Toward a Filipino Critical Pedagogy: Exposure Programs to the Philippines and the Politicization of Melissa Roxas

Michael Viola

Journal of Asian American Studies, Volume 17, Number 1, February 2014, pp. 1-30 (Article)

Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press

For additional information about this article
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/jaas/summary/v017/17.1.viola.html
TOWARD A FILIPINO CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Exposure Programs to the Philippines and the Politicization of Melissa Roxas

michael viola

This pedagogy makes oppressions and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade.¹

—Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

On an exposure program it is designed to show you the Philippines—all of it, the nice parts and the not so nice parts. . . . It changes you. . . . You begin to complete that definition of what Filipino really means for those who identify as Filipino American.²

—Melissa Roxas

Scholars often turn to the activism of U.S.-born Filipino Americans in their militant confrontation of the U.S.-supported Marcos dictatorship during the 1970s and 1980s as a political apex. They argue democratic mass struggles against neocolonial domination in the Philippines were connected to various forms of social oppression encountered within the United States.³ This claim raises a series of related questions. What has happened to such militant activism since the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986? Does a Filipino American identity motivated by the eradication of U.S. neocolonialism in the Philippines and the ideals of collective emancipation for Filipinos in the United States, the Philippines, and throughout a global diaspora still exist in the twenty-first century? If so, what are its qualities, and what global conditions motivate such activism?
In seeking to address these questions, this article also considers the ways in which Asian American studies (AAS) can continue to honor and build upon its rich social movement legacy by advancing theoretical frames that are in interchange with global struggles and community experiences of resistance.4 Paulo Freire and his outline for a “pedagogy of the oppressed,” which he explains was “forged with, not for, the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity,” is useful for such a task.5 Freire’s outline for critical pedagogy in conversation with AAS offers an alternative framing of how Filipino American activist formations are creating culturally relevant forms of knowledge production. These forms link their collective confrontations to unjust social relations in the United States with global Filipinos resisting the conditions of U.S. neocolonialism in the Philippines.

In what follows, I explore the contemporary formation of a radical U.S.-born Filipino American identity cultivated in the experience of transnational activism. I investigate the innovative ways Filipino American activist formations are educating about, and intervening in, the asymmetrical power relations between the United States and the Philippines as a global agency indignant with the conditions of militarization of the entire island under the guise of U.S. joint military training exercises (Visiting Forces Agreement), the alteration of the Philippine constitution to abide by the neoliberal demands of global “free trade,” and the continued circulation of Filipino migrant workers to North America, Western Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and other regions throughout the world. A particular focus is the politicization of human rights activist and cultural worker Melissa Roxas. I maintain her life experiences and struggles offer a unique perspective on the formation of U.S.-born Filipino American activists who have come to frame their complex collective identities as intricately linked to the dialectical conditions of repression by, and resistance to, U.S. imperialism in the Philippines.

I first became aware of Melissa Roxas in the fall of 2006 as a graduate student in Los Angeles involved with various networks of Filipino American cultural workers, activists, scholars, and youth organizers involved with the social movement formation BAYAN-USA.6 At the time, I had not yet met Roxas in person as she was conducting an extended exposure program in the Philippines to gather materials for her writing and to
conduct medical surveys throughout the country. Educational exposure programs organized through BAYAN-USA enable Filipino Americans and their allies to visit the Philippines for a short-term stay. There, visitors are hosted by a community-based organization that represents a specific sector of society that can include women, labor, youth, faith groups, indigenous groups, human rights, and educators. Participants are immersed in the everyday conditions of the Philippines’ producing classes, where mutual dialogues, community workshops, as well as formal discussions are facilitated. In their immersion with the community, exposure participants are able to witness some of the realities challenging a Filipino polity and learn resilient forms of dissent and resistance that mirror its people’s history and collective vision for the future.7

On the afternoon of May 19, 2009, I received a phone call from a friend informing me that Roxas along with two of her companions had been forcibly abducted in a northern province of the Philippines. She was the first American citizen to fall victim to the systematic violations of human rights during the tenure of then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Human rights groups such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, and Karapatan (based in the Philippines) have reported that more than one thousand workers, students, activists, educators, peasants, and religious leaders in the country had been made to disappear or had been killed by paramilitary forces during the Arroyo presidency from 2001 to 2009. On May 25, 2009, as a result of an international barrage of media statements, community vigils, and coordinated actions, Roxas resurfaced and was reunited with her family in Manila. Shortly after reuniting with her immediate family in the United States, Roxas returned to the Philippines on July 19, 2009, to personally submit her testimony to legal bodies of the Philippines, in which she described being abducted at gunpoint by several heavily armed men, brought to what she believes was a military camp, and interrogated and tortured repeatedly before being released.

