tolerance discipline policies may contribute to identifying some students as being smart and well behaved and others as having learning disabilities or behavioral problems. Ms. Torres discusses with students

how labels can be oppressive and how they are sometimes used by people to claim certain political identities or to fight for access to social goods. She cites examples of other communities in the United States and around the world that face similar issues, providing students with the contact information of key stakeholders in such communities.

— Producing an Argument: Leaving Evidence

Over the next three days, students choose a medium of communication with which to present their findings. Ms. Torres allows students to write a song, a blog entry, a letter to a local politician, or a podcast, among other media. Students also use assistive technologies such as speech-to-text, alternative keyboards, and Camera Mouse as part of their cultural repertoires to create their final product.[5] Ms. Torres uses a rubric that she explicitly teaches to students and that they have access to in various formats throughout the activity so that they can assess their work along the way. All the students share and discuss their final products during a celebratory class session, and at the week's end the students' works are published on the class website and distributed through social media by tagging key stakeholders in their communities, including the neighborhood and community center. In an extension of these activities, students organize a forum at the neighborhood center to share their findings with the school and community and advance a set of solutions to address incarceration, tracking through testing, and lack of unemployment.

Unpacking Ms. Torres's Unit

— Goals

If goals are narrowed to decontextualized academic content and skills, they can contribute to the assimilation of students into the dominant cultures of schools. Curriculum goals in a CSP/UDL cross-pollination embrace strengths of both pedagogical frameworks; and by borrowing from both, Ms. Torres moves beyond teaching an academic standard toward sustaining, with a critically reflexive stance, the cultural repertoires and abilities of those students who have been marginalized by curricula informed by whiteness and smartness. This extends CSP by accounting for dis/ability and by interrogating ability-based forms of oppression. For instance, students explore different examples of arguments such as Mingus's blog to explore intersecting forms of oppression as they connect to their identities.

Further, UDL's definition of expert learners is extended to learners who can interrogate and challenge complex forms of exclusion, and it positions students with dis/abilities in empowering roles not historically available to them. In the CSP/UDL cross-pollination vignette, becoming an expert learner is the *means by which* students become engaged in curricula that support their contribution to CSP's overarching goal: creation of a socially just world. For

example, Ms. Torres uses the Common Core argumentative writing standard as a springboard to engage students in discussion and action about forms of oppression at the intersection of racism and ableism. A major goal of a cross-pollinated UDL/CSP curriculum is to debunk and then provide alternatives to sorting and tracking people within schools and society.

In addition, in the vignette students engage in sustaining and expanding their identity and challenging the labels that sort them as certain kinds of students and communities. The activity contributes to forming local and global identities around individual and group justice struggles. As students engage in thinking about the redistribution of resources in schools and beyond, and in recognizing and valuing difference with a critically reflexive stance, they are given tools to represent themselves and their group memberships in the educational decisions affecting their lives. In other words, UDL goals are extended to contribute to the democratic project of schooling, foregrounding a critical praxis stance in teaching, and CSP is extended to account for dis/ability as a fluid identity marker. In the vignette, for instance, students interrogate how racism and ableism contribute to issues affecting their school and community (e.g., high rates of school discipline referrals and incarceration in their community). Through this work, the students are able to better understand dis/ability as culturally and socially constructed as they interrogate how discipline norms frame some students as having behavior problems.

— Materials

Materials are the core representation and means of engaging with curriculum. They can privilege some students' cultural practices and marginalize others'; they can act to enable or dis/able students. Thus, materials need to be flexible and grounded in students' cultural repertoires. As the vignette shows, a CSP/UDL cross-pollination fuses CSP's potential to facilitate socially just and critically reflective learning via cultural practices of youth (e.g., music, spoken word, poetry, social media apps, blogs, online video channels) and UDL's principle of multiple means of action and expression. Thus, a cross-pollination of UDL and CSP facilitates engagement and learning of students with dis/abilities with physically accessible materials while repositioning as important the types of flexible media used in everyday life by people with and without dis/abilities. Ms. Torres's classroom tools include an array of materials that tap into students' cultural repertoires and that help them examine critical issues affecting their communities and develop solutions aimed at disrupting marginalization. This extends CSP's capacity to redistribute access to learning and to recognize all abilities by providing multiple pathways for students and teachers to engage in examining interacting forms of oppression.

Further, in Ms. Torres's classroom, students' final products become new curricular materials, serving to "leave evidence" (Mingus, n.d.) developed by and for students with dis/abilities that both documents and dismantles oppression.

