Possible Worlds for Families in School

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Using two theories drawing on sociocultural frameworks—Holland et al.'s (1998) theory of self and identity and Rogoff's (1990; 1995) theory of cultural apprenticeships in learning—this paper examines how family-school relationships may be studied in ways that open them up as "worlds of possibility" (Urrieta, 2007, p. 114). This offers an opportunity for examining how family-school relations may stimulate changes in the school environment while also considering how parents' identity develops through engagement with the school. Conceiving of family-school relationships as a site of apprenticeship for children's development further expands how the family-school relationship may be imagined.

When my daughter started school, I understood that it was a transition not just for her but also for me. Just as she moved physically and psychologically from "home child" to "school child" I thought of myself as similarly adapting to a role as "school parent." Although helping prepare your child for school occurs both prior to and separate from school, I knew formally interacting with the school institution changes the parent role. Parents also bring with them past schooling histories, their own beliefs about parent involvement and expectations for their child. As an academic who studies family-school relationships, I also understood that this transition to "school parent" comes with many hidden challenges and traps. Regardless of how engaged a parent might be with her child outside of school, a parent can easily be constructed as uncaring when failing to take part in school-sanctioned activities. Alternatively, not all involvement is appreciated; a strong parent voice in support of school practices and policies is welcome, but one in opposition is viewed as problematic.

Although I recognized some of the ways my involvement influenced the school and my daughter's academic achievement, I rarely considered the ways that my own identity development, not just my role as a school parent, was shaped by my relationship and negotiations with the school. The literature on family-school relationships, specifically parent involvement[2], often conceives of parents as a key ingredient for student achievement (e.g., Choi et al., 2015; Epstein, 2009; Hoover-Dempsey & Whitaker, 2010). The research focuses on school and child outcomes but rarely on parent outcomes (except to the extent that a child's success is tied to success in parenting). In both research and policy, the parent

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[2] Throughout this paper, parent "involvement" will be used to refer to the school-sanctioned roles and parent "engagement" will be used to refer to ways that parents construct roles for themselves in relation to the school.

is framed as an instrument in service to the school and the accepted ways of being involved are defined in school-centric ways. This paper offers an alternative framework for analyzing how parents interact with the school, proposes a model for how a parent's identity development is influenced by this interaction and explores how parent engagement helps children develop an understanding of civic engagement.

In examining family-school relationships, I focus on parent *engagement* rather than involvement. Engagement indicates that parents are choosing to take part, rather than being required to do so by the school. I draw on Boulanger's (2018) work in seeking to refine the use of the term parent engagement to capture and critique the notion of the relational activity the parent is part of as well as the internal processes and negotiations a parent undertakes in making her position meaningful for both herself and her children. Rather than school-centric involvement, parent engagement focuses on the parent and her choices in the positions she plays in the school and the ways she participates with her child outside of school. The activities that parents choose to engage in, as well as the parent's internal negotiations about how to be engaged and why, are situated in relation to a variety of categories, such as a parent's gender, race, class and sexual orientation and such factors also influence opportunities for parents.

Thus, examining family-school relationships requires a more complex model than researchers typically use, one that accounts for the parent-child-school relationship but as well as a) the larger societal narratives that influence parent roles, b) the structure of the school context and the unique relationships and activities that make up that context and shape family-school relationships, and c) the individual histories and identities of parents. Using two theories drawing on sociocultural frameworks—Holland et al.'s (1998) theory of self and identity and Rogoff's (1990; 1995) theory of cultural apprenticeships in learning—this paper examines how family-school relationships may be studied in ways that open them up as "worlds of possibility" (Urrieta, 2007, p. 114). The purpose of this article is to push the ways in which parents are framed in policies promoting parent participation and to expand how parent engagement might be studied by researchers as a context of development for both parents and children.