In the fall of 2010, I had the opportunity to meet Roxas. In multiple conversations audio-recorded throughout two days and numerous email correspondences, Roxas shared aspects of her youth growing up as a Filipino American, her political awakening, and the role of exposure programs to the Philippines in the shaping of her identity. I intentionally did not
ask her to elaborate on the circumstances of her abduction and forced disappearance, as I did not find it necessary for her to relive traumatizing accounts that have already been made accessible through detailed public affidavits and the writ of amparo filed with the Philippine Court of Appeals. Along with individual interviews and public documents, I utilized primary sources such as her open letters, cultural writings, and media statements in mapping how one individual, as part of a collective activist formation, achieved a consciousness that builds upon the vision and historical praxis of immigrant workers, labor organizers, cultural workers, and student and youth activists who aligned themselves with the struggles of a Third World polity. Such an identity, crafted in a political project to realize emancipation for Filipino Americans born in the United States and Filipinos dispersed throughout the globe, is bound to the struggle for freedom, genuine democracy, and self-determination in the Philippines. Roxas’s life experiences are unique in that she exhibits how a human agent not only becomes politicized with these ideals, but also through her praxis animates a unique and culturally relevant pedagogy. Such a pedagogy evaluates the causes of oppression and with corresponding action supports the possibilities for a more just global reality.

Organized into three sections, this article begins by building upon key Freirean concepts from the educational subfield of critical pedagogy to analyze Melissa Roxas’s life experiences as she considers her own political awakening through the processes of critical reflection and social activism. Of particular interest is the role of community-based exposure programs to the Philippines in Roxas’s politicization. In the second section, I explore how Roxas’s immersion in the Philippines during a time of accelerated human rights violations incubated an alternative identification between Filipino Americans with the Philippine homeland. The essence of such a kinship is motivated in the abolition of egregious violations of human rights, the end of global class relations, and the eradication of hierarchal structures of oppression. Following the main body of the article, I conceptualize a Filipino Critical (FilCrit) pedagogy that is informed by an educative and political project linking Filipino Americans with a social movement formation in the Philippines and throughout the diaspora.
Critical Pedagogy and the Politicization of Melissa Roxas

Critical pedagogy is an important educational subfield developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire that counters historical amnesia and the asymmetrical relations of power and privilege that have been forced upon marginalized communities. Through his critical literacy campaigns in Latin America during the 1960s, Freire analyzed how dominant systems of education were mobilized as the central means for a population to internalize and consume the ideology of a ruling elite, via “banking education.” Freire outlines a systematic process of miseducation where oppressive social conditions are presented as unchangeable. The future is thus imagined as not available for toiling human beings to shape. Freire's educational immersions with landless peasants and workers in Latin America enabled him deeper insight of their (neo)colonial existence within a exploitative structure that has nullified their humanity, and rendered life and labor as objects to possess and control.

To assist in a project of humanization, Freire introduced a transformative pedagogical approach where “the oppressed find the oppressor out and become involved in the organized struggle for their liberation. . . . [Such a] discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action nor can it be limited to mere activism, but must include serious reflection: only then will it be a praxis.” Toward this task, Freire immersed himself with dispossessed groups to gather an inventory of their basic vocabulary of the community. Collective discussions, also known as “cultural circles,” were formed, enabling participants to dialogue with and examine critically their experiences constituted by larger social and class forces. Freire's educational insights have served as the basis for the educational subfield of critical pedagogy that has cross-fertilized with a multitude of critical traditions and diverse geographical locations. The educational exposure programs to the Philippines that I examine in these pages are one example where Freire’s ideas are renewed, as he urges, “I don’t want to be imported or exported.” He continues, “It is impossible to export pedagogical practices without reinventing them. Please tell your fellow American educators not to import me. Ask them to re-create and rewrite my ideas.” Exposure programs enable Filipino Americans to examine their experiences, reflect upon the causes of their diasporic conditions, and act collectively to reshape their
world. The life experiences of exposure participant Melissa Roxas offer an important window as to how a particular individual affirms her integrated Filipino American identity within larger oppressed or exploited groups and collectively acts to surmount a structure that has rendered global Filipinos as objectified possessions or “beings for others.”

Roxas’s process of politicization points to how one can understand as well as shape one’s ongoing history—not simply as an intellectual exercise or anchored solely to consumable markers of identity such as ethnic dances, entertainment, and food, but through struggle and collective praxis.

Melissa Roxas was born on October 23, 1977, in Manila. She immigrated to Southern California when she was eight years old to be reunited with her mother. She elaborates,

My mom was in the United States years before my siblings and I arrived. My mom was able to petition for my brothers and [me] . . . but even then, my family was separated for a while because when we got to the United States we were still separated from my sister and my dad. This was in the early 1980s after Ninoy Aquino was shot. The political situation as well as the economy in the Philippines had a lot to do with my family moving to the United States.

Roxas recognizes how the political and economic situation in the Philippines during the 1970s and early 1980s—propped up by U.S. military and economic support for the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship—had an impact on her family’s decision to leave the Philippines. It was during this time period that the Marcos regime would restructure the Philippine economy in service of global capital (through the instrumentalities of the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the World Bank), thereby plundering the country’s natural resources, perpetuating conditions of immense unemployment, nurturing conditions of social and political unrest, and setting in motion the Filipino diaspora. Indeed, the Filipino diaspora is a relatively new global phenomenon. As E. San Juan explains, “There was no real Filipino Diaspora before the Marcos dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s.” He continues, “It was only after the utter devastation of the Philippines in World War II, and the worsening of economic and political conditions in the neo-colonial set-up from the late 1960s to the present, that Filipinos began to leave in droves.” As such, from the period of 1965 to 1986, a great flux of Filipinos—including
Roxas’s family—looked outside the Philippines for improved economic opportunities, improved social conditions, as well as escape from political repression.

