The Public Pedagogy of Student Activists in Chile
What Have We Learned From the Penguins' Revolution?

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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS ARE INHERENTLY PEDAGOGICAL EVENTS, in that efforts to effect structural change in a society are quite clearly learning opportunities for multiple publics. Strategies to educate and engage wider and stratified audiences are frequently embedded within the activities of such movements and might include disseminating particular perspectives and/or engaging imagined learners through mass media, social media, street protests, graffiti art, visual or performing arts, town halls, informal publications, and impromptu gatherings. Ellsworth (2005) provides an avenue for considering the pedagogical possibility within social movements through her articulation of anomalous places of learning, which signify "peculiar, irregular, abnormal, or difficult to classify pedagogical phenomena" (p. 5). While provocative and promising, such spaces are difficult to see as pedagogy when one remains rooted in "dominant educational discourses and practices – a position that takes knowledge to be a thing already made and learning to be an experience already known" (p. 5). Extending Ellsworth's proposal we suggest that social movements are also anomalous places of learning; fluid, transitory, liminal spaces within the public sphere that manifest a pedagogical imperative. Of course, similar to the teaching and learning observed in P-12 schools, there is no necessary identification of a social movement's pedagogy with justice. Curriculum theorists have long observed the practice of pedagogies of injustice and inequity in P-12 schools (Gay, 1988) and in popular culture and social discourses (Dentith & Brady, 1999; Giroux, 1998; Schubert, 1981). Our specific interest as researchers of public pedagogy and visiting scholars in Chile is in understanding how leadership and pedagogy function among movements oriented toward social reconstruction grounded in agency for justice. To this end, we have engaged with youth who

acted locally as school level leaders at one specific school during the 2006 secondary school student protests for educational equity in Chile. Seeking the vantage point of a longer term perspective, our inquiry was taken up approximately five years after the original protests and views this social movement through the theoretical lens of public pedagogy. Our research questions ask: 1) how were the pedagogical dimensions of this social movement constructed? 2) what can be earned from this experience about how coalition building works in an emergent public pedagogy? 3) what are observable effects of this public pedagogy in the local context of one secondary school in the Chilean capital city?

Socio-political Context: Chilean Secondary School Student Protests for Educational Equity

In May – June, 2006 approximately 800,000 secondary school students in Chile initiated a three week long national protest, during which they ultimately occupied several hundred schools across the nation. Popularly referred to as *la revolución de los pinguinos* ("the penguin revolution," in reference to commonly worn school uniforms), this new social movement formed as a protest against inequities in Chile's neoliberal and significantly privatized educational system which students say disadvantage low income students. As the most significant student protests in Chile since well before the 1973 military coup, these autonomous student protests also signaled the first major crisis of President Michelle Bachelet's less than 100 day old administration (García-Huidobro, 2007). The protests occurred in 2 main stages. The first involved a student strike and public protests in the streets. When government officials in the capital city of Santiago took action through *carabineros*, a militarized police force, to remove students from the streets the students then retreated into many of the schools in a *toma* (occupation or take-over). Rather than establishing a rigid category of occupiers within the school buildings, the structure of the *toma* was interestingly fluid at many sites. For example, parents were able to bring food into the schools and students were able to rotate their time in occupying the sites. Resolution required negotiation between the government and student leaders at the national level. Within several weeks the protests generated significant and unexpected equity oriented reforms, including a USD 138 million per annum increase in the education budget, the introduction of a school lunch program for low income students, income-based elimination of the college entrance exam fee for 80% of students, a review of the national educational legislation, attention to educational quality differences between municipal and private schools, capital improvements to over 1200 schools, the appointment of a national educational commission inclusive of student representatives, and the introduction of new democratic deliberative practices within secondary schools. The immediacy of this phenomenon to democratic engagement in Chile is evident, as is the pedagogical intent to engage politicians, media, and the larger society in critical reflection and concrete action in regards to educational inequity in Chile.

