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Critical, Project-Based Clinical Experiences as Sustainable "Third Space" Reforms

Kristien Zenkov & Kristine E. Pytash

Abstract

In this article, the authors—university faculty members working across college and school contexts in the United States—detail how teacher educators might address two challenges facing the teacher education field: (a) the long-standing critique of traditional teacher preparation in the United States as an isolated, questionably relevant ivory tower endeavor and (b) the community and political concerns and tensions that teachers and students are facing outside of, and increasingly within, school. They speculate that university-based teacher educators might attend to both issues by considering these as elements of the documented existential challenges facing the teacher education field and responding to these concerns by appealing to third space notions, Teacher Prep 3.0, and current clinical practice innovations with classroom-level interventions. In this conceptual article, the authors describe

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the theoretical bases for this reframing and detail the elements of critical, project-based (CPB) clinical experience structures. Although, over the past decade, a range of scholars have explored CPB experiences, the authors propose that this clinical experience model might uniquely answer these teacher education critiques and community and political concerns. They illustrate their CPB efforts and discuss the issues that support and impede the implementation of such structures and roles, reflecting on how these mechanisms offer preservice teachers, veteran classroom teachers, school-based teacher educators, and university-based teacher educators a model for collaboratively, authentically engaging with some of the civic discourse concerns facing our democracy across school, university, and community contexts.

Introduction

We came of age as university faculty members (or, more accurately, university-based teacher educators, or UBTEs) in colleges of education in the United States in an era when our mentors—established scholars and teacher educators—were ensconced in the traditional culture of academia. Although many colleges of education in the United States were founded as normal schools and were originally viewed as technical training institutions (Harper, 1970; Katz, 2008), generations of education scholars successfully advocated for integrating these schools into the comprehensive university structure (Ogren, 2021; Payzant, 2004). This status remains despite arguments for radical revisions to colleges of education and the roles of university-based teacher educators (Labaree, 2004; Zeichner, 2006).

Yet, teacher education practitioners and scholars have long been aware of—and increasingly acknowledge—the fact that much of the work of teacher education occurs in primary and secondary classrooms, with veteran teachers (or school-based teacher educators or SBTEs) serving in almost invisible mentor capacities while playing essential instructional and coaching roles. This teacher education structural phenomenon has historically been characterized as a gap between the university coursework preservice teachers complete and the clinical experience realities they encounter in schools (Fitchett et al., 2018; Zeichner, 2010). Critics of traditional teacher education programs continue to offer similarly negative assessments of these fissures (Ronfeldt et al., 2014), often accompanied by unfavorable appraisals of university faculty members' roles in teacher preparation (Zeichner et al., 2015). This theory–practice or school–university divide is one of the primary instructional and scholarship challenges of UBTEs' professional lives—one that differentially impacts these teacher educators based on the research expectations of their institutions.

In response to these critiques of the ivory tower version of teacher education, numerous scholars, policy makers, and teacher education professional and accreditation organizations in the United States have attempted to mandate more intentionally organized field experiences for teacher candidates (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2018; Hollins, 2015; National

Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2010). While not always explicitly described as such, these intentionally organized field experiences are rooted in notions of third space and include practice-based strategies and pedagogies of enactment. Ultimately, such structures also attempt to answer what have been characterized as existential challenges to university-based teacher education and university-based teacher educators' roles.

A second, more urgent difficulty teachers and teacher educators have recently faced is the question of how to address the increasingly common community and political tensions in the United States that have seeped or been thrust into high school and middle school classrooms (Geller, 2020). These include issues of structural racism, historical gender oppression and sexual violence directed toward women, and, in everyday ways, the normalization of xenophobic political discourses (Darragh & Petrie, 2019; Sondel et al., 2018). We recognize that these are realities that classroom teachers (our SBTE partners) and the teacher candidates with whom they work are having to learn to navigate and that we by extension must also consider in our university courses and research. Committed to antiracist- and social justice–focused teacher education and PK–12 curricula, pedagogies, and frameworks, and to promoting civil civic dialogue in all education settings, we welcome the challenge of examining how to address such issues in our classrooms and those of our future teacher students. Yet we continue to seek models of how to do so effectively, particularly via teacher education structures that simultaneously address that theory–practice divide.

We have speculated that teacher educators based in university settings might facilitate the consideration of this combination of concerns through a heightened focus on current clinical experience and teacher education reforms. We have also hypothesized that UBTEs and SBTEs might identify more authentic forms of professional engagement and newly compelling reasons to exist if our professional roles included uniquely responsive, sustainable, and boundary-spanning efforts across university courses and school- and community-based field experiences. These would represent a Teacher Prep 3.0 orientation with justice-focused and social transformation objectives that extend our narrower teaching or teacher education goals. Specifically, we have attempted to act upon the proposition that teacher educators might enact the third space theory long proposed as a means of bridging that university–classroom divide (Zeichner, 2010). We suggest such ends might be achieved through implementing clinical experiences in diverse settings—experiences that are rooted in collaborations with a wide array of youths and preservice/veteran classroom teachers who are enacting merged teaching and research endeavors that explicitly address rhetorical, ideological, and community conflicts.