Due to the persistent nature of discrimination felt by Filipino immigrant families in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s, tactics were enacted to shelter their offspring from having to face similar expressions of racial prejudice and ridicule. Such efforts included speaking to their children in English with the idea that Filipino American youth would speak English without an accent or foreign intonation. Because language is an important social practice that cannot be divorced from identity formation, it is noteworthy to frame Roxas’s youth as she describes her difficulty identifying as Filipino American. Roxas explains, “I considered myself Filipino American or 1.5. However, growing up, I didn’t particularly identify with Filipinos.” She continues, “My mom was a working mom who worked long hours and my siblings and I pretty much took care of ourselves and fixed our own food. And when my family talked, we spoke Taglish [mix of Tagalog and English]. But my mom talked [to us] more in English actually.” She reflects how her own identification as a Filipino American was befuddled compared to other U.S. ethnic groups:

I remember growing up and being around a lot of other cultures. . . . For example with Latino communities, their respective language was spoken at home [and] there was a sense of history and an acknowledgment with their indigenous roots and their pride as a Chicano. For other families whether . . . Vietnamese, Korean, or black there is a sense of identity that goes beyond what food they eat. Growing up Filipino that was not necessarily instilled in me. When I reflect upon a Filipino [identity], at least when I was growing up, it was mostly rooted with food or an identity with a place that’s called the Philippines . . . a country we came from, that we seldom visit and when we do, usually our family takes us to the nice beaches and the mega malls.

Roxas alludes to a Filipino American identity disconnected from its own language and history. Because the historical atrocities, alternative imaginaries, and native languages of her community have been suppressed and actively made forgotten, Roxas, like many Filipino American youth, was rendered ill equipped to build upon a rich lineage of resistance and political struggle. Roxas elaborates, “I had been blindfolded during the early
part of my life and kept from the truth about my history as a Filipino, the real reasons why my family had to immigrate to the U.S., and I was kept from the truth about what is happening in the Philippines.” With a historical legacy of resistance marginalized by dominant U.S. cultural and educational apparatuses, the capacity for Filipino Americans to relate to themselves and the world has been greatly stunted, neutralizing a potentially radicalized and empowered collective agency.

Growing up in the diverse communities of Southern California, Roxas at a young age observed how her companions from other racialized and oppressed groups related to their respective histories. She reflects, “I noticed how those around me from other cultures had a proud sense of who they are . . . and a strong sense of their history and why they are here in the United States. For Filipino Americans, we are proud to be Filipino, but what can that be grounded in without our history?” While the struggles of blacks, Latinos, and other U.S. immigrant populations would prove an important source of inspiration, for Roxas it was not Filipino American history but the “politics of food” that first facilitated her politicization:

My first introduction into what I understand now as imperialism was through the book Diet for a New America. . . . In a sense, I got to understand how inequality works through the politics of food. I began to question who had access to food, who had access to land, and how that was all distributed. Becoming vegan was the only way that I knew at that young of an age to make a change and that was start[ing] with myself.

Roxas’s individual decision to become a vegan was a concrete and practical solution for a young teenager interested in having a positive impact on the world. She explains, “My decision to be vegan, then later vegetarian, were influenced by my beliefs at that time, which was, to follow the old adage, to create change in the world, start with yourself.” As immigrant groups including Filipino Americans often keep their cultural ties to their countries of origin through the preparation and consumption of ethnic foods, the fact that Roxas did not commonly eat Filipino food in her own home together with her personal decision to become vegetarian would further complicate her sense of identity:

My family was not traditional Filipino in the sense that I would hear about other moms cooking traditional Filipino foods such as Adobo or
Sinigang. My mom worked long hours so my siblings and I fixed our own food. When my mom would prepare food it was mostly American food. So I grew up actually not really [eating] Filipino food at all.23 Roxas further describes how over time, with continued reading and learning, her politics would change and “my diet choices evolved with that.” She explains, “I realized that in order to solve the whole redistribution of food, there is something else that needs to be resolved.” Roxas’s realization was that social transformation was a process that requires more than the freedom of individual choices. She would recognize “that regardless of whether or not I choose to become a vegan, it’s not going to change these social conditions in the world. So I have to become a part of a bigger change that will take not one individual but many, many individuals acting collectively to create change.”24 The reinvention of her political consciousness would take a qualitative leap as a college student in Southern California during a time of enhanced racism as immigrants, particularly from Latin America, entered into the United States in increased numbers with the passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In 1996, Roxas enrolled at the University of California, San Diego, where she was exposed to the xenophobic aggression manifested in California legislative politics in which funding for educational programs—as well as other important social services that assisted immigrant populations—was targeted, threatened, or cut altogether.25 The political climate in California had a great impact on Roxas’s experiences in college. She points to this period as a time when she “actually became more politicized in other issues.” She began to realize growing up in Southern California how “we [immigrants] are second-class citizens, whether someone recognizes it or not. They are ignoring facts, if they think we are first-class citizens living in the United States. I think pretty much that everyone that I know who is a person of color has experienced [some] form of discrimination.”26 In response to a white supremacist social order, Roxas formed a study group with friends who wanted to analyze things that were not being offered in her academic studies: “As a science major, I was not a part of any ethnic studies classes at that time … and so my friends and I started a study group to watch a lot of films, progressive films, books, and discuss it together. We studied the book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed.”27 Her politicization as a youth
through the politics of food and later as a college student during a time of increased anti-immigrant sentiments would eventually lead her to question more deeply her own heritage as a Filipino American immigrant youth.