Despite these apparent gains following from the 2006 protests, a consensus appears to hold among current secondary school student leaders that reforms failed to achieve substantive equity effects within Chile's educational structures (CONES, 2012). The Chilean educational system is a complex "experiment" in privatization with three categories of school financing: municipal, private subsidized, and private schools. Municipal and private subsidized schools receive a per pupil subsidy via public monies, private subsidized schools may be non-profit or for-profit entities, and private subsidized schools may participate in a "shared financing" in the

form of additional parent fees (Peirano & Vargas, 2005). Municipal schools "may" also participate in "shared financing" at the secondary level if all parents and guardians agree. Hailed in many quarters of the globe as an example of the success of educational privatization, the Chilean educational structure has produced a highly segregated system. 2012 student enrollment distribution was: municipal (39.1%), private subsidized (53.6%), private (7.3%). The enrollment patterns become telling when disaggregated by social economic status: municipal schools are comprised almost exclusively of students from low income backgrounds and private schools are comprised equally exclusively of students from high income backgrounds (CONES, 2012).

Table 1: Distribution of Chilean students across types of schools by SES

SES Group	% of National Student Population		
	Municipal	**Private Subsidized**	**Private**
Low Income	15%	6%	---
Middle Low Income	17%	21%	---
Middle Income	5%	18%	---
High Middle Income	1%	10%	1%
High Income	---	---	6%
TOTAL	38%	55%	7%

Source: CONES (2012), based on 2010 Ministry of Education data

National test scores correlate to SES grouping, with 2010 SIMCE testing in *segundo medio* (grade 10) evidencing a 65 point opportunity gap between private and municipal schools in reading and a 91 point gap in mathematics (CONES, 2012). The CONES report, prepared by student leaders of the national secondary student coordinating group, observes that Chile has the second largest SES segregation among members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and summarizes the significance of this reality as "*los que tienen más, estudian con los que tienen más, y los que tienen menos, estudian con los que tienen menos*" [those who have more, study with those who have more, and those who have less, study with those who have less] (p. 9). In reviewing educational research into this "open enrollment" context in Chile, Falabella Ambrosio (2013) describes a "pupil commodification" in which "schools attempt to shape their student social intake towards those upper/middle class parents and more 'able' pupils, while excluding those 'disruptive' pupils coming from more underprivileged backgrounds" (p. 15). This reality of unresolved educational inequity in Chile becomes the background against which we view leadership and pedagogy in the penguins' revolution, a moment in historicized work for justice.

Theoretical Framework: Public Pedagogy

Public pedagogy is a theoretical construct generally deployed in educational research to understand sites and processes of learning beyond formal schooling and academic environments (Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010). It has been taken up to explore the pedagogical possibilities operating within daily life (Luke, 1996), popular culture (Sandlin, Schultz, & Burdick, 2010), educational institutions such as museums and libraries (Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011),

social activism (Brady, 2006), and the constraining and hegemonic moves of neoliberal discourses (Giroux, 2004). Burdick & Sandlin (2010) describe a *critical public pedagogy* as a counterhegemonic practice, a "terrain of contestation" (p. 351) and cultural resistance. Sandlin et al. (2011) map a strand of public pedagogy literature focused on decentered or *communitarian public intellectualism*, referencing the collective efforts of community groups and activists who are operating beyond traditional institutional roles to effect social justice. Specifically, Brady (2006) describes community groups acting collectively to interrupt hegemonic forms of discrimination in institutions and quotidian practices as public pedagogues. The distinction between identifying public intellectuals with institutional roles and a communitarian public intellectualism is not to suggest that critically engaged communities operate without reference to, intersection with, or immersion in institutional structures. Rather, it is to delineate an extension beyond Gramsci's (1971) traditional intelligentsia as interpreters of hegemonic discourses or Said's (1994) emphasis on the public intellectual as individuals with academic, cultural or economic power. To the degree that these perspectives have informed Giroux's articulation of educators and cultural workers as oppositional public intellectuals creating democratic spaces (see Sandlin et al., 2011, for a more complete discussion), the notion of communitarian public intellectualism constructs the possibility of recognizing actors within social movements – such as the Chilean secondary student protestors – as pedagogues who themselves practice a public pedagogy. We locate our interpretations of the pedagogical work of the student leaders within communitarian notions of public pedagogy, notions that are themselves largely shaped by feminist theorizing.