This paper begins with a discussion of the ways that parent roles and positions in schools are conceptualized and discussed in the literature. It moves to a consideration of the narratives that shape parenting and how parents conceive of their place in these narratives, an analysis of how the narratives are related to the figured worlds of family-school relationships, and how parents may alter their internalized discourse about parent engagement. The paper concludes with a discussion of how parent engagement may serve as apprenticeships for children to learn about civic engagement.

CHANGING ROLES AND POSITIONS

"Family–school partnership" and "home–school–community partnership" are terms widely used in describing ideal relationships between parents and schools today (Epstein, 2009). In fact, many districts and states in the United States have policies in place that specifically call

for parent partnerships as a goal of public education. Schools receiving Federal Title I monies (funds that support schools that have higher percentages of students from lower income backgrounds) must have a home–school compact, and some U.S. public charter schools require a parent "contract" for involvement (Nakagawa, 2000). In some public school districts, such as in Chicago, IL, a certain number of parents must serve on a local school council or other committee at each school. Parents are asked to take on many decision-making roles on these committees, including approving budgets and setting school improvement plans.

However, the discourse of partnership tends to center on parent involvement activities, having evolved from what Epstein (1992) described as a shift from separate to sequenced to overlapping family–school relationships. Parents did not become "partners" in education without the school institution allowing this to happen. When family-school partnerships were brought in as part of policy, such as in the Chicago School reform movement, parent presence in the schools, usually through involvement activities, was viewed as a way to balance the interests of teachers and administrators (Hess, 1991).

Despite the desire for greater parent involvement on a broad level, there is little evidence that parent input results in lasting school change. Even in Chicago, where a very strong role for parents in school decision making was mandated, parents often found it difficult to gain the skills, knowledge and authority needed to promote school change and improvement (Lewis & Nakagawa, 1995). In Stelmach's (2004, 2016) research on school councils and community action teams at schools in Canada, she used an institutional analysis to explore why these councils and teams were mostly ineffective. One key finding was that parents, especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, have little influence in changing school practices due to deeply ingrained school system constraints. For example, teachers guarded their professional status, administrators focused on formal committee processes that were removed from the technical aspects of instructional change, and the overall school culture reproduced limited views of parents, keeping parents themselves from adopting a stronger role. In addition, Stelmach (2016) found that parents were limited to an advisory role, one that was seen as a step following decisions by experts.

Although parent involvement might not result in school change on a broad level, the family-school partnership literature and the parent involvement research stresses the importance of involvement for student outcomes. Parent involvement has been related to better student variables such as self-efficacy, achievement outcomes and test scores (Choi et al., 2015). However, parental engagement shifts this narrative to focus more on the autonomy and agency of parents, and by serving as a way to bring disenfranchised parents into schools (Barton et al., 2004; Carreon, Drake & Barton, 2005; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012). For example, Barton et al. (2004) described the "ecologies of engagement" the ethnic- and language-minority parents in her study created by interacting with schools in their own ways. Parents raised questions, gained knowledge about the school and created space to be a part of the school. Their work argues that parent "presence" in any aspect of schooling is an important function (Carreon, Drake, & Barton, 2005).

However, there is also a challenge for choosing to be present in the schools, especially for parents who may not have the kinds of social and cultural capital that is valued in school settings. For example, Matthiesen (2016) provides an insightful analysis of how a deficit perspective plays out in family-school relations with Somali diaspora parents in Danish Public Schools. The teachers position the Somali parents as lacking the knowledge and abilities to be involved, discounting the parents' role in the school and marginalizing their voices. Despite being in the schools and wanting better treatment for their children, parents are not viewed as partners. Instead, in an effort to maintain positive relationships with teachers, parents choose not to challenge the teachers and are constructed as complacent. As Matthiesen (2015) explains, "A position of positivity, of compliance, thus seems necessary to them [the parents] in order to ensure a good schooling for their children" (p. 19).