In our previous research studies, we have investigated the nature of alternative clinical experiences, with a particular focus on such experiences implemented in literacy education settings (Pytash & Zenkov, 2018; Zenkov & Pytash, 2018). This conceptual article is based on these earlier examinations, with the goal of

integrating these with a proposal with potential implications for teacher education in our current, more politically charged context. The purpose of this article is to extend the illustrations and understandings of how to implement alternative critical experiences. Specifically, in this article, we outline the nature of the existential challenges facing traditional university-based teacher preparation, and we consider the critical, project-based (CPB) model of clinical practice as a rejoinder to these phenomena. While CPB experiences have been explored by a range of scholars over the past decade, we propose that this clinical experience model might uniquely answer some of these teacher education critiques and some of the pressing pedagogical and community issues of our time (Dutro et al., 2018; Pellegrino et al., 2016). CPB experiences require UBTEs to work alongside prospective teachers, veteran teachers, and young people in educational spaces (Fisher & Many, 2014) to address real-world, often grand concerns, supporting preservice teachers to develop justice-oriented teaching frameworks (Baily et al., 2014; Cammarota, 2011).

Our intent in this conceptual article is to introduce the features of this model and illustrate how this approach might help to fill this clinical experience gap and address the foundational theory–practice divide of traditional teacher education structures. We highlight this model, as well, for its focus on positioning young people as powerful players who might help themselves, their peers, and their family and community members to see beyond their differences and engage with civic discourse concerns facing our democracy across school, university, and community settings. Here we summarize the theoretical, historical, practical, and research bases upon which this model relies, and we detail and analyze one CPB example from our teacher education practices. In our consideration of how this structure might contribute to a more viable model of teacher education, we have been guided by the following call: "If teaching is indeed a complex practice, and not something that individuals naturally develop on their own, then teacher educators must develop new approaches for preparing ordinary people . . . to be prepared for the challenge" (Grossman et al., 2009, p. 287).

Contexts and Literature Review

Our consideration of teacher educators' roles, teacher education reforms, and the pressing issues facing future and veteran teachers is rooted in a range of contexts and informed by a rich set of research literatures, which we briefly examine here. These circumstances include the historical and persistent theory–practice or school–university divide, trends in teacher education program enrollments, and the changing nature of teacher education structures and teacher educators' capacities. These realities also increasingly involve the community tensions and xenophobic rhetoric that veteran teachers, preservice teachers, and teacher educators must be ready to constructively address. Finally, we explore current teacher education programs and teacher educator role reforms, including the heightened emphasis

on clinical experiences and Teacher Prep 3.0 structures that we hypothesize might help to address this particular set of challenges.

The Theory-Practice or School-University Divide

Numerous teacher education researchers and practitioners, professional associations, accrediting bodies, and U.S. policy makers have documented the disconnect between preservice teachers' learning in university courses, clinical experiences, and eventual PK–12 teaching work (AACTE, 2010; Colmenares, 2021; Hollins, 2015). This divide is often the result of conflicts between conceptual stances about teaching and learning and the implementation of pedagogical practices within K–12 settings (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Flessner & Lecklider, 2017). More than three decades ago, Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) referred to the university–reality gulf as the *two-worlds pitfall*, highlighting the fact that preservice teachers often encounter contradictory ideas about effective instruction in their university methods courses and their school-based field experiences.

Teacher education scholars continue to problematize and rethink this rift (Scott et al., 2014). Smagorinsky and colleagues (2013, 2015) extended Feiman-Nemser and Buchanan's (1985) concept into the *multiple-worlds pitfall*, describing the "myriad of influences" (Smagorinsky et al., 2015, p. 285) preservice teachers encounter. When teacher candidates experience these pitfalls, they may "act in inconsistent ways in their instruction to meet competing, if not always binary, expectations for their practice and their student outcomes" (Smagorinsky et al., 2015, p. 153). Bridging this gap is especially important given that our PK–12 students are increasingly diverse and their relationships to school continue to evolve in complexity (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Hancock et al., 2017; Matsko & Hammerness, 2014; Zenkov, 2009).

This breach can cause preservice teachers to enter the teaching profession oriented toward a replication of pedagogies they encountered in their own school experiences (Bowman & Herrelko, 2014; Schutz et al., 2018; Smagorinsky & Barnes, 2014). By contrast, the goal of most educator preparation programs is to support novice classroom teachers to enact research-based, social justice orientations to teaching that consider the increasingly diverse students with whom they work (Conklin & Hughes, 2016; Hancock et al., 2017; Rust & Clift, 2015). When preservice teachers are unable to connect their identities as socially just educators to specific pedagogical practices that allow them to enact those identities, they are likely to lose their equity-focused orientations (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2016; Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Ronfeldt, 2012).

Trends and Challenges in Teacher Education Programs and Roles

While the theory–practice divide and university faculty members' detached roles may be one of the historical flaws of such traditional university-based programs, numerous other factors are impacting the very state of the teaching profession.

These include a denigration of teachers (Sutcher et al., 2019), policy attacks that have diminished teacher unions' power and number, reforms that have resulted in real reductions in teacher pay (Allegretto & Mishel, 2016), and a distrust of public institutions (Cowan et al., 2016). The result is that veteran teachers are increasingly reluctant to remain in the profession and that fewer prospective teachers are interested in pursuing teaching careers (Gray & Taie, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2017). Between 2009 and 2013, university-based teacher education program enrollments in the United States dropped by 31% (Kumashiro, 2010; Zeichner, 2014), a period during which overall postsecondary enrollment fell only 3% (Office of Postsecondary Education, 2015).