In contrast to scholarship that prioritizes reproductive dimensions of popular culture and neoliberalism as pedagogical events (Giroux, 2003, 2004), curriculum theorists Dentith & Brady (1999; & Brady, 2006) describe public pedagogy as a curricular practice that actively subverts dominant ideologies. Informed by a feminist politics of ethics, they locate public pedagogy within intersections of daily life, government, media, and popular culture. The methodology of public pedagogy, Dentith & Brady (1999) argue, creates sites of struggle in which "images, contradictory discourses, canonical themes and stories, and common sense versions of reality are disputed" (p. 1). This terrain of contestation is twinned with efforts to construct alliances across differences, a much more complicated and fertile strategy than organizing around shared identity (Brady, 2006). Its pedagogical intent is to foster movement "from positions of social inequality to ones of informed activism" (Dentith & Brady, 1998, p. 2) that pursues concrete advances in neighborhoods, health and social services, and education. Its actors and pedagogues are often grassroots coalitions and activists, and the practice of public pedagogy does not necessarily require (though nor is it opposed to coalitions with) institutionally located or socially recognized public intellectuals. In this way feminist-informed, communitarian notions of public pedagogy turn inquiry toward social movements with interest in how justice oriented pedagogical processes are enacted, in how public pedagogues emerge, and to the dynamics of coalition building across differences.

Methods

Our inquiry is a narrative inquiry (Chase, 2011) centered in one private subsidized secondary school in Santiago de Chile that was a site of the 2006 student protests, meaning that the secondary student population first went on strike and secondarily opted to take over the

school as part of the national protests for educational equity. The research team involved two US researchers with experience as visiting scholars in Chile and three graduate level research assistants in Chile for the first time. Participants were five alumni who had been identified by school administration as the core student leaders of the local student movement at this school, invited back to the school to meet with the researchers by the local administration. These youth leaders, four women and one man, were university students at the time of our conversations. They had been representatives in 2006 of an initial 10 schools that began to work collectively to seek structural change regarding issues of educational inequity from the Ministry of Education and the national government, not anticipating that their efforts would become a national student movement involving nearly all secondary schools in Chile. Our primary method of data collection was in-depth group interviewing, structured as a conversation about their role in the student movement at their school. The conversations foregrounded participants' perceptions in relation to our three research questions addressing pedagogical dimensions, coalition building, and observable effects of the student movement. The tenor of the conversations was thoughtful yet lively and dynamic exchange amongst participants as well as researchers. Participants were forthright in discussing the 2006 protests and their current assessments of both those protests and current manifestations of educational inequity in Chile. Recognizing that leadership and pedagogy are contextual, our interest was in understanding participants' meaning making about the student movement and their own role in it at their local school. We seek an embodied knowing immersed in the particularities of a local place and history, as opposed to general observations of the movement on a national level. Occurring approximately 5 years after the protests, the conversations capture interpretations that are reflection on prior life events and likewise shaped by the current context of ongoing and unresolved student protest for educational equity in Chile. Interviews were conducted in the Spanish language, recorded, transcribed, and subsequently translated into the English language. Analysis was conducted with both the Spanish language and English language texts, which allowed researchers to work with the original statements while also cross-referencing our interpretations within our primary language. Data were qualitatively analyzed with holistic and categorical content methods through the lens of communitarian public pedagogy as articulated in our theoretical framework (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998).

Pedagogical Dimensions of the Social Movement

Our analysis considers the student protest leaders as practitioners of a communitarian public intellectualism (Brady, 2006; Sandlin et al., 2011). Through this lens, we explore their pedagogical intent, pedagogical addressivity, and pedagogical processes. In terms of **pedagogical intent**, these student leaders were clear that their investment in this social movement was oriented toward understanding and changing the structures that support inequity of educational opportunity and subsequent inequity of social and economic opportunity in Chile. Recognizing that "not everyone has equal opportunity to enter university," participants focused on local knowledges that facilitated their personal awareness of educational inequity. One leader observed:

> My parents are laborers and had no access to a better education … we did it [the protest] to say "and what about the people who come next?" What is going to happen with their

life, their children ...what will happen to these people, their brothers and sisters ... Oh, my dad works all day long ... so what for? So I can be something in life.

Another participant notes that the *LOCE* (*Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Enseñanza*; a Pinochet-era national educational law which decentralized education[1]) had an effect of dividing the social classes. She explains: "If I am the child of a laborer, I am going to study at a school that I can access, and I will end up being a laborer. I was educated to be a labor, and no more than that." Participants further note the significant gaps between socio-economic groups on the university admissions test and the national *SIMCE* test, articulating a public dynamic which compares municipal schools test results with private schools. The end result of such competition, in one leader's words, leaves municipal schools "stigmatized." Using their own experience as a source of critical reflection, the leaders' interpretations are congruent with scholarly critiques of socially reproductive possibilities within schooling (Apple, 1982) and the limits of neoliberalism's emphasis on competition and privatization in relation to enhancing student achievement (Falabella Ambrosio, 2012). Educational inequality is seen by this group of leaders not as a *status quo* reality, but rather as an active process that continuously creates problematic changes within the nature of democratic citizenship in Chile. Within this context, the youth leaders report that the fundamental intent of this movement was to transform education through changing the *LOCE:*