Similarly, research by Brantlinger (2003) and Lareau (2003) underscores how parent involvement may be used to reproduce existing inequalities by reinforcing existing differences. Middle-class parents, who possess the social and cultural capital to be involved in ways that meet school expectations, and who also feel more comfortable in the established relations and expectations of the school, feed into the construction of uninvolved parents as uncaring. Both Brantlinger and Lareau suggested that middle-class parents are better at negotiating the system to the advantage of their own children and may even justify inequities in the school system to the benefit of their own children.

A clear example of how parent involvement favors middle-class families comes from Doucet (2011), who discussed parent involvement as a ritualized practice that reinforces existing inequalities by creating a "group identity" within typically-involved, middle-class, majority (what she terms "mainstream") parents. This group identity leads to exclusionary practices and interactions that leave parents who are linguistically, culturally and socioeconomically diverse being pushed to the margins of the school community. Doucet's research argues that three root paradigms—the cult of domesticity, the cult of capital and the cult of pedantocracy—underlie the ritualized nature of parent involvement. Much like the narratives of parent involvement, Doucet discusses how images of mothers helping with bake sales (domesticity), the resources and support that flows to involved parents (capital) and the prescriptive nature of the kinds of roles schools outline for parents (pedantocracy) work together to create the circumstances in which parent involvement becomes ritualized. Doucet concludes by arguing for parent involvement practices that "reenvision and reengage" parents with schools.

The literature points to a need for more complex ways of understanding parent engagement in schools. It is important to interrogate the parent role especially in light of the many years that parents interact with this particular societal institution, and how the relationship shifts and the parent develops due to changes in the school, child, home life and society.

NARRATIVES OF PARENTING

Typically, the "goodness" and necessity of certain types of parent involvement for school and student outcomes becomes reinforced through school practices and policies. The parent

involvement roles typically valued by many schools primarily consist of school-centric roles (Alameda-Lawson & Lawson, 2016), ones that the school institution has identified as important, but not necessarily ones that parents see as meaningful (Anderson & Minke, 2010; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012). Parents who step outside of the defined boundaries of school-sanctioned involvement may be deemed as "helicopter parents" (if they go beyond these roles) or uncaring parents (if they choose not to take part). Such constructions of parents are not only demeaning, but fail to acknowledge the transformative roles that parents may negotiate for themselves in relation to schools.

I find it helpful to consider these typical parent involvement roles as part of *narratives of good parenting*—stories that define who is a "good" parent— that are structured by educational institutions and reinforced through societal values. Identifying the narratives surrounding family-school relationships is a first step to critique and change them. These often taken-for-granted narratives structure and constrain the ways in which parents may interact with the school environment, and they shape how a parent approaches school and develops an identity as a parent-in-school. Parents are defined by these narratives, even if they choose not to take part in them. Czarniawska (2004) explains, "Other people or institutions concoct narratives for others without including them in the conversation; *this is what power is about.* Some people decide about other people's jobs, their livelihoods, their identities" (p. 5, emphasis in original). Parents often lack power in relation to the school. This is especially true for parents from marginalized groups (e.g., immigrant, ethnic minority, language minority or lower-income parents), for whom these unspoken narratives may operate to further marginalize and penalize them for failing to enact the standard narratives of parent involvement.

One step in re-figuring family-school relationships is to better understand how the narratives related to parent involvement operate in shaping parent opportunities and choices. Czarniawska (2004) discussed that in order to understand broader issues in society, the narratives must be identified. As she wrote, "To understand a society or some part of society, it is important to discover its repertoire of legitimate stories" (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 5). As with Lave and Wenger's (1991) work on legitimate peripheral practice, which defines what practices are recognized as part of a community of practice, the "legitimate stories" of family-school relationships establishes whose participation and what kinds count.