Such evidence supports the struggle toward representation in our definition of inclusive education and provides a means to distribute it to a limitless audience via digital technologies, positioning students as teachers of others like and unlike themselves. In doing so, a CSP/UDL cross-pollination becomes a tool for examining dis/ability as a political identity claimed by people bound by shared sociopolitical experience rather than as a mental or physical "abnormality" (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010). On one hand, selection and use of materials extends UDL by engaging students in critical reflexivity on the construction of dis/ability and on ability-based oppression and in empowering students to create their own curricular materials. On the other hand, it extends CSP to foreground dis/ability as a constitutive and essential component in the construction of fluid cultural identities.

— Instructional Methods

Instructional methods encompass techniques and discursive moves teachers employ to mediate student learning. When methods privilege dominant cultural and language practices, knowledge, *and* abilities, they become barriers to learning and participation and tools for assimilation to dominant school cultures. In this sense, methods can differentiate the able from the dis/abled, successful from failing, and low achieving from high achieving. They may contribute to misdistribution of access to learning activities and to misrecognition of students' abilities and cultural repertoires. The design of inclusive methods, thus, is crucial to ensure that *all* students have access to meaningful participation, are valued and respected, and learn.

True to CSP, instructional methods in a CSP/UDL cross-pollination, as reflected in Ms. Torres's classroom, sustain evolving youth cultural practices and support students in critiquing and challenging current forms of oppression—even those that inform their cultural practices and identities—through the discussion of blogs, such as LeRoy Moore's. Key to instructional design is the positioning of students as experts of their own practices to mediate learning. Foremost, methods are based on the premise that all students are capable of constructing knowledge and contributing to others' learning. Thus, power relations between teachers and students and within student groups are redistributed, and students have opportunities to represent themselves, as reflected in Jaycee's story. This instructional move enhances the relevance and authenticity of the task—an important principle of UDL.

Ironically, however, if methods are based on narrow and rigid forms of learning and participation, some students remain at the margins in lesson plans that aim to challenge other oppressions. The cross-pollination provides students with differentiated supports, participant structures (e.g., large groups, dyads), and flexibility in how content and tasks are presented (e.g., visual, tactile, verbal communication) to support learning within their "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978). Such methods contribute to the aforementioned CSP goals of (1) developing citizens for a democracy that

nurtures cultural, *inclusive* pluralism; (2) equitably redistributing access to the learning environment; and (3) recognizing and valuing all students' cultural practices, languages, and abilities.

— Assessment

Assessments can be pedagogical tools of exclusion, as they privilege and teach the value of certain knowledge systems, abilities, behaviors, and skills over others; they pinpoint some students' deficits and others' smartness. In this sense, assessments are a form of cultural capital (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2004) that comes with owning whiteness and smartness (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). In turn, assessments are used to sort students into ability profiles and, accordingly, redistribute remedial, narrow instruction to some and enriched learning experiences to others (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2015). Thus, assessment practices can contribute to exclusion based on misdistribution and misrecognition.

To address this concern, the cross-pollination materialized in Ms. Torres's class builds on CSP's principle that assessments are informed by students' cultural repertoires, identities, and out-of-school practices to widen what is assessed. Foremost, the cross-pollination of CSP and UDL assesses students' performances *as well as* learning activities within which performances are situated. That is, reflecting on observations and students' experiences, like the one shared by Jaycee, teachers and students inquire about how tools, peers, rules, and required forms of participation mediate performance; what aspects of the activity enable and which ones dis/able learning; and for whom and for what purposes learning occurs.

Next, a CSP/UDL cross-pollination requires that assessments be ongoing and flexible in how information is presented and ways students may perform. Any assessment that relies on either narrow response forms (e.g., writing without strategic supports such as a glossary) or materials (e.g., paper and pencil) will inevitably confound evaluation of students' performance (Rose & Meyer, 2002). In Ms. Torres's classroom, students select options for modes of expression according to the skill the assessment seeks to measure (writing an argument). This cross-pollination provides rather than withholds varied supports given and withdrawn (if appropriate) over time as an equitable assessment practice. This extends CSP to provide multiple pathways and levels of supports for students to demonstrate what they learned.

Assessments in the cross-pollination framework are both a means for teachers to explore students' understanding and a tool that serves as an empowering form of learning itself. For instance, in Ms. Torres's class, students could choose their communication media according to cultural and ability repertoires, becoming agents for a socially just world as they developed blogs, podcasts, and posters. Through a rubric, critical examples such as Mingus's blog, and/or teachers' mastery-oriented feedback, the students can undertake self-assessment and reflection and, in doing so, develop a critical reflexivity about themselves and their world.

Pitfalls and Recommendations for the (Arduous and Extensive) Work Ahead

In this article we cross-pollinate CSP and UDL toward an inclusive and emancipatory curricular framework. We situate the paper and ourselves within an inclusive education agenda, one that moves beyond including students with disabilities in the general education classroom and toward the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn, the recognition and value of all student differences, and the provision of opportunities for families and students to advance and define claims of exclusion and their respective solutions (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013).