> *Participant 3:* I think we have to be very, very clear that the main reason of all was to change the *LOCE...*
> *Participant 2:* Basically the goal of changing *LOCE* was to change education itself.
> *Participant 4:* A restructuring of education in Chile.
> *Participant 5:* It was a law of the dictatorship, at that time it was untouchable.
> *Participant 4:* We started to consider that if there were no structural changes, then nothing would change. All changes would remain only momentary.

Congruent with the work of communitarian public intellectuals, these student leaders acted at a grassroots level to identify educational inequity as embedded in the material structures of people's lived experience and to facilitate movement from positions of inequality to ones of informed activism (Brady, 2006). A core strategy of their public pedagogy was to mobilize youth colleagues not only in critiquing inequity but also in a focused, collaborative, activist effort to change legal and educational policy structures in pursuit of sustainable equity gains. The pedagogical value of this particular strategy is not necessarily in its immediate effects – the *LOCE* was in fact subsequently changed, although these participants and current student movement leaders indicate the change did not produce the desired equity effects – but in the process that involves wider publics in activist change for social transformation. In this way the student movement counters Cuadra's (2007) construct of an embedded hypergovernability, in which citizens are positioned as beneficiaries of benevolent democratic institutions rather than as deliberative actors in their own right.

Pedagogical Addressivity

The question of addressivity takes up the notion of to which imagined publics this pedagogy speaks and in what form. Ellsworth (2005) foregrounds pedagogy as "unable to contain or control where and when its address arrives or how it is taken up" (p. 55). Pedagogical address invites a relation between the learning self and the pedagogy's "symbolic constellation" (p. 103), in which learning is contextualized within bodies, emotions, place, time and "detours through memory, forgetting, desire, fear, pleasure, surprise, rewriting" (p. 55). Within this understanding, our current analysis prioritizes understanding how the youth leaders understand the various audiences that their public pedagogy seeks to engage. The youth leaders reflect back on student government in their local secondary school as historically having a predominately social event focus, providing such opportunities for the larger student body. These student leaders began to adopt a social justice concern regarding educational equity through their immersion in current events and contact with other schools developing a similar perspective, and collectively formed a sense that "we wanted to share this concern with others." Implicit within this statement and the context within which it was offered is that 'sharing concern' was oriented towards informing people's understanding in order to serve as a catalyst for educational and social change. Such intent is reflective of anomalous sites of learning, characterized as both difficult to classify pedagogical phenomena and provocative and promising (Ellsworth, 2005). This pedagogical desire found expression in efforts with other students, family and other adults, and policymakers in a manner that was explicitly focused on building strategic alliances across distinct groups of citizens (Brady, 2006).

Outreach to other students within the secondary school began with an effort to secure the school administration's permission for these student leaders to visit each classroom in the school, discussing issues of educational inequity and explaining their understanding of the nascent student movement emerging across multiple schools in the nation's capital. Reflecting on these classroom visits and exchanges, one youth leader commented:

> And something wonderful happened. Kids who had never questioned things in their life––they were living in a world in which they were not made to question why they have money to come to school – started caring about their peers in municipal schools and thinking they should have it, too. Just because we get an education doesn't mean we shouldn't help make things better.

Following a morning of these classroom discussions, 800 secondary students in the school opted to strike in support of advancing educational equity across the nation's educational system. These students met "quietly" at 1:00 PM in the school's courtyard to deliberate as a body regarding specific concerns and proposals they might endorse. Another participant emphasized that "not only did we go through all the classes, but also we created an awareness in students that caused them to communicate their families and other adults in their immediate environment." This mediated outreach to family members and other adults was important to the student leaders because several striking students from other schools had been interviewed on national television and, in the collective view of the youth leaders participating in this study, were not able to articulate credible reasons for the protests. In the participants' perception, this led to an emerging public sense that students were striking only to miss school. In turn, they took care to educate fellow students about multiple dimensions and interrelations of the equity concerns rather than "isolated issues." Referring to these classroom discussions as a "day of reflection," participants observed that fellow students pondered, spoke, learned, and acted. The discussions fostered a

process of movement building by creating opportunities within which wider groups of students might debate, endorse, alter, or reject goals and priorities of the emerging national protest, thus facilitating public pedagogy's interest in shifting participants to positions of "informed activism" (Dentith & Brady, 1998, p. 2). Noting many parents' initial cautions or concerns, a participant articulated her perception of a different positionality among the youth and their parents with the view that "when you're young you have a revolutionary soul, which others have lost over time, so I hope that does not happen to us, but it is complex because many things are lost."