Despite being a college student in a highly regarded public institution with a large population of Filipino Americans, Roxas discovered that “I didn’t know a lot about my own culture. I was studying all these different cultures and I realized I knew very little about my own.” Roxas was able to unearth this purged history through her own initiative as she became involved in the planning of a Philippine Culture Night (PCN) organized at her university. She explains the great difficulty she encountered learning about her community’s history:

> I decided to join Philippine Culture Night. More than just for the traditional dances, I wanted to understand the meaning . . . and the history behind them. So I became the screenwriter and the director of the PCN my second year. I started to do my own research. I was so dissatisfied and just upset about the lack of information available at the time about Philippine history. For instance, there was little mention of the Philippine American War. . . . But anyways, I wrote the play and it . . . sparked a strong desire to keep learning, finding out the truth about my history.²⁹

In his study of PCNs, Theo Gonzalves argues the production and performance of PCNs can serve as “a rite of passage for acting in concert and refashioning the terms of what it means to be Filipino American.”³⁰ Through comprehensive ethnographic research and individual interviews, Gonzalves documents how PCNs on U.S. college campuses have served as a cultural resource for contemporary Filipino American youth as they mobilize culturally relevant music, dance, theater, and comedy as the central means to identify with Philippine history and the Filipino diaspora. For Roxas, the activation of a Filipino American identity required more than the thoughtful production of culturally relevant performances. Becoming Filipino American would require participation in a collective political project that transcended the celebratory exhibitions of ethnic identity in order to recuperate the past, interrogate the present, and transform the future.

In five years, Roxas completed a bachelor’s of science in animal physiology and neuroscience and a bachelor’s of arts in Third World studies with a minor in health care and social issues. She also applied to medical school
to pursue her childhood dream of “helping the poor and disadvantaged” as a physician. While applying to various medical schools in the United States and abroad, Roxas had a friend who had taken part in an educational exposure program to the Philippines, stayed with Third World trade unionists, and learned about the workers’ struggles in the islands. With the assistance of her friend, Roxas organized her own educational exposure trip in the summer of 2002 focused on issues of community health and alternative medicine. For the first time, Roxas traveled to the Philippines without her family. She reflects on the fundamental difference between an exposure program and the trips she would take with her family:

Before, when I went to the Philippines I would just go to the tourist destinations. But I didn’t want to ignore the beggars in the streets, the children and the slums that you have to pass through to get to the “nice” part of town. I wanted to see the real Philippines, the reality that the majority of Filipinos face every day, so, as they say, I went back to my roots.

As a result, she immersed herself during her trip with a community-based health organization and through such work become more cognizant of the harsh reality for too many Filipinos in the country. Roxas elaborates,

Through a clinic in Manila, I spent a lot of time with the urban poor. It was community work, living with the community health workers, and living with some of the urban poor communities. I talked with patients and their common ailments. I was very interested in how community groups in the Philippines were able to provide affordable healthcare to the poor through alternative medicine and acupuncture. There would be people who traveled two to three hours from outside of Manila just to get treatment in the urban areas.

Roxas was changed by not only the alternative approaches to health services she was both learning and implementing, but also how health workers were “actively organizing to improve their conditions and to address the root causes of the problems, not just providing a Band-Aid fix.”

While abroad, Roxas gained acceptance to medical school. She ultimately declined admission, choosing instead to dedicate her life to an environment of learning that confronted the historical structures responsible for the causes of unnatural health problems impacting the people of Philippines. For Roxas, going to the Philippines equipped her with “the tools
of analysis to understand the causes of various health problems and the practical tools to solve them. She gained deeper understanding of how health conditions in the Philippines are connected to the ongoing global ordering of subordination and national subalternity. Such understanding was attained through a constellation of personal experience, theoretical and historical analysis, as well as collective action. Freire describes this process as conscientization.

Conscientization signifies the formation of a critical consciousness by those who are able to understand the forces of subjugation and are equipped to contribute to their community’s emancipation. Freire reminds us that “conscientization is not exactly the starting point of commitment.” He elaborates, “Conscientization is more of a product of commitment. I do not have to be already critically self-consciousness in order to struggle. It is through struggle with others that one can become conscious and aware.” The components of Roxas’s educational exposure program in the Philippines certainly aligns with a Freirean position that critical engagement and genuine dialogue with historically subjugated groups enable a deeper perception of the social and class forces that frame subalteral experiences. Freire elaborates, “The more fully he or she enters into reality so that knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to the world unveiled. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit to fight at their side.” Through Roxas’s exposure program she acquired a unique optic in understanding her own personal identity and its connection to Philippine history, and the ongoing struggles for justice by Filipinos throughout the globe. She is clear, “Through the exposure I was also able to understand that my family leaving the Philippines for better jobs and opportunities abroad was also a result of the conditions in the Philippines. They are intertwined.” In other words, the common denominator that binds her own life narrative with the social and political economic conditions in the Philippines is in many aspects a shared history of repression and resistance to U.S. hegemony. Roxas explains,