POSSIBLE (FIGURED) WOLRDS

As Boulanger (2018) discusses, the concept of parent engagement is under-theorized and rarely accounts for a complexity of the parent's individual subjectivity, situation, development and context. Instead, theoretical work that has been done focuses primarily on the roles parents play in the schools (e.g., Epstein, 1992; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995) and the link to child outcomes. Boulanger's work pushes the field forward by recognizing the subjectivity of the parent, the many assumptions and unspoken expectations influencing the relationship between family and school, and by building on Iannaccone, Marsico and Tateo's (2012) concept of the "educational self" to consider the development of the parent in relation to the school. The "educational self" explains how ways of interacting in educational contexts

are shaped by our lifetime experiences in school and other educational settings. A certain part of our knowledge, identity and dispositions related to school are activated whenever we interact in an educational context.

Similarly, parent identity is shaped through the school context and "possible worlds" for parents and children are structured. I use the concept of identity discussed by Holland et al. (1998):

> *"Identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations. We are interested in identities, the imaginings of self in worlds of action, as social products; indeed, we begin with the premise that identities are lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice. But we are also interested in identities as psychohistorical formations that develop over a person's lifetime, populating intimate terrain and motivating social life. Identities are a key means through which people care about and care for what is going on around them. They are important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being"* (p. 5).

This very dynamic, always-changing perspective on identity development suggests that the many social activities that parents engage in at school and with other actors within the school setting should be studied as a way of further understanding identity development for parents. As one of the contexts outside of home where parents regularly interact, it makes sense to consider how their identities are shaped in the "social practice" of the school and by the roles that parents play in the schools. In what ways can engagement with the school be the stimulus for identity development that encompasses "new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being"?

Holland's theory highlights the concept of "figured worlds," as contexts of activity into which individuals enter and learn particular ways of interacting. This concept provides a structure for analyzing and understanding the "roles" that parents play in the context of family-school relationships. However, Holland's theory also examines how these worlds may be imagined in new ways, such as when parents negotiate new positions in relation to the school. This offers an opportunity for examining how family-school relations can stimulate changes in the school environment while also resulting in new identities for parents.

A figured world is a "socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 52). A figured world is shaped by narratives and other cultural factors and, as Urrieta (2007) explains, "Figured worlds are encountered in day-to-day social activity and lived through practices and activities. Identities are thus formed in the processes of participating in activities organized by figured worlds" (p.109). Holland's theory relies on Bakhtin's (1982) discussion of the "dialogic self" and how self-development takes place through self-authorship.

In the context of school, one "figured world" is that of family-school relations. The narratives driving the roles parents play in the schools are ones that often establish expectations about the kind of presence parents must have in the schools (supportive and subordinate), the amount of involvement (regular and visible) and the consequences for lack of involvement (student failure, withdrawal of resources). The assumed exchange/reciprocity shaped by the figured world of family-school relations will disadvantage those children whose parents are unable or unwilling to take part in the narrative of a "good" parent.

The process of identity development in a figured world takes place through both conceptual and material processes. On a conceptual level, figured worlds "provide contexts of meaning" for ways people act and think about others and themselves as well as tangible abilities to change how they act (Urietta, 2007, p. 110). I have argued that family-school relations frequently reinforce inequitable relations in society, thereby reproducing inequality, due to the narratives that create a requirement of parent involvement for student achievement (Nakagawa, 2000). For example, the figured worlds of parent involvement for lower income or minority parents often reinforce deficit views of parents, such that parents may internalize this view of themselves as somehow lacking when they are unable to be involved in expected ways.

Countering this reproduction of inequality requires new conceptual processes. This is why the concept of parent engagement is powerful. The idea of engagement may provide a means of resisting, changing and "liberation from" the interactions that reproduce social inequality, especially when we consider the ways in which parents may personally benefit from the engagement rather than merely focusing outwardly toward the school and child. This reframing can also shift narratives, thereby creating new figured worlds through which parents may engage with schooling.