Relational dimensions (Ellsworth, 2005) of the pedagogical address emerged in participants' reflection on interactions with their parents regarding the protest issues and process. A participant discussed the change that her efforts made in her family as they began to understand issues of educational equity differently and to take those issues to other adults. She shared how her parents' began to engage others with their transformed perspective regarding their own direct responsibility for the educational system: "And they spread, so a chain reaction was unleashed... Because they talk to their co-workers and that colleagues also spread and maybe one of them will go out there to find more information." Another participant discussed how interactions with parents extended beyond discussion of the issues to material involvement in the protest process at the site of the school in *toma*: "parents came to bring us food. A father brought kilos of bread for breakfast at eleven, he brought us milk." She describes these as moments in which the youth protesters "learned a lot."

Participants also described initial – and failed – efforts prior to the protests to engage the Ministry of Education in discussion of educational inequity, attempting communication through a prepared report, letters, visits to the Ministry, and requests for conversation. Considering the subsequent protests, a participant shared the view that they afforded policymakers and youth leaders an opportunity to learn productive possibilities inherent in dialogue regarding issues relevant to education's stakeholders and across an ideological spectrum. For us as scholars engaged in the work of theorizing and mapping conceptualizations of public pedagogy (Sandlin et al., 2011), these moments illustrate the indeterminate nature of the pedagogical address within communitarian public pedagogy. *How* the pedagogical intent is taken up, mobilized, or reconfigured by its intended addressees (Sandlin et al., 2011) is beyond prescription. *That* such processes flow across and between the multiple subjectivities engaged in the pedagogical dynamic, reshaping understandings of the imagined pedagogues, is integral to authentically democratic public pedagogies. Ellsworth (2005) provides a framework for understanding this dynamic in her discussion of a pedagogical form in which addressees are "implicated in an ongoing narrative in the making, implicated not as 'responsible for' or 'guilty of' but implicated as entangled, intertwined, twisted together, wrapped up with, involved" (p. 109).

Pedagogical Processes

The public pedagogy of these student protests evidence several pedagogical processes or strategies that involve yet exceed questions of addressivity, and which we have opted to illustrate through analyzing the manner in which protest *forms* were deliberatively figured to facilitate reception of pedagogical intent. Participants describe intentionality in shaping protest structures to advance public focus on issues of educational equity rather than on the protest dynamics themselves. Likely reflecting perceived cultural priorities in Chile, these youth organizers emphasized order and responsibility in actual protest actions. During the strike and its concurrent

street protests, for example, this group organized itself on the main thoroughfare of *Avenida Alameda* with a desire to be provocative while avoid confrontations with motorists or the police:

> *Participant 3:* When the red light was on; we went out to the street shouting with our canvas. When the light was green, we went up to the sidewalk again.
> *Participant 4:* We were very careful with that reality.
> *Participant 3:* Because we knew that if we covered the street the police would arrive, and that was not the idea.
> *Participant 4:* Our idea was to publicize the problem.

Similarly, order remained a primary organizing principle during the *toma* or takeover of the school building, in order to prioritize clarity of the message over a debilitating focus on the students' methods. Participants describe a peaceful and simple process in which a small group of students "duped" the school's doorman into opening a door at 6:00 AM by saying that a student needed a forgotten book. Once in the school they opened doors for other students and began to occupy the school. Feeling a sense of responsibility for the school as well as anticipating ways that damage to the building would deflect from the credibility of their message, mobilized students acted to secure and maintain the building. Youth leaders report securing computer labs, school records, and offices, sending keys out of the building to school administrators so that these internal sites would remain secured.

> *Participant 4:* and we were very careful, we cleaned up the whole school even the school toilets.
> *Participant 5:* in fact every day we designated delegates: You clean this floor, you this floor... you that part.