As well, alternatives to traditional teacher education programs (most notably Teach for America and its spin-offs, collectively characterized as Teacher Prep 2.0) have made damaging assumptions about educator preparation practices, considering content knowledge as the primary evidence of candidates' teaching abilities, while reducing clinical requirements (Gitomer et al., 2021; Stewart et al., 2015). We are now confronted simultaneously by the ivory tower version of teacher education; these increasingly common counterintuitive Teacher Prep 2.0 varieties (Heineke et al., 2014); and our veteran teacher colleagues', future teachers', and even our own professional and personal needs to address these community tensions. As a result, we speculate that our profession—and, by extension, teacher educators' roles, regardless of the nature of the university institution in which they are based—is in the midst of an existential crisis.

Community Tensions and Issues Facing New and Veteran Teachers

As Kretchmar and Zeichner (2016) highlighted, too often, alternative models, such as Teach for America, fail to take into account larger, justice-focused community concerns, which the authors contend should be at the center of the Teacher Prep 3.0 movement. Community-driven and context-specific teacher education efforts are especially vital considering the current environment in which new and veteran teachers find themselves. Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, demands placed on teachers were deepened by increasing political tensions in our communities and nation (Geller, 2020; Sondel et al., 2018). These challenges are particularly salient in schools that serve diverse communities and result in a greater necessity to prepare teachers to address students' emotional and academic needs simultaneously (Darragh & Petrie, 2019).

Teachers are challenged not only to consider a wider range of issues: The sheer number of their responsibilities has increased over the last several decades (Apple & Jungck, 1990; Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Fitzgerald et al., 2019), heightening the risk for burnout and feelings of isolation (Stone-Johnson, 2016). Given these realities, teacher education programs must innovate to cultivate a different demographic of reflective practitioners. New teachers must be able not

only to examine the broadest scope of teaching and learning possibilities but also to interrogate their own social locations and how those influence the ways they interpret schools and students (Haj-Broussard et al., 2015). The vision of Teacher Prep 3.0 programs even suggests that the work of preparing effective educators for the classroom must be explicitly connected to broader social movements for justice (Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016).

Teacher Education and Clinical Experience Reforms

Answering these theory–practice and teacher educator role critiques, teacher education accrediting agencies, professional associations, scholars, and practitioners have called for more diverse, responsive clinical experiences (AACTE, 2018; Association of Teacher Educators [ATE], 2015; Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP], 2013). One leading voice has been the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation, whose Standard 2 requires educator preparation programs to recognize that high-quality clinical practices are central to future teachers' preparation (CAEP, 2013). In addition, two of our field's primary professional associations—the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)—have recently made the nature of clinical teacher education (including problematizing traditionally university teacher educators' roles) primary program and policy topics (AACTE, 2012; ATE, 2015).

The highest-profile publication in the past decade to underscore the centrality of diverse clinical experiences and disrupt teacher educators' professional capacities in the United States was the NCATE (2010) Blue Ribbon Panel Report *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers*. Many of the recommendations in this publication were echoed in the AACTE (2018) Clinical Practice Commission report *A Pivot Toward Clinical Practice, Its Lexicon, and the Renewal of Educator Preparation*. Both documents addressed the need for teacher educators and teacher education programs to consider significant role and structural shifts to enhance their relevance and long-term viability, by calling for clinical faculty to serve in boundary-spanning functions and recognizing that the consideration of what counts as effective clinical practice and revisions to teacher educators' positions should happen in unison (Feuer et al., 2013).

Alternative Clinical Experience Structures

These more intensive, intentionally planned, and divide-spanning clinical experience structures and roles have taken a variety of forms. Scholars and practitioners have extended considerations of teacher education pedagogies to include the core practices with which all teachers should be proficient, implemented through practice-based strategies (Zeichner, 2013), pedagogies of enactment (Grossman et al., 2019; Ord & Nuttall, 2016), and scaffolded rehearsals (Kazemi et al., 2016).

The increased attention being paid to these pedagogies, field experience endeavors, and revised school- and university-based teacher educator roles is occurring among both U.S. and international practitioners and scholars (Many et al., 2012). Researchers in Ireland and the Netherlands have framed these examinations as inquiries into teacher educator identities (Furlong & O'Brien, 2019; Swennen & Volman, 2019), recognizing that our field must expand who it counts as teacher educators to include school-based practitioners (Czerniawski et al., 2019).

From this collection of alternative clinical experience structures, we hypothesize that the CPB model (Burke et al., 2018; Johnson & Barnes, 2018; Zenkov et al., 2018) might offer promise for addressing this range of teacher preparation program, teacher educator role, and community relevance issues. We turn next to an articulation of the definition and theoretical bases of this structure before offering an examination of an illustrative case of CPB efforts as an example of Teacher Prep 3.0 in operation. We conclude with a consideration of the implications of such a model for the theory–practice divide and community and political tension issues with which the teacher education profession continues to struggle.