We justify the cross-pollination of CSP and UDL by examining the relationship between racism and ableism and its implication for educational inequities. Race and disability have been closely interwined through history, with detrimental effects for people of color and people with dis/abilities. As both racism and ableism tend to be constructed through their interaction, they need to be abolished together. It follows that an emancipatory and inclusive pedagogy needs to dismantle barriers to participation that are the result of racial, ethnic, language, *and* ability hierarchies and to support students in understanding and questioning how racism and ableism have material consequences in their lives.

We present a loving critique of both CSP and UDL to identify areas in which they could be extended. We recommend that CSP attend explicitly to issues of dis/ability within the cultural pluralism it aims to sustain. UDL will benefit from expanding its definition of an expert learner with a more critical and reflexive stand that supports teachers and students in dismantling intesecting forms of opression. We argue that UDL should closely account for both content and skills taught so that students are encouraged to sustain and challenge their racial, ethnic, language, and ability identities. Then we provide an example of how a cross-pollination of CSP and UDL might look and discuss it in light of its potential to advance an inclusive education agenda based on redistribution, recognition, and representation.

Our CSP/UDL cross-pollination has implications for teachers, teacher educators, and researchers. We recommend that teachers engage with pedagogies that aim to dismantle intersecting forms of oppression such as racism and ableism and that they be cognizant of and reflective on how these intersections inform the design of classroom social arrangements that position some as smart and others as dis/abled. Like Ms. Torres, they need to design and implement goals, materials, instructional methods, and assessments that account for complex identities and cultural repertoires their students bring, with particular attention to those repertoires and materials that marginalize youth with dis/abilities.

Teachers, of course, cannot do this alone. Teacher educators and teacher preparation programs need to be restructured so that preservice teachers do

not experience a dichotomized experience in learning about being culturally responsive to or including students with dis/abilities. Those who lead and facilitate teacher educator programs and professional development in schools and districts need to support teachers in cross-pollinating CSP and UDL and to engage with educators in continuing inquiry projects to improve the design and implementation of this blended pedagogy.

Finally, future research should test and examine the impact of learning activities informed by a CPS/UDL cross-pollination not only on student test scores but on broader forms of learning and identity formation as critical citizens in a pluralistic, inclusive, and emancipatory democracy. Researchers should examine tensions that may emerge from this cross-pollination, considering that tensions in practice are fertile context for expanding and improving the materials, practices, and goals of the learning activity (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013).

By no means is our proposed cross-pollination a well-bounded and complete framework. It is a work in progress. There are other oppressions that need to be addressed, such as patriarchy and genderism and heterosexuality in school curriculum that is pathologizing for LGTBQ youth (Erevelles, 2011). Further, colonizing influences continue to shape the fight for cultural and linguistic survival of Native communities: "Western schooling has been the crucible in which these contested desires have been molded, impacting Native peoples in ways that have separated their identities from their languages, lands, and worldviews" (McCarty & Lee, 2014, p. 103). Thus, we echo the invitation by Valle, Connor, Broderick, Bejoian, and Baglieri (2011) to create strategic alliances against exclusion. A key implication of the proposed cross-pollination is that it creates a fertile intellectual space for these alliances to converge and debunk the normative center of schools.

This collaborative work is arduous and faces institutional and disciplinary complexities, including rigid separation of special and general education teacher preparation programs that diminish possibilities to prepare future inclusive educators. Further, special education's monopoly on educating students with dis/abilities (Connor, 2013) poses another obstacle. Special education has relied on behavioral and cognitive approaches to teaching and learning focused on identifying and remediating students' deficits (Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998) that contrast with sociocultural views of learning that inform asset pedagogies. In addition, issues with specific dis/ability communities may arise. For instance, families and advocates of students with Autism may prefer separate classrooms or schools where behaviorist instructional techniques are emphasized over other emancipatory pedagogies. Finally, some Deaf and Autistic communities have rejected being positioned as dis/abled altogether, instead framing Deafness as a form of bilingualism (Valente, 2011). And both Autism and Deafness are considered by some as cultural communities (Strauss, 2013). All of this has implications for ways these groups wish to be positioned within the cross-pollination. Another important challenge is

how to fuse McCarty and Lee's (2014) culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy, which foregrounds the role of tribal sovereignty, with a CSP that foregrounds intersections of race and dis/ability. We perceive all these challenges as catalysts to building strong alliances across critical, inclusive, and special education fields.

Notes

1. See, for instance, the video titled *UDL Principles and Practice* at http://www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/videos/udlcenter/guidelines.
2. See, for example, http://nepc.colorado.edu/blog/more-just-pipeline.
3. See http://kriphopnation.com/category/blog/.
4. See http://www.census.gov/geography/interactive-maps.html.
5. Assistive technology refers to "any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities" (Assistive Technology Act of 1998).

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