However, even with new processes of parent engagement, existing inequalities may still be reinforced through family-school relations. Material processes such as status and power accrue through an individual's role and actions in a figured world. The reciprocity and exchange that comes in typical family-school relations dictates that parents who fulfill the role of "involved parent" receive certain benefits—greater access to administrators, more attention for their child—due to the relationships the parent establishes. These material processes influence a parent's sense of self and reinforce parent involvement in school-sanctioned activities. Thus, even if parent engagement provides ways for marginalized parents to gain more access, it may not shift who has power in the school.

In addition to the material and conceptual process that influence development, creating and producing a personal identity in relation to a figured world further depends on three mechanisms: "negotiations of positionality, space of authoring, and world making" (Urrieta, 2007, p. 111). Positionality is the subjective perspective from which a person views the external world and chooses to react or not.

> *"[Positionality] refers to the fact that personal activity (the identified action of a person) always occurs from a particular place in a social field of ordered and interrelated points*

or positions of possible activity . . . A person engaged in social life, a person involved in an activity or practice, is presumed to have a perspective . . . Persons look at the world from the positions into which they are persistently cast" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 44).

In the figured world of family-school relationships, parents are often cast as supporters to the school (e.g., as volunteers in the classroom, helping with fundraising, assisting at events), making it difficult to conceive of other ways of acting. Any action that a parent takes or may wish to take is influenced and shaped not just by the role she is cast into, but also by a variety of different experiences—individual histories—the parent brings to that role. From that individual position a parent has many choices—"mainstream" parents, as in Doucet's (2011) study, have greater social capital to be at the school, understand and enact the ritual of parent involvement, and also recognize the unspoken contract that involved parents accrue greater benefits in the school. Mainstream parents already know the script and can more easily step into the figured world of family-school relations.

In a figured world, the individual must either accept, reject or negotiate their role in it. For example, Delgado Gaitan and Trueba's (1991) classic work on immigrant children and families "crossing cultural borders" to be successful in U.S. schools illustrates how new parent engagement roles may be authored in the school. Mexican immigrant parents in their study were dissatisfied by the education their children received from the school. Through conversations with researchers, parents developed a space in which to share their own histories, concerns, expectations and desires for their child's school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993). In contrast to being cast as uncaring, as the school believed, parents wanted to be involved. Delgado-Gaitan describes one parent, Mr. Reyes, standing up at a meeting to express this frustration, "In his opinion, many families felt isolated, not because they did not care, but because they did not have the necessary experience to communicate with the schools" (p. 397).

As parents met and organized separately from the school, they discussed their treatment in the school, supported each other's experiences and determined what they valued and what changes they would like to see in their children's schooling. The learning of new parent roles also caused challenges for Delgado-Gaitan (1993) who began questioning her own role as a researcher when she was asked by the parents to present her data and help them as they organized. In the end, Delgado-Gaitan changed her view of both herself as a researcher and her understanding of the parents in the district, stating how she "believed initially" that parents were ignorant of ways to organize collectively according to U.S. norms. But she changed her perspective, seeing that "Parents interacted with one another in ways familiar to them based on mutual respect for each other's opinions and experiences in the traditions of their own culture" (p. 408).

Although neither Delgado-Gaitan nor parents in her study used terms such as "figured worlds," the parents were constructing their own figured world of family-school relations, one built on their own strengths, dispositions and understandings of what education entailed. The parents then approached the school with specific requests. By entering the school from a different position, with a list of requests and empowered by collective action,

the parents were viewed differently by the school administrators and teachers. Delgado-Gaitan and her colleagues facilitated parent meetings wherein the parents could develop a community and activate a "shared repertoire" of practices (Wenger, 1998) that allowed them to pursue their collective goals. The parents saw themselves differently too, as advocates for their children, rather than supporters of what the school requested. Thus, rather than involving themselves in the figured worlds already created for the parents at the school, the parents created new roles, requiring new relationships with the school. However, the parents in Delgado-Gaitan's study could not have rejected the existing roles for parents without an understanding of other possibilities. They developed another sense of their own identity because outside of school they were able to invent and experiment—"play"—with other ways of acting.