Critical, Project-Based (CPB) Clinical Experiences

As established academics with a combined more than three decades as teacher education practitioners and scholars in the United States, we have employed the CPB clinical experience model in an attempt to address the challenges facing our field, our roles, and the veteran and future teachers with whom we work. Ultimately, we have implemented this alternative clinical experience structure in an effort to make our educator preparation efforts more relevant to teacher candidates, the young people they will serve, and classroom teachers playing mentor roles. Here we offer a summary of this structure, followed by an example of a CPB experience. We then spend the bulk of this article discussing the theoretical and research bases of the iteratively developed CPB framework and considering and critiquing this structure based on this example and our efforts to integrate it into our teacher education practices.

The CPB model is defined in the following way: CPB structures provide intense, short-term clinical opportunities for preservice teachers to partner with school- and university-based teacher educators and to work with youths—including those disenfranchised in and by schools. These clinical experiences model teaching practices that appeal to the notion that youths whose voices are least often heard might be the ones to whom teacher education scholars and veteran and future teachers should listen most. These experiences are social justice oriented and offer teacher candidates foundations for collaborative pedagogies that challenge the assumptions of pathology that school systems often make about young people. These project-based investigations utilize multimodal literacies in every subject area, recognizing that literacy is a social practice grounded in specific purposes, contexts, experiences,

and relationships. These activities focus on authentic ends and schools' democratic purposes, allowing young people to address grand inquiries and develop "partnership literacies," while engaging in civil and civic human exchanges, across school and community settings (Pytash & Zenkov, 2018; Zenkov & Pytash, 2018).

Here we offer an illustrative case of a CPB experience (the Having of Difficult Conversations project) implemented in the first author's (Kristien's) school–university context. The CPB model allows for a short-term clinical opportunity in which the university teacher educator works in the classroom space with the school-based teacher educator and youths in the classroom. These experiences are typically social justice oriented and offer teacher candidates the foundations for collaborative pedagogies that challenge the assumptions that society typically makes about young people. Many nuances are involved in each CPB experience: The unique features of our programs, communities, and the diverse constituents and schools with which we work dictate how we implement these structures.

The Having of Difficult Conversations Project

Kristien coordinates a graduate, 35-credit degree program for secondary education teacher candidates, who complete three semesters of coursework and clinical experiences and a semester-long internship, all of which take place in the program's eight pairs of partner middle and high schools. This CPB example occurred during the first semester of this sequence, when candidates took their first subject-specific methods course and completed a 15-hour middle/high school clinical experience, which typically consists of observations of mentor teachers.

This project was embedded in the English Methods I class that Kristien teaches each fall and spring. The project took place in Ms. Whitney's 12th-grade English class at Marshall High School,[1] where the majority of students were children of recent immigrants and representative of the diversity of the region, which includes individuals from 118 countries. Marshall is the only public high school in a very demographically diverse mid-Atlantic city of about 150,000.

Ms. Whitney and Kristien codeveloped the Having of Difficult Conversations CPB project (abbreviated as Difficult Conversations). The project unit took place over 3 weeks in February, with teacher candidates (six English, one history/social studies, one math) partnering with Kristien, Ms. Whitney, and the 24 high school seniors. Students had recently finished reading August Wilson's play *Fences*, in which the main character, Troy, a Black man in the working-class U.S. city of Pittsburgh in the 1950s, battles with himself, his wife, his sons, friends, employers, and a society bound by racism to be recognized as a potential-filled if imperfect human being—a breadwinner, father, employee, and citizen.

Keying in on the theme of "wanting to be heard and known"—and speculating that this was one source of the tensions in our communities and nation—Ms. Whitney and Kristien facilitated trios of student collaborations with one teacher

candidate to use a photovoice methodology (Schell et al., 2009) to explore four questions with pictures adolescents took and related writings they crafted:

> What is it like to be you?
>
> What is your life like?
>
> By whom are you known—and what is it like to be known?
>
> What is a justice issue that is important to you about which you and someone you care about disagree?

We were explicit with youths that we were calling on them to take an introspective look at their identities and experiences, a common focus of photovoice projects (Paone et al., 2018). The first of six project sessions began with each teacher candidate using a typed protocol to interview their mentee young people to generate potential responses to these questions. The future teachers then led photowalks in youths' classrooms, around the school grounds, and in the nearby community, encouraging youths to take pictures to illustrate and extend their thinking.

The core pedagogical strategy that the project modeled for teacher candidates was "elicitation" conferences they led with youths each project day (Clark-Ibáñez, 2007; Zenkov et al., 2012). These interactions allowed candidates to get to know students and demonstrate that they cared about them as people. These structures were the intensive instruction adolescents needed to help them consider these deceptively complex queries and the photovoice strategies. Ms. Whitney and Kristien provided a set of elicitation questions (see the appendix) to help young people explicate their thinking, while emphasizing to teacher candidates that these interactions should be responsively implemented. Over the course of the project, youths and teacher candidates provided written and visual answers to the project questions.

For the second part of the project, young people were asked to interview the individual they identified as someone in their lives that they knew well but with whom they disagreed about an equity or justice issue that they cared about. Teacher candidates discussed options for these choices of interviewees to ensure the selection of an appropriate (a safe but challenging) conversation partner and to help the young people articulate how the issue identified was related to social justice. We discussed with youths how their interviews of these individuals might result in what we recognized as potentially difficult conversations. With the teacher candidates acting as mentors, each high school senior then spoke with their chosen individual, documenting their answers to the project questions—including discussions of the justice-related issue about which they disagreed—and working with these individuals to take images they thought illustrated their responses to the questions and the justice topic.