I learned and interweaved the importance of history with the experiences of Filipino Americans. Because even to understand the waves of
migration of Filipino Americans, it is definitely rooted in Philippine history and the needs of the economy of the U.S. . . . The reason why we are here and our families were forced to migrate in the first place is because of the historical problems in the Philippines. It didn’t happen in a vacuum. The prevalent poverty and joblessness created the conditions for mass migration and separation of families that still continues today. The relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines is still very much influenced by its colonial past. Who we are as Filipino Americans, our identity and culture, is shaped by our history and our past. We can’t erase this fact, erasing it would be like denying you are Filipino altogether.39

A shared yet unique history connects her to the Filipino manongs40 of an earlier generation and the continuing immigrant experiences of a populace dispersed to East Asia, Western Europe, the Middle East, and North America. While I do not have the space here to elaborate at great length on this point, it is worthwhile to highlight Carlos Bulosan’s America Is in the Heart and Philip Vera Cruz’s self-titled Philip Vera Cruz: A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworkers Movement as expressions of an earlier collective praxis that Filipino Americans must continue to remember and renew.41

These important autobiographical narratives produced from the Filipino immigrant experience were crafted through the practice of organized labor during the twentieth century in the United States and have inspired future generations of Filipino American activists. Through these important texts, Bulosan and Vera Cruz articulated the collective experience of “being a Filipino in America” and the integral role community activism played in their radicalization. Both Bulosan and Vera Cruz acquired a unique political position by having participated in immigrant labor struggles for justice and equality for Filipinos living in the United States, while also connecting their unique experiences to the demands for freedom and genuine sovereignty in the Philippines. Such a standpoint has not expired for Filipino American activists in the twenty-first century, demonstrated by Melissa Roxas and her immersion in the Philippines. Through a community-based exposure program that is in dialogue with Philippine social movement politics, practices, and pedagogies, Roxas cultivated an oppositional consciousness. Such a consciousness was not formed on the merits of identity alone—whether rooted in ethnicity,
gender, or nationality—but rather forged through the collective process of overcoming historical systems of exploitation and human oppression.

**Cartographies of Community in Filipino American Studies**

Thus far I have offered a mapping of Roxas’s politicization and the unification of her ethnic identity through the knowledge facilitated in her educational exposure program to the Philippines. Upon returning to the United States from her Philippine immersion, Roxas explored various avenues to reduce the distance between her position as a Filipino American in the United States and the social struggles waged by Filipinos in the Philippines and throughout the diaspora. Roxas explains,

> I always had varied interests. I was always interested in health work but I was also a cultural worker, so I was also an artist. How did I merge all that together? Making art for social justice, not just art for the sake of art but with a purpose. I was a writer and I met other artists and we decided to form a cultural organization. I felt that I had to be actively engaged in the community to be able to understand and produce the kind of work that would be relevant to the community.42

As a result of Roxas’s educational exposure to the Philippines, her conceptualization of community could not be confined solely within the borders of the United States. Roxas forwarded a diasporic vision of belonging and political engagement that builds upon the international activism that inaugurated the Asian American movement in the 1960s.43

As it is commonly known, the Asian American movement was one of the last ethnic consciousness movements of the 1960s emerging from the civil rights struggle, the politicization of Asian American college students, and the public protests against the war in Vietnam.44 For instance, Asian American student and community activists at San Francisco State College believed it integral to identify with the causes of Third World liberation struggles in the Asian continent and thus took on the name the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF). A statement of goals by the Philippine American Collegiate Endeavour (PACE), one of the key organizations in the TWLF, acknowledges their understanding of community and its inclusion of Third World peoples. They proclaimed their goal as “to fuse ourselves with the masses of Third World people, which are the major-
ity of the world’s peoples, to create, through struggle, a new humanity, a new humanism, a New World consciousness, and within that context collectively control our destinies.”

The international connections made by militant student and community activists has left an indelible mark, giving birth to the field of AAS that has forwarded a critical analysis of U.S. social relations from the diverse positionality of marginalized Asian immigrant experiences born out of racism, patriarchy, and internal colonialism.

The subfield of Filipino American studies emerged from such activism and today has offered an important global analytic to frame the diverse experiences of Filipinos in the United States, and their linkages to the Philippines and other Filipino communities outside of the U.S. context. Interdisciplinary scholarship of the Filipino diaspora has contributed to greatly expanding the theoretical perspectives of global forces of migration and the experiences of overseas Filipino workers, domestic workers, nurses, and other segments of Filipino migrants; deeper understanding of Filipino American identity formations within the Filipino diaspora mediated through specific cultural, spatial, and technological spaces; and a broadened analysis of the social constructions of race, gender, sexuality, and other social relations that have shaped the history of Filipino migration and the lives of Filipino Americans.