As Holland and Lave (2001) explain, the agency of the individual shapes how she participates in the activity. The positionality of the individual is influenced by the role into which she is cast but the parent, having agency, may negotiate and author new roles. Parent engagement provides the possibility for agency. Holland et al. (1998) use the idea of improvisation to consider how this new authoring permits the individual to not just try something new, but learn about and create a new figured world. Through social play and practice, an individual may try out new ways of acting. As this experimentation takes place, the individual may "develop new competencies," resources, strategies and ways of being that can lead to new figured worlds (Urrieta, 2007, p. 111). This is the way in which marginalized identities may become central. But as Holland states, "the first step toward authoring and reauthoring is . . . internally persuasive discourses" (p. 182). Individuals must first imagine and then believe in the possibility of these new roles in order to author them. In the figured world of traditional family-school relationships, and especially for parents who have been marginalized by existing school structures, an "internally persuasive discourse" may be hard to develop. There are constraints both from the context of the school and from the economic, educational and psychological resources to which a parent may have access.

POSSIBILITIES FOR SHIFTING THE INTERNAL DISCOURSE

The parent-in-school identity is tied to the activities in which parents engage. Part of what may be important in this conception is the level at which parents feel obligated to participate in school activities. Parents engage with the school for a variety of reasons but may feel a sense of obligation to do so based on subtle and not so subtle messages from the school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). As schools shape these "opportunities" to be involved, they are creating figured worlds of parent involvement. Parents volunteering in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, donating materials, supporting fundraising efforts, serving on school committees are all roles that have been established within the figured world of parent involvement, and often urged upon parents by schools. The expectations and obligations may create an internal discourse for parents related to what a good parent "should" do and these roles are reinforced through narratives, policies and research about the importance of parent involvement to academic achievement.

Of note is that the figured world of traditional family-school relationships can be disconnected to the lives of the individual parents. The roles for parents neither acknowledge nor value the personal lived history an individual might bring to the process and this is particularly problematic for families that have historically been marginalized through schools. There is little space for parents to develop internally persuasive discourses that challenge typical parent roles if they cannot bring their personal strengths and ways of living to the figured world. Delgado-Gaitan (1993) reflected on a similar point as the immigrant parents organized themselves:

> "In the case of the Latino parents who felt fearful and insecure because they did not know how to interact with the schools, I noticed how honest and sincere they were in sharing their feelings ... They confronted their enduring selves through continuity with their social history. . . . As parents discovered their strengths and developed new ones, they became more capable of articulating their situated selves in their new contexts" (p. 408).

Through the activity of self-organizing, parents also exemplified the importance of "history-in-person" (Holland & Lave, 2001). By drawing on their own individual social histories in creating their parent committee, they were able to better nurture their own internally persuasive discourses. For the parents in Delgado-Gaitan's study, their self-organization put them on more equal footing with the organization of teachers and somewhat mirrored the taken-for-granted ways that upper-income parents assume their voice and concerns will be recognized by educators.

Parents may resist or question the standard narratives of parent involvement. This points to another important feature of figured worlds, that within this context "the space of authoring is also a contested space, a space of struggle" (Barron, 2014, p. 255). This is where the intersections of an individual's identity in relation to school may provide chances for parents to develop new persuasive internal discourses that will, in turn, allow parents to imagine new ways to engage. For example, the work by Moll and others (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Moll et al.,1992) on funds of knowledge suggests how the identities and competencies that parents develop outside of school, if activated in relation to the school setting, may allow for resistance to restrictive school roles. Funds of knowledge refers to the skills and knowledge individuals possess related to their culture and homes. Such knowledge, if valued and recognized in the school system, can allow for greater parental engagement.