The project culminated with a read-around during the final session at Marshall High School, where students each shared their own photograph/writing combinations for the four questions and a photo/writing combination for the conversation they had with someone they cared about regarding these justice concerns. Teacher

candidates, other teachers, and members of the school board and community listened to young people detail these products and discuss their takeaways. Ms. Whitney, Kristien, Ms. Whitney's students, and the teacher candidates also examined the outcomes of this project for potential findings that might be shared via scholarly publications. Sharing this work in this public school setting and via a scholarly outlet was recognized as a way to honor and recognize students' and preservice teachers' voices and contributions.

From this illustrative example, several benefits of the CPB model become clear. First, teacher candidates were learning to implement instructional strategies that centered students' experiences and voices. Second, students in the classroom worked collaboratively in the classroom with the university-based teacher educator, their classroom teacher, and teacher candidates on projects that allow them to take ownership of their educational experiences. Third, teacher candidates were positioned as pedagogues, engaging in authentic but manageable instructional tasks and in unique ways that challenged their assumptions about teachers' capacities. In the following section, we turn to the grounding and a critical examination of the CPB model, considered through the lens of this example.

Discussion and Analysis

We do not offer the preceding example or the CPB model as *the* answer to the critiques of university-based teacher structures and roles, in the United States or internationally. Rather, our hope here is to extend the conversation about what seems possible with such experiences and capacities (Sawyer et al., 2016), to engage in that laboratory of practice (Perry & Imig, 2008) about Teacher Prep 3.0 efforts (Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016), including an emphasis on the social responsibility of teacher education activities and structures. In the following sections, we consider each of the often-overlapping elements of the CPB definition we introduced, relating these to the Difficult Conversations illustration, highlighting relevant research, and offering critical reflections on the implications and limitations of this model.

CPB Structures Provide Intense, Short-Term Clinical Opportunities for Preservice Teachers to Partner With School- and University-Based Teacher Educators and Work With Youth—Including Those Disenfranchised in and by Schools

CPB clinical experiences address teacher education programs' need for short-term, intensive learning opportunities that illustrate the pedagogies that are possible in and across PK–12 and teacher education contexts (Darling-Hammond, 2014). Such structures appeal to the pivot in our field toward high-leverage or core teaching practices, pedagogies of enactment, and to the reconsideration of practice-based teacher education (Anthony et al., 2018; Forzani, 2014; Janssen et al., 2015). Such experiences offer veteran teachers reasonable, abbreviated pedagogical alternatives

that rely on collaborations with teacher education program constituents and challenge the traditional roles of all involved (Thompson et al., 2015).

The abridged nature of these experiences also serves preservice teachers, making the implementation and adoption of these approaches more likely (Kang & Windschitl, 2018). These experiences attempt to answer some of the sustainability critiques of third space models, by providing university-based teacher educators with truncated opportunities to engage in boundary-spanning teaching roles (Dennis et al., 2017; Williams, 2014), partner with veteran teachers (or "school-based teacher educators"), and guide teams of preservice teachers in their work (Ronfeldt, 2012) with young people for whom school has not seemed or been relevant (Bennett, 2013). In this hybrid third space, the "lack of othering" between the university-based teacher educator, the partner teacher, and preservice teachers allows for all to take part in the formation of teaching and learning practices (Laughlin, 2021, p. 23). Additionally, these hybrid roles are highlighted as foundational structures of school–university, professional development school (PDS), and coteaching partnerships, which are recognized as key features of effective, equity-focused educator preparation programs (Clarke et al., 2014; Holmes Group, 2007).

Yet, we speculate that CPB structures are sustainable in a novel way: They are not designed to require long-term engagements of or permanent role revisions for UBTEs and SBTEs. While such structures have been idealized and often illustrated by PDS practitioners and scholars, few large-scale or permanent changes to teacher educators' or teachers' roles have resulted. Perhaps the form of sustainability that will best serve all of the constituents of schools and teacher education programs will rely on ongoing, responsive, project-based structures that address the immediate learning needs of youths and preservice teachers and the pedagogical needs of classroom teachers and university teacher education faculty.

Teacher education practitioners, researchers, and policy-making bodies have recommended that future teachers critically examine their own realities and experience diverse contexts to be prepared for the work they will soon do (Teacher Preparation Task Force, 2017). These studies have revealed mixed results for new teachers' cultural awareness, the effectiveness of their pedagogical practices, and the likelihood that they will take and maintain teaching positions in such communities (Krieg et al., 2016). The intentionality of the CPB model presents opportunities for enhancing candidates' cultural sensitivity (Milner & Laughter, 2015) and for scaffolding them into the use of intervention-oriented practices that challenge pedagogical norms and help them serve their often-disengaged students (Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010).