While a growing body of scholarship on the Philippine diaspora and the immigrant experiences of Filipino Americans has produced important insights into the construction of ethnic identity as well as community linkages and disjunctions to the Philippine homeland, what is quite sparse within the academic literature is a critical analysis of contemporary Filipino American identity formation nurtured in the revolutionary praxis of community activism. Such omission is problematic considering an essential legacy of the AAS project was to fortify the connections among knowledge production, political activism, and service so that education could be mobilized to meet the needs of communities beyond the sanctioned walls of university classrooms.

Filipino American activist formations through their involvement both locally and globally with national democratic youth, organized labor, educators, cultural groups, women’s organizations, and indigenous movements have contributed greatly to alternative visions of democracy, justice, and identity. Unfortunately, such contributions are hardly recognizable in
academic discourses. With the history and more contemporary tactics of transformative Filipino American praxis not placed at the center of analysis, how has the relationship of Filipino Americans with the Philippines and the Filipino diaspora been more commonly theorized within the field?

Jonathan Okamura maintains Filipino Americans should not be viewed as an ethnic minority in the United States but more so a part of the Philippine diaspora considering how Filipino Americans have forged “significant transnational relations” and symbolic linkages to the Philippines as a cultural center or homeland. For Okamura, the transnational relations that link Filipino Americans with the Philippines are intelligible almost exclusively through the enactment of Philippine cultural forms (ranging from the martial art forms of kali and escrima to the utilization of ancient Filipino scrip or alibata), the sending of remittances by overseas Filipinos to their relatives, the distribution of gifts and consumer goods via balikbayan boxes, and long-distance telecommunication. Through such exchanges, Okamura highlights how second-generation Filipino Americans—many of whom have never stepped foot in the Philippines—can nurture a diasporic identity that is situated in “Philippine, rather than Filipino American, culture and history.” Okamura’s analysis of the transnational linkages between Filipino Americans and the Philippines aligns with the scholarship of Yen Le Espiritu, and in particular her analysis in *Filipino American Lives*. Using a life story methodology to examine the transnational contours of human experiences for a Filipino American population located in the San Diego area, Espiritu observes that in the community’s efforts to “resist racial categorization, Filipino immigrants in the United States also have refused to sever their ties to the Philippines.” Espiritu argues Filipino Americans assume the role of transmigrants, “generating and sustaining multistranded relations between the Philippines and the United States” mediated again in various symbolic cultural affiliations and the sending of remittances and goods to relatives. Espiritu’s later work *Home Bound* builds upon a transmigrant framework. However, her concluding chapter points to the unique activities of three Filipino Americans who participate in an educational exposure program to the Philippines. The praxis of such exposure participants can offer an alternative framing of a unique Filipino American identity that is
connected to the Philippines not simply through the transnational flows of cultural and economic exchange, but more so in their attempts to fashion identity across various forms of difference and geography grounded in a political project of collective emancipation.

The writings of Espiritu and Okamura are a small but informative sample of how scholars theorized Filipino Americans in connection with the Philippines and its diaspora during the 1990s. Such texts were instrumental in integrating transnational Filipino American experiences to AAS during the 1990s. It was during this period, with decades of entrenchment in academic institutions across the country, that AAS scholars observed a discrepancy between increased academic scholarship within the field and the lack of a parallel expansion in community-based research and activist organizing. For instance, Glenn Omatsu concluded that AAS was in a crisis with an emphasis in developing theory that was devoid of social practice. Omatsu further observed that the field had deviated from its founding objectives of “serving the people” and instead had become an exclusive phenomenon confined largely within elite academic institutions.

AAS scholars have taken such criticisms seriously. In 1998, a collection of twenty essays was anthologized with an important organizing theme of “reconsidering community” and titled *Teaching Asian America: Diversity and the Problem of Community*. Contributors to this collection conceptualized community within various classroom sites as they explored exclusively how diverse college and university students could be mobilized for a myriad of social justice issues. Outside the classroom setting, service learning models and community-based research projects are the central means by which Asian American scholars link research and pedagogy to community. To be sure, cultivating avenues of community engagement and human empowerment through service learning, participatory action research, and other collaborative projects with diverse ethnic groups inside the United States is essential for the ongoing theoretical and practical relevance of the field. However, research projects devoid of a political economic and global standpoint in a predacious epoch of imperialist globalization only further embed themselves in what Manning Marable has identified as a “liberal democratic tendency.” This particular ideological tendency is primarily concerned with reducing societal conflict through
reconciliatory public discourses, civic engagement, and multicultural diversity. Marable explains that a liberal democratic impulse “seeks not a complete rejection of neoliberal economic globalization, but its constructive reform and engagement, with the goal of building democratic political cultures of human rights within market-based societies.”

Educational exposure programs to the Philippines introduce and immerse participants such as Melissa Roxas in an alternative and more global democratic tendency—or what Marable has termed a “radical egalitarian tendency” that is informed by Third World social movement politics. While the political spectrum of antiracist and social justice organizing in the United States is certainly diverse, it is in the Philippines and other non-Western (neo)colonized peripheries where protest movements have proven most belligerent and durable against the oppressive forces of racialization and (neo)colonial subjugation. The objectives of such movements are not to work within and amend historical systems of exploitation, but rather to completely alter global relations so that a new world of human possibility can emerge.