As Delgado-Gaitan's study (1993) illustrated, the use of community and connection is a crucial means of developing a persuasive internal discourse for what "could be." For example, Barton et al.'s (2004) research described how immigrant parents carved space out between school-sanctioned activities to share information and support that led to new knowledge of how to interact in school. These informal spaces for community facilitated parent engagement in schools that differed from the formal spaces and figured worlds created by the school. The connections that these immigrant mothers established afforded them the space to develop a persuasive internal discourse that allowed parents to take on other roles, such as being better advocates for their children. What Barton et al.'s research

also suggests is that those parents who are marginalized in the school system may enact social play and experimentation through community and connection with other parents. The power of community may allow for the development of a belief in the possibility of other roles in the school—and establish a persuasive internal discourse.

In some instances, the persuasive internal discourse may also be scaffolded through policies and processes that create the opportunity for greater involvement. For example, policies such as the Chicago School Reform Act of 1988, which created the space and opportunity for new roles in the school, permitted parents who had not been involved in the past to imagine a new role in relation to the school. The policy forced parents to step into positions of power in local school boards, and permitted some parents the opportunity to experiment with new roles in the newly configured world of Chicago schools. However, the social play of the newly involved parents sometimes clashed with those parents who had been involved for many years—creating a new figured world, with new roles for parents was not just a matter of policy. The new roles parents occupied did not fit with the expectations of school administrators, and even parents who chose to occupy the new roles struggled with stepping in to the new responsibilities, especially in the face of resistance from administrators, teachers and sometimes other parents (Lewis & Nakagawa, 1995).

The conflict between a taken-for-granted figured world and a newly emerging one might be thought of in terms of differences in what Holland et al. (1998) term relational and positional identities. The positional identities of the parents were those that drew on how the parents were allowed to change the ways they interacted with educators and other parents—parents new to the board may have moved from outsiders to positions of power and they were no longer in a subordinate position in the school. The relational identity is that aspect of the self where one is able to interact with others based on social connections. Some parents were thrust into a situation having few relationships on which to draw and lacking the social capital to establish these. The Chicago School Reform created a context where the roles of parents clashed with those of the administrators because their identities were in part "defined by their position, relative to others" (Chang, 2014, p. 32). And parents, unused to roles as decision makers, frequently deferred to their positional identity as subordinate to administrators and their relational identity as feeling less comfortable in the role of decision maker. Although a persuasive internal discourse might have been practiced through the parent roles created by the Chicago School Reform policy (Lewis & Nakagawa, 1995) the existing figured worlds shifted very little.

Both of these examples suggest that parents may change how they identify themselves in relation to the school and create new worlds for themselves—new spaces in which to be engaged. The challenge to fostering and promoting these new worlds is that they will often conflict with existing contexts and systems embedded in the school and other societal institutions. These systemic oppressions, often related to race, gender, class and other groups with less power in society, will necessarily control the extent to which the figured world of family-school narratives may be transformed.

APPRENTICESHIP IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

A landmark study by Robert Putnam (Putnam, 2000) discussed the decline of involvement in civil society, with individuals less involved in associations, volunteer work and other community activities. Part of this decline was captured by the fewer number of parents involved in parent teacher associations or volunteering at school over time.

However, parent engagement in school provides an ideal context to begin socializing young people to be engaged too. As a parent's own identity and development is influenced, we should also examine how the child's development is affected in the process. The figured world of the school for the child (especially in elementary school) constrains students to roles with almost no power. As parents reauthor their roles in the school, is it possible for children's figured worlds and roles to also be reauthored?

Rogoff's work (1990, 1995) on cultural apprenticeships in learning provides a connection between parent engagement, shifts in parent roles, and student development. Although her work did not explicitly discuss parent engagement, Rogoff did address parent-child interactions. Rogoff's theory allows us to redefine family-school interactions as a cultural apprenticeship in learning social engagement and change. Children attend school with their parents, watch as parents interact with school authority and are supported in learning to ask questions. Eventually, through observation and guidance, children may reach the level of participatory appropriation, where they are independently school and civically engaged. In addition, it reframes a parent involvement narrative to be one where parent engagement may serve as an apprenticeship for children to learn about civic engagement. It expands the notion of parent engagement in ways that recognizes that as parents develop their own roles in relation to schools they are also simultaneously producing new ways for children to develop and engage with civic life.