Critical, Project-Based Clinical Experiences Model Teaching Practices That Appeal to the Notion That Youths Whose Voices Are Least Often Heard Might Be the Ones to Whom Teacher Education Scholars and Veteran and Future Teachers Should Listen Most

CPB clinical experiences appeal to the belief that equity in classroom pedagogies, youths' learning opportunities and achievement, and school structures rely on teacher candidates' recognition that schools are not neutral spaces (Fasching-Varner et al., 2014). Rather, schools have institutional cultures that reproduce inequalities, which impact youths' abilities to engage with and remain in school (Greenberg, 2015). A primary goal of CPB experiences is to position youths as capable learners across school and community settings, mentored by novice and veteran teachers who approach young people with an efficacy stance and pedagogies that give students voices in their school and community realities (Scorza et al., 2017).

CPB clinical experiences also rely on the assumption that attempts to understand diverse youths' points of view on school, issues in their lives, and the challenges their communities are facing might increase their ownership of curricula and teachers' practices (Bell et al., 2011; Mitra et al., 2012). A CPB orientation to clinical experiences reinforces the idea that voices of youth might be integral factors in determining the nature of effective instruction (Cook-Sather & Curl, 2014; Pellegrino et al., 2014; Zenkov et al., 2014). Such an inquiry orientation has been widely documented in research literature (Watson & Marciano, 2015) and has included the use of action research and participatory research methods (Call-Cummings & Martinez, 2014). Such approaches might be mirrored in collaborative, school–university partnership and boundary-spanning practices that enact third space notions, honoring school-based teacher educators while serving teacher candidates and youths (Beck, 2018; Cuenca et al., 2011; Goodwin et al., 2014). For example, in the Difficult Conversations project, our primary pedagogies included one-to-one and small-group interactions, such as mentor-like structures and elicitation conferences, where future teachers modeled inquiry and interview procedures to gather youths' insights.

These Experiences Are Social Justice Oriented and Offer Teacher Candidates Foundations for Collaborative Pedagogies That Challenge the Assumptions of Pathology That School Systems Often Make About Young People

CPB experiences look to a critical pedagogy framework (Emdin, 2016), which suggests that all educational practices should be rooted in lived experiences of empowerment for students, teachers, and teacher educators (Freire, 1970/2000). Teacher educators have historically struggled with ways to cultivate preservice teachers' dispositions toward socially just pedagogies (Agarwal et al., 2010). To address this concern, we looked to the equity literacy and justice education notions

defined by scholars and established by our professional associations (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015; National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2010).

These views intersected with the concept of third space, which hypothesizes that collaborative activities that collapse hierarchies in and across school and university roles are more democratic (Sawyer & Liggett, 2012). As English educators, we considered the concepts of justice framed by the NCTE (2013), which call on teachers to help students "develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles." Preservice teachers need clinical experiences that teach them how to enact their identities as social justice educators and respond to the inequitable situations they encounter in schools (Boylan & Woolsey, 2015).

Early CPB experiences are designed to be foundational for developing preservice teachers as socially conscious teachers, as boundary-spanning teacher educators guide candidates' awareness of the communities in which they teach and ultimately to challenge narrow views of students' success (Cammarota, 2011). Scholars have argued that social justice initiatives in teacher education are best when supported by mentor teachers with similar belief systems (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). The CPB model of mentor teachers and university faculty working alongside teacher candidates attempts to enhance these mentoring relationships, helping preservice teachers learn to construct "patterns of practice for equity" (Cochran-Smith et al., 2014, p. 119).

The Difficult Conversations project intended to enact the CPB principle that such experiences should trouble negative stereotypes of students (Gere et al., 2009). Youth participants expressed frustration with the increasingly constricted interactions in their families, schools, and communities. As an example, these adolescents shared how they and their adult family members had encountered blatant racism in what previously had been innocuous exchanges with other customers at large, chain grocery stores, where many members of our diverse immigrant communities traditionally shopped. In response, many of these youths' parents, adult family members, and caregivers insisted that these young people stop frequenting such businesses.

In an attempt to constructively integrate such tensions into the English class curriculum and this clinical experience, Kristien and his teacher partner modeled pedagogies for teacher candidates that challenged the xenophobic tone of these exchanges, to serve both these future teachers and their future students. Via such instructional strategies, we also hoped to aid young people to operate on more of an even terrain with preservice teachers, veteran teachers, and university faculty, helping to determine the research question(s) the project addressed. Youths also implemented the methods and collected the data used to answer these questions, engaged with teacher candidate mentors to analyze data, and presented the results of the project to an audience that they helped to identify (Scorza et al., 2017).

These Project-Based Investigations Utilize Multimodal Literacies in Every Subject Area, Recognizing That Literacy Is a Social Practice Grounded in Specific Purposes, Contexts, Experiences, and Relationships

While CPB experiences can be implemented in all content areas, we specifically attempted to counter the narrow, standardized test–oriented definitions of student success so prevalent in today's critiques of schools and teachers, which are supported by a restrictive definition of literacy, as a skill that is demonstrated by one's ability to read traditional texts or produce standard written forms. Scholars have documented an expanding nature of literacy, detailing how texts come in forms as diverse as music, Web-based media, texting, and social networking tools (Hinchman & Appleman, 2016). This multimodal concept of literacy is rooted in a sociocultural orientation that views literacy as a constellation of practices, which are relevant to all subjects (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011).