Roxas’s experiences in her exposure programs to the Philippines contribute to this important and ongoing conversation in the field with particular consideration of Filipino communities that are globally scattered as a result of the Philippine (neo)colonial relationship to the United States. Analogous to the wider goals of the student and community activists who helped in the formation of AAS, educational exposure programs such as the one in which Roxas participated breathe life into a bottom-up Third World approach to an AAS political project. As such, Filipino American activists drawing upon their immersions and exposure experiences in the Philippines play an important role from within the United States in such a global endeavor. Namely, they are positioned to bridge, reinvent, and synthesize transformative aspects of both liberal democratic and radical egalitarian tendencies, while offering an important vision of community that is united across various forms of difference and national boundaries in its defiance of U.S. imperial domination.

In August 2005, with the rising cases of human rights violations occurring in the Philippines, Roxas participated in an international fact-finding mission organized in collaboration with BAYAN-USA. Organizers
convened participants from the United States and around the world to gather, collect, and hear stories from victims and survivors of human rights violations in the Philippines. During this one-week trip in the Philippines, Roxas listened “to countless incidents of killings, abductions and torture of Filipino citizens, mostly those who were active in protesting the government’s oppressive policies. These were peasants who were advocating for their right to their land; these were workers who were striking for better wages at a factory; these were students, professionals and church people; these were women who wanted better living conditions and education for their children.” 57 This trip solidified Roxas’s political commitment to pursue human rights work in the Philippines. In 2007, she returned to the Philippines to conduct an extended exposure program to pursue “human-rights advocacy full-time” by conducting community-based health work and writing poetry that pertained to the social conditions she encountered throughout her travels. 58

For two and a half years, Roxas’s life was dedicated to furthering a culture of human rights and social justice in the Philippines as she worked with various health care and worker groups in Central Luzon. Reflecting on her experiences, she states, “Each day I was with the community, I learned how precious a birth can be, how to appreciate life, and I slowly began to understand what they meant when they whispered to me their names and told their stories.” 59 At around 1:30 p.m. on May 19, 2009, while conducting health care surveys in La Paz, Tarlac, in an effort to plan for future medical programming in the area, Roxas and two of her companions were forcibly abducted by a group of heavily armed men. She explains,

I was writing about human rights in the Philippines. And although I was aware of the human rights situation in the Philippines, I never thought that I would be targeted and become a victim myself. But one of the most brutal and alarming characteristics of the Philippine government’s counterinsurgency campaign, Oplan Bantay Laya, is that the government considers as suspect and subversive anyone who helps and is on the side of the poor; those who support the Filipino people’s right to actively participate in and decide about their own communities; people who are human rights advocates and those who advocate for truth and justice. 60

In legal affidavits submitted to the Philippine courts, Roxas further details the conditions of her captivity in a location believed to be a military camp
of the Philippine Army. According to her legal testimony, for six days she was blindfolded, handcuffed, interrogated, and physically and psychologically tortured. Roxas’s captors confiscated her possessions, including two years of her writings, deprived her of legal counsel, and physically harmed her in an attempt to coerce her into signing a document stating she was a member of the New People’s Army—the military component of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The physical abuse inflicted upon her was severe, as her captors were described as

choking her a number of times, repeatedly boxing her on her jaw, chest and rib cage, and banging her head on the wall, while the others uttered: “matigas ‘to. Barilin na lang natin” [She is tough. Let’s just shoot her]. Every time she would fall on the ground because of the beatings, other men would force her to stand to resume assault. Once, a plastic bag was placed on her head, which suffocated her and caused her to lose her breath for a while.61

Roxas’s abduction is consistent with the Philippine counterinsurgency plan called Oplan Banatay Laya (OBL), launched in 2002 by then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Human rights organizations including the United Nations have criticized OBL as a strategy that allows military forces in the Philippines to target activists and progressive individuals working with openly legal community-based organizations, churches, labor unions, and cultural groups in a dangerous manner.62

On May 25, 2009, Roxas was released, and despite all that has happened to her she speaks of the importance of exposure programs to the Philippines:

The exposure program only opened my eyes to reality and introduced me to a movement that gave me the tools of analysis to understand the problems and also offer solutions. . . . Like many other activists, I wanted to contribute towards genuine change in the Philippines. . . . We provided health care, we helped improve conditions in the community, [and] provided education. This is not a crime. The crime is not providing the people with what they need. The crime is not giving a hungry child food. The crime is preying on illiterate farmers and taking away their land. The crime is believing in change.63

The dehumanization Roxas faced only strengthened her political resolve to speak out and educate others about the historical social conditions that
permit the violations of human rights in the Philippines and around the world. She has traveled throughout the United States, defiantly retelling her firsthand witnessing of trauma and torture as well as offering an alternative vision of society that challenges dominant ideologies that detach the individual subject from larger social forces, community formations, and resistant histories. Roxas states, “It is often hard, even up to now, to talk about my experience. But the reason why I tell my story is because it is also the story of many others, and it reflects the experience of many Filipinos who have been abducted and tortured in the Philippines.”64 Roxas’s politicization facilitated in her educational exposure experiences in the Philippines offers an alternative framing of how Filipino Americans identify with the Philippines and also suggests the formation of an emancipatory pedagogy emerging within Filipino American activist communities.