For example, in a recent chapter (Nakagawa & Eigo, 2016) I wrote about how my own engagement in my daughter's schooling served as an apprenticeship for her learning how to be empowered to ask questions in the school and take part in civic engagement. My own identity work in the figured world of family-school relationships provided an opportunity for my daughter to observe and develop her own sense of engagement. Our experience mirrors what Rogoff (1995) described as sociocultural learning on three levels, community/institutional, interpersonal and personal. These levels echo the development of the persuasive internal dispositions that facilitate imagining new roles for parent engagement. As my daughter observed my engagement and practiced negotiating her own roles in the figured world of schooling, she developed the dispositions to imagine her own possibilities as a leader engaged in community work beyond the school.

At the community/institutional level, the apprenticeship involves being immersed in the figured world of family-school relationships. At that level my daughter observed parent-teacher meetings, volunteer and fundraising activities, and policy discussions. The interpersonal level included learning through guided participation through the figured world of school, where my daughter engaged in asking questions about school testing and dress-code policies. Finally, participatory appropriation involves the internalization of

learning for the individual. At this level, the internal dispositions my daughter developed at the community and interpersonal levels transferred outside of school to her serving on the board of directors for a reproductive health organization. The process of participatory appropriation allows an individual to "change and in the process become prepared to engage in subsequent similar activities" (Rogoff, 1995, p. 150).

CONCLUSION

By examining parent engagement simultaneously from the perspective of Holland et al. (1998) and Rogoff (1995) we expand the possibilities for family-school relationships and suggest a mechanism for how parent engagement may provide a way for the next generation to become more engaged in changing societal institutions. This seems a particularly useful way of conceptualizing how marginalized groups may, through re-imagined family-school relationships, challenge schooling to become more equitable. The figured world of family-school relationships may be shifted from parent involvement to engagement and parents may author new roles and identities for themselves. Rogoff's work adds another layer by conceiving of parent engagement as a site for apprenticeship in civic engagement. These dual processes may help to envision ways that family-school relationships provide new paths for identity development for both parents and children.

Lightfoot (2004) calls the interactions between parents and teachers "the essential conversation," and discusses how both parents and teachers must listen and learn from each other in order for students to be successful. Parent engagement overall must include a process of listening and learning—knowledge development for both parents and schools requires that a dialogue take place. By eliminating rote requirements for parent involvement and co-constructing opportunities for engagement, this mutually beneficial dialogue may take place. The dialogue would change the figured world of parent involvement, allowing new narratives, relationships and development for both parents and educators. Future research should examine the figured worlds of parent involvement vs. engagement, the nuances of parent roles, and the internalized discourse that results from parent engagement and involvement.

In addition to essential conversations, parents and schools could encourage parent engagement as a means to support opportunities for participatory appropriation on the part of students. Participatory appropriation through parent engagement would allow the child and parent to work interdependently in ways "that are active and dynamically changing" (Rogoff, 1995, p. 151). The possibilities for parents to work alongside their children in engagement holds potential for both the parents and students. Researchers and educators could examine how parent engagement could facilitate opportunities to help young people learn about civic engagement.

Finally, the shift to parent engagement also recognizes that the current narratives and figured worlds about parent involvement often penalize those families who are already marginalized in the system. Examining how parent engagement may shift parent roles and family-school relationships to allow for empowerment of children and parents is critical to

making schools "sites of possibility" for all families. Simultaneously, parent engagement contributes to a "social architecture of participation" (Scapp, 2006)—a term used to describe the building blocks necessary for individuals to engage with institutions in productive ways (Gilmore & Barnett, 1992). Finally, re-imagining the parent role in the school for parents who have been traditionally marginalized in educational contexts, establishes the possibility for power relationships to change and ultimately result in greater equity in our public schools.

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