Nonetheless, the process was as contested as unified. Four of the five student leaders participating in conversation with us, elected as leaders by their peers, evaluated a *toma* as one possible course of action and decided against it primarily because of concern that it would interfere with the protest's goals. The *toma* was instead initiated by other peers, explained by one as follows: "We got to the point that, if we don't do to this, and we don't take real or radical actions for a change, we would not get anything. Because it was so much talk, speak.... pretty much talks, yes. But the goals weren't getting reached, and then we said we had to add to that, with a peer group." Another point of conflict emerged in the perceptions of school administrators to the *toma,* as explained in the words of a participant:

> they [administrators] considered the takeover as a violation of their house. They wondered: why are they violating my house? Why? ... This is our home. But we'd say: The house is for students, because without us the school does not work …they felt that the school was their house, and we never wanted to cause any hurt.

Thus, while participants reported that the school administrators avoided acting to end either the strike or *toma* based on a view that to do so would interrupt students' practice of democracy, the administrators nonetheless experienced the school takeover as a personal violation. These moments of discord and hurt gesture towards the contingent nature of communitarian public pedagogy. The fluid, indeterminate, and heterarchic characteristics of

grassroots educative organizing and action bear within them tensions and struggles that refigure and fold into one another positions of pedagogue and learner, leaving all "implicated in an ongoing narrative in the making" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 109).

Coalition Building Across Difference

Coalitions and alliances are a central aspect of communitarian public pedagogy (Brady, 2006; Sandlin et al., 2011). Scholars of public pedagogy often describe these coalitions as centering on the work of public intellectuals who bring together various constituencies in a collective effort. The student leaders represented in this inquiry served as public pedagogues employing coalition building in their work and the data suggest they were purposeful in developing alliances. In describing how they went about forming coalitions, the participants reveal an emergent and organic process reflective of Brady's (2006) feminist conceptualization of public pedagogy, which prioritizes grassroots, collective phenomena. Student leaders built alliances among themselves, with students in other schools, with educators, and with their parents and families. Each of these alliances appeared to serve a different and essential purpose in the student leaders' efforts to organize a social movement focused on advancing equity for all students, with particular attention to low income students and their families. Further, the approach taken by the student leaders in this study appears to illustrate Brady's (2006) assertion that building alliances across difference is a much more complicated, but also more powerful, process than organizing by shared identity.

Coalitions Among Students

The participants described a multifaceted process of alliance building among students who participated in the social movement. Alliances were built among the student leaders who participated in this study, among students within the participants' school, and with student leaders from other schools engaged in the social movement.

Coalitions across schools. In reflecting upon their experience, the student leaders indicated that building alliances with student leaders from other schools was a key factor in the initiation of the social movement. Coalition building with student leaders outside of the participants' school began at a government-sponsored meeting of student leaders from schools throughout Chile. The stated purpose of the meeting was to engage student leaders in addressing concerns related to Chile's national education policy. Initially, government representatives met with the students and indicated an interest in the student leaders' concerns. However, after a change in government administration, the government seemed to take little interest in the work of this coalition of student leaders. As one of the participants in the study asserted, "They left us hanging." After months of trying to engage the government in further discussion, the coalition of student leaders began to promote the idea of student protests. Because the coalition of student leaders was small, coalition members assumed the impact of mobilization would be limited. As one study participant stated, "We never thought it would reach the national level." However, protests quickly spread from one school to another. "I remember when we were going to meetings, and we were 10 people, and one day I came and we were 200! We were so many that it was difficult to talk."

As more student leaders joined the coalition, the coalition strengthened not only because of the expanding size but also because the new members brought new perspectives to the movement. Whereas the majority of original coalition members were from the Metropolitan Region of Santiago, those who joined the coalition after the initial protests came from all regions of the country. They brought with them distinct experiences with educational inequity. As one study participant described:

> Youth were coming from other regions with problems….There are regions where children of different ages are in the same course. They walk miles to get to school….If it rains, they cannot go to school because there is no bridge. Then they have no computers, no Internet. They are very far away from what our vision is in the metropolitan area.

These stories of inequitable conditions in schools created a shared sense of injustice. In response, students throughout the country began to initiate protests at their schools. Participants reflected with us on their collective decision to actively join student mobilizations:

> *Participant 3:* Demonstrations and protests continued …One day we had a reflective conversation here and then every one of us went to talk to students in our classes."
> *Participant 1:* We couldn't stay in our school while others were fighting for something that we wanted to achieve, too."