Because the assumptions about what counts as literacy often rely on pathological schema about youths' abilities to read, write, speak, listen, present, and create (Kamil et al., 2011), many future teachers struggle with this expanded concept. A broader notion of literacy is key to serving our increasingly diverse students, and both preservice and veteran teachers need exposure to pedagogies that integrate such a concept with varied texts (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012). Research has consistently revealed how students' literacy development plays a primary role in their decisions to continue to engage with schools' curricula and even to remain in school (Fien et al., 2018). This is also true as we consider literacy across the content areas and the literate practices within specific disciplines. Researchers have documented how the intersections of digital literacies and content area literacies can enhance students' learning within disciplines (Manderino & Castek, 2016).

Supported by both university instructors and school-based mentors, preservice teachers need opportunities to work with youths in ways that value adolescents' languages and literacy practices, and they must also learn pedagogies rooted in these expanding notions of literacy, allowing youths to engage in design-based thinking and critical problem solving, as both consumers and producers of text (Kamil et al., 2011). Via opportunities to serve as coresearchers and coteachers, diverse and often disenfranchised youth collaborators can grow in their ownership of both general and subject-specific literacy tasks and build deeper relationships to the topics at hand and to these literacy skills (Mirra et al., 2015).

While the increase in ownership and authenticity for both youths and teacher candidates seems to be an inherently positive feature of such projects, many teachers of diverse youths continue to face pressure to rely on reductive, test-focused pedagogies (Ravitch, 2016). As university teacher educators, we were aware that, too often, teacher candidates witness scripted approaches to teaching reading and writing, in systems that track students according to their scores on those tests (Dudley-Marling, 2014). The Difficult Conversations project intended to chal-

lenge these notions and practices, scaffolding young people into the production of multimodal depictions of autobiographical information and the use of interviewing strategies to learn from and document the lives and perspectives of people with whom they disagreed about something important and that was justice focused.

These Activities Are Focused on Authentic Ends and Schools' Democratic Purposes; They Allow Young People to Address Grand Inquiries and Develop "Partnership Literacies," While Engaging in Civil and Civic Human Exchanges, Across School and Community Settings

Like most student voice inquiries, CPB clinical experiences are grounded in merged pedagogical and participatory research methods that incorporate explorations of youths' perspectives on their immediate concerns (Lyiscott et al., 2018; Zenkov et al., 2018). These experiences result in habits of thinking, reading, writing, and speaking that go beyond surface meanings and dominant myths to understand sociological phenomena (Fobes & Kaufman, 2008). These explorations of youths' points of view consider grand issues behind these topics. For example, with the Difficult Conversations project, we called on young people to reflect on their everyday experiences with tensions in their immediate circles, which they were also witnessing in community enactments of xenophobia. Such experiences can also remind teachers and university faculty—operating as partners in these endeavors, with youths and teacher candidates—of a shared need to consider youths' perspectives in our instructional methods and curricula (Mitra et al., 2012).

CPB clinical experiences rely on a partnership literacies orientation, which assumes that literacy and literacies—both general and subject-specific forms—are processes that are continually learned, challenged, and modified, as well as contents or materials that are tangible entities (Pellegrino et al., 2016). Partnership literacies highlight collaborative, democracy-focused capacities as emphases in our teaching and learning endeavors (Dover, 2013). Consistent with notions of third space, these partnerships challenge the top-down model of teacher education for which our field has been criticized (Bullough et al., 2004). Thus CPB experiences also address traditional university-based teacher educators' professional needs to engage in research with immediate relevance for our youth and teacher partners (Goodwin et al., 2014).

At the center of the Difficult Conversations CPB experience—and of the now more than a dozen versions of this model we have implemented across our two programs—was the belief that the pedagogies and the curricula with which we were engaging young people should be rooted in activities where they were partnering with a range of teachers across settings, subject areas, and grade levels to address ideas and philosophical questions. Young people participated in the sorts of exchanges that are foundational to our nation's political processes. Such experiences recognize that one of schools'—and teacher education programs'—objectives is to strengthen our communities and our democracy (Goodlad et al., 2015). The iteration

of the Difficult Conversations project on which we focus here concluded with a school presentation to other teachers, a larger audience of preservice teachers from our program, and school board members from the district, with media coverage from the *Washington Post.* But it seems a reasonable and even necessary extension of this structure to integrate it with local and even larger social movements, thus connecting it to the Teacher Prep 3.0 model, enacting elements of Murrell's (2001) "community teacher" concept, and enhancing the authenticity of both youths' lessons and teacher candidates' learning.

Conclusion and Implications

The persistence of the ivory tower critique of academics has inspired us to reconsider how we might situate our teaching and scholarship differently, to answer this assessment. In this conceptual article, we have made the case that traditional, university-based teacher educators might do more than respond to this critique, perhaps recognizing it as part of an existential crisis of our profession. While the PDS movement, practice-based structures, and the concept of third space have offered teacher educators theoretical and practical promises for effective reforms to the roles and elements of our profession, for too long, these have remained ideals and frameworks rather than realities that our schools and universities have enacted in a widespread manner.

The field of teacher education can find hope for effective reforms in U.S. and international scholarly, professional association, and policy reports that collectively highlight the importance of the clinical practice elements of our work. Yet these reforms insufficiently consider the nature of the new roles for both school- and university-based teacher educators that will be necessary for sustainable models of effective practices. We cannot function only in the realm of these archetypes, oblivious to the narrowing notions of accountability that many conservative policy makers are operationalizing in efforts to reshape the very nature of education across the PK–20 continuum. We offer the CPB model as an illustration of our efforts to simultaneously challenge those delimiting concepts of accountability and answer those calls for new forms of clinical practice.