Coalitions with each other. The participants seemingly understood the radical nature of what they were proposing:

> This type of mobilization, we had to do it or be left behind…We might not have another opportunity to fight for something worthwhile. Thinking like this was rather radical, in a sense, as an individual and as a school.

They also seemed keenly aware that political action was a departure from the typical role of student government at their school. As one participant stated, "The school had other student governments throughout its history, but never before had the student government in this school participated in anything like this." Moreover, the participants themselves were viewed as traditional and they were aware their participation in the protest movement would come as a surprise to many. One leader asserted, "So girls like us, we were always like star students….It was like we had the doors open; the school was happy with us. They never imagined this would happen." More strikingly, the student leaders conveyed that their willingness to participate in such radical action came as a bit of a surprise to themselves. In reflecting on their experience, the student leaders described the tension between their identity as compliant, respectful students and their desire to engage in important political action. Forming a close alliance within their group seemed to help the student leaders negotiate this tension. It was as if this alliance gave them a collective identity of political actors that transcended their individual compliant identities. As one participant stated about her relationship with another participant, "we were equal and the two ... we support each other. I always saw her, and she saw me there... I felt lonely without her."

Coalitions within the school. In addition to the alliance among themselves, the student government leaders reached out to other students to help lead the movement. In describing one of the key participants who was not a formal student government leader, a participant stated, "Delegates, on paper, do not usually have much participation, but [he] made the difference because he was one of us, he was very active among the students." The movement also involved students who were not star students, who were often seen as problematic students, "who were always in wrong way. They always got bad grades, but they showed us that they were very socially conscious. And you don't have to be necessarily a good student to think, to criticize, to reflect, and to contribute." As a result of this purposeful coalition building, there was wide support for the movement among the student body of the school. One participant indicated, "That was the most important thing. At the end, the whole school was reached, at least most of the students. That was the driving force for our participation in the events of 2006."

Coalition Building With Parents

While the data are replete with evidence of coalition building with various student groups, similar engagement with parents and families is also prevalent in the data. The participants described the essential role their families played in allowing them to participate in the social movement. They described their parents and families as giving tacit, if not outright, support. Some families provided food and clean clothes to the students during the occupation of the school. The participants indicated that support from families came somewhat unexpectedly. As one participant stated, "No one thought at first that this [family support] would happen because we all know each other. We know how each of our families are. They [the other participants] knew that my family would be reluctant." This participant went on to describe how she gained support from her family. "After I told them why it was important for me to participate, they accepted the situation and they allowed me [to participate]."

The participants seemed to anticipate their families would be wary of participation in the movement. Participants' parents lived during the dictatorship of Pinochet and could recall a time when protest in Chile led to torture and death. This understanding of their parents' experience made the participants keenly aware of the need to build a coalition with their families. Even in reflection, the participants seemed a bit surprised that their families had been so supportive during the protest. One participant described coalition building with families this way:

> It was complex because you had to face the family. Many times parents were concerned. They were afraid because of the things that had happened in their life. They did not remember what it was to be young and have a revolutionary soul....So all the kids who were there [at the school during the occupation], they had problems with the parents….It was not an easy process, but we learned a lot.

An Imperfect Coalition With Educators

Like a coalition with parents, building a coalition with the teachers and administrators in their school was essential to the participants. The participants conveyed a strong allegiance to teachers and administrators and did not want to disrespect or disobey them. Additionally, the

participants understood that having support from teachers and administrators would facilitate their efforts to organize the student body as a whole. Once the student leaders determined they would participate in the student protest, they met with school administrators to explain their position and ask for support. The administrators granted the participants permission to go to each classroom to discuss the protest movement with other students. The participants surmised that the administrators agreed to this because they trusted the student leaders and they believed this would appease the student leaders and prevent more serious forms of protest. As one participant explained, "The school gave us a chance, not because they wanted to let us do anything. We could talk to them [other students] because the school wanted to prevent at all costs a takeover."

The participants also reached out to teachers. Because the national education policy negatively affected the work of teachers by reducing teacher autonomy and connecting teacher evaluation to standardized test results (Pastrana, 2007), the participants viewed teachers as potential allies. However, the participants found that while many teachers privately voiced support for the students, few openly aligned themselves with the movement. The participants indicated that some teachers tried to help the students by asking them what they needed. Most teachers simply ignored the students. The participants attributed the teachers' lack of support to fear of losing their jobs, "They left us alone because they had to ensure their work." The participants surmised the teachers were "proud of the movement," but unable or unwilling to participate.

The participants conveyed a sense of disappointment in the reluctance of teachers and administrators to openly support their efforts. "It was very hard when they said, what you are doing is very good, but later they said publically we should not be doing this....It was a disappointment in that sense." The participants did not receive the level of support they had hoped for, but neither did they face resistance from teachers and administrators. In this way, the alliance with teachers and administrators was imperfect. It was not an alliance that advanced the cause of the participants, but it was an alliance that allowed the participants' efforts to continue.

Observable Effects of the Social Movement

The stated goal of the protest movement was to change national education policy. The participants were united in the view that while the protest movement led to some improvement in the policy, the sweeping change they sought did not occur. Participants expressed disappointment at the lack of meaningful change:

> I am totally disappointed with the consequences of the mobilization, because in my opinion nothing was achieved. There were changes in people who participated, but specifically about changing the…law, it did not happen. The title [of the law] has changed, but that is nothing. It is a total disappointment….I am proud to know I fought, I tried, but I know specifically that I got nothing.

In spite of their disappointment about lack of change to the law, the participants identified other important and lasting effects of the protest movement.

The Return of Protest

The participants suggested the movement served to mark a return to social protest as an important aspect of Chilean democracy. Social protest is embedded in the fabric of Chilean culture and history. Under the Pinochet military regime, this aspect of Chilean life was both evident and suppressed. Since the end of the dictatorship, popular protest has remained relatively rare in Chile (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009). The participants viewed their success in mobilizing large numbers of students as a positive outcome. One participant stated, "We moved society. It hadn't happened since democracy returned. There had not been a big movement in Chile in 20 years." Another suggested, "We showed Chile that if you are able to organize, you have more power than politicians." Moreover, such power is not reserved for adults. Because of this movement, "people respect the power of students."

Individual Transformation

Although limited policy, funding, and legal changes emerged from these protests, the primary effect the participants identified was change that occurred within those who were part of the movement. Each participant identified specific ways the experience changed their perspectives and how they believe the experience changed other individuals. As one participant indicated, "The real strength of the mobilization was the change that occurred in people." Another participant suggested, "Individually you can see the passion with which we speak….We came today because we want to give witness to what we believe, and because this experience affected us as people…it will go on with us, because it is a worldview."

Coda: 2013

Perhaps one of the most significant effects of the 2006 student protests is that they changed the Chilean educational landscape by rupturing long standing silences, creating social spaces for ongoing democratic discussion and activism regarding educational equity (García-Huidobro, 2007). The "Chilean Winter" of 2011, an apparent legacy of the 2006 protests, united secondary school and university students in ongoing marches, performative protests, strikes, building occupations, organizing efforts, media engagement, and negotiating strategies now oriented towards equity and justice issues across the P-16 pipeline. Such activism has led the nation's billionaire president, Sebastián Pinera, to observe that people are constructing "a new society," challenging "excessive inequality," and "asking for a more just society, a more egalitarian society" (Barrionuevo, 2011, para. 8 & 9). Protests and organizing have continued into the present moment with examples ranging from the Minister of Education meeting with CONES student leaders to violent street conflict between *carabineros* and youth protestors. In one of the most egregious examples of the later, *carabineros* entered the campus of the Universidad Alberto Hurtado in August, 2012 constraining and arresting youth organizers – an action unheard of since the first half of the dictatorship and which drew harsh condemnation from University administrators. It is with this context in mind of continuing educational inequities and ongoing social movements that we have looked back to the 2006 *revolución de los pinguinos* in an effort to more clearly understand the public pedagogy of that social movement within the local context of one secondary school. The students' life stories have helped us to

more intricately articulate dimensions of a communitarian public pedagogy that can serve as a conceptual and organizing resource for other justice workers. More compelling, they have left us convicted of our own implication in an ongoing narrative in the making (Ellsworth, 2005).

Notes

[1] The *LOCE* was promulgated by Pinochet in 1990 and took effect on March 10, 1990, the last day of his 16 year dictatorship. It remained in effect for 19 years after the restoration of democracy and was repealed in 2009 with the passing of the *Ley General de Educación*. This repeal was in part due to momentum for change generated by the 2006 protests, though student leaders often indicate the changes in educational law have not been sufficient for establishing educational equity in Chile.

Acknowledgements

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