When university-based teacher educators engage in CPB projects, we have to be more committed to facilitating and participating in research in these spaces. As Fecho (2003) noted, "the practice of one's pedagogy and the practice of one's research transact in complicated and powerful ways" (p. 284). We must be willing to negotiate an examination of all pedagogical practices—not only preservice teachers' or school-based teachers' pedagogies but also our own—while considering what an "insider view brings to our understandings of teaching and learning" (Fecho, 2003, p. 283). CPB structures might seem particularly difficult to implement in smaller or more rural college and university contexts, where university-based teacher educators wear more hats or teach more classes or where travel times to partner

schools might be prohibitively long. Yet we speculate that these are not merely the practices of faculty in Research 1 institutions; the authors of this manuscript both began to implement such structures while based in Research 2 universities, and by the nature of the scholarly expectations of our current faculty roles, we are obligated to simultaneously engage in and examine such innovations.

We note, too, that CPB efforts might be some of the most realistic structures to implement, as these are typically abbreviated, attempting to model rehearsals of alternative classroom instruction and teacher education structures, rather than enacting them on an everyday basis. Our field needs these cases of unique roles and practices to inform the ongoing evolution of our schools and teacher education programs. Ultimately, we propose to trouble the concept of sustainability for third space approaches, PDS structures, boundary-spanning roles, and recent clinical experience innovations. Perhaps what should be sustained and the clinical practices that will have the greatest impact are those practices that explicitly and immediately respond to intersections of teachers', preservice teachers', university-based teacher educators', and youths' pedagogical, curricular, and community concerns. In a time of ongoing racial and political unrest in the United States, it seems the CPB model might provide classroom instruction, clinical practice, and advocacy and research structures to promote even more of these difficult conversations and move our nation toward common understandings of justice.

As university-based teacher education practitioners and scholars, we must also be willing to complicate more than just our own roles in these clinical practice exchanges. We must also consider how to extend the collaborative nature of CPB structures (which are rooted in youths' and teachers' life and learning concerns) into the rewards and recognition derived from these efforts. At the culminating project event at Marshall High School, the young people and Ms. Whitney were the legitimate, recognized experts, and Kristien and the preservice teachers were merely the facilitators. But if we are to continue to employ the CPB model, we will have to identify how social justice ideals can guide all aspects of the projects—which may involve yet another set of difficult but very necessary conversations.

Our intent in this conceptual article was to extend discussions of the clinical teacher preparation structures that are central to the boundary-spanning teaching and teacher education efforts occurring across schools and universities, in the United States and numerous other countries. We are presently working with multiple colleagues in programs around the United States on comparative studies of the impact of the CPB model, on which we anticipate reporting in future publications. While we recognize that the CPB model perhaps does not represent a large-scale solution to the challenges schools and universities face with regard to best-practice pedagogies for PK–12 students or future teachers, we suggest that preservice teachers do not just need to spend more time in the field only to learn about the so-called realities of teaching and learning in schools. Rather, they might learn alongside teams of university-based teacher educators, school-based teacher educators, and

young people—in schools, in universities, with other institutions, and with others engaged with social movements—to explore the fullest range of what is possible in schools' teaching and learning exchanges. We speculate that the best teacher education efforts may mandate, not that colleges of education leave the academy, but that university education faculty continue to learn to live beyond the walls of their institutions—and perhaps justify their existence as never before.

Note

[1]All names are pseudonyms.

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Appendix

Photovoice Elicitation Questions

Opening Questions

What is the first thought that comes to mind when you look at this photo?
What do you like about this image?

"Why" Questions

Why did you take this picture?
Did you take this picture on purpose or accidentally?
Was this planned, staged, or spontaneous?
What does this photo say about you?
How is this photograph personal to you?

"Where" Questions

Where did you take this picture?
Who were you with when you took this picture?

"When" Questions

What was happening when you took this photo?

What happened just before or just after you took this photograph—
to you or the people in the image?
What is happening just outside of the frame of this picture?

Feeling Questions

How does this photograph make you feel?
How do you think other people will feel when they see this photo?
What do you think your friends, family, teachers, parents, etc. would feel
or think about this picture?

Audience/Conclusions Questions

What do you want others to see/think when they look at this photo?
What conclusions do you want your audience to have about this photo?
If you were to present this picture to our class, what would you want to say?

People in the Picture Questions

What is the person in this photograph thinking, feeling, and seeing?
Is the person in this photograph successful?
How do the people in this photograph feel about each other?

Descriptions

What do you see in this photograph?
What are the important details in this photo?
What does this traditionally represent?

Sentence Starters

I like this picture because . . .
I took this picture because . . .
I think this is a good picture because . . .
I think this picture will confuse people who see it because . . .

Project Questions

How does this picture answer the question "What is it like to be you?"
How does this picture answer the question "What is your life like?"
How does this picture answer the questions "What is it like to be known?"
and/or "By whom are you known?"
How does this picture answer the question "What is a justice issue you care about,
but about which you disagree with someone close to you or you care about?"

Title Questions

What would you title this photograph? Why?
Maybe choose some words from your writing to be your title . . .

Other Potential Questions