**Toward a Filipino Critical (FilCrit) Pedagogy**

Drawing upon the life experiences of Melissa Roxas and her exposure programs in the Philippines, I offer an alternative understanding of relationships forged between Filipino Americans and a global Filipino polity. In addition, the transnational praxis of Filipino American poses an alternative pedagogical framework in the making, an archive urging to be theorized. AAS and critical pedagogy, two frameworks born of and in dialogue with Third World social movements, are essential in conceptualizing what I call a Filipino Critical (FilCrit) pedagogy. At the heart of such a pedagogy is the educative process of achieving a particular “standpoint” nurtured in such programs as educational exposures to the Philippines where Filipino Americans come to view their struggles for social transformation as distinctively unique yet intrinsically linked to the plight of Filipinos in the Philippines and throughout the diaspora.65

Through a politics of immersion and dialogue in the Philippines, exposure participants such as Melissa Roxas witness and learn about the neocolonial social conditions as well as a resilient collective agency active in transforming their dehumanized realities. Through such efforts participants acquire at the very least an attentiveness and at best an ongoing relationship with a Philippine social movement enabling new political practices and pedagogies to materialize. This is so not only because many
participants are Filipino American and can trace their family’s historical origins to the island, but also because an experiential learning process allows participants to come to an understanding of how the vast natural resources and the people of the Philippines remain ongoing targets of U.S. imperialism.

Educational exposure programs to the Philippines do not support passiveness or worse forms of cultural imperialism where Filipino American travel abroad to prescribe solutions for those more directly impacted by the structures of imperialism, patriarchy, racism, and militarism. Participants do not go to the Philippines to teach, to transmit, or to give anything, but rather to learn with the Filipino workers, youth, peasants, women, and community organizers involved in a project for genuine democracy and national sovereignty. In this process, conditions of mutuality are created in which the exposure participants as well as the community groups hosting them are further radicalized in recognizing the root causes of their oppression, inspired in collectively surmounting their unjust global conditions, and through ongoing praxis and dialogue, which extends beyond the exposure period, assist both parties in their efforts to co-create a more peaceful and just world.

Cultivated in social movement practices and politics, a FilCrit pedagogy connects local efforts for social transformation in the United States to the conditions of a neocolonial polity dispersed throughout the globe and the not-yet-realized pursuit of sovereignty in the Philippine homeland. Roxas explains, “Addressing the root causes and the concrete reality of Filipinos in the U.S. means also helping to promote and create meaningful change in the Philippines. A movement to change conditions in the Philippines is towards a global movement to improving conditions everywhere.”66 As opposed to localized interruptions or individual forms of resistance to a worldwide system of dehumanization, a FilCrit pedagogy is informed by the transnational praxis of those who actively and humbly witness, learn, and challenge the barbaric consequences of a global capitalist system that is impeding the human potential of not only a dispersed Filipino polity but the vast majority of black, brown, indigenous, undocumented, immigrant, and poor people across the planet.

As I have also argued elsewhere, the efforts of Filipino Americans to theorize, educate, and overcome their conditions of exploitation and
oppression have great relevance for social theory, educational practices, and global social movements. However, if scholars do not analyze an ongoing past framed by a resilient and active protest to U.S. imperialism in the Philippines, a FilCrit pedagogy runs the risk of mechanically replicating the social struggles of other groups while neglecting the task to be innovative and useful for its own time and conditions. The assertions of pan-African scholar W. E. B. Du Bois are certainly applicable as he proclaims, “Plans for the future of our group must be built on a basis of our problems, our dreams, and frustrations; they cannot stem from empty air or successfully be based on the experiences of others alone.” Thus, a FilCrit pedagogy informed by the national democratic yearnings of Filipino American activism is of significant value within an academic climate that has eluded the revolutionary practices and imaginaries of an understudied population active in their efforts to create the world anew.

Conceptualizing a pedagogy that mobilizes knowledge production toward eradicating neocolonial conditions in the Philippines is an intertwined political, theoretical, and activist project. It involves an overcoming of class relations as well as unjust social relations predicated upon race, gender, sexuality, and other forms of difference that constrain the collective human potential of Filipinos in the United States. It must not be divorced from the processes of human struggle required to achieve such emancipatory objectives. Freire explains, “Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.” He elaborates,

If it was possible to change reality simply by our witness . . . we would have to think that reality is changed inside of our consciousness. Then it would be very easy to be a liberatory educator! All we would have to do is an intellectual exercise and society would change! No, this is not the question. To change the concrete conditions of reality mean a tremendous political practice, which demands mobilization, organization of the people.

Filipino American activists such as Melissa Roxas, linked to social movements abroad, carry the seeds of new global conditions. It is not the responsibility of one ethnic or racial group alone to transform such tremendous worldwide inequities. Nevertheless, it is imperative that social theory not
only be receptive to, but also advance and build upon the indelible contributions of Filipino Americans in their efforts to transcend hierarchical systems of oppression and global exploitation.

In terms of the analysis I have begun to develop here, a FilCrit pedagogy is both a sketch and an invitation. The creation of any sketch, regardless of whether it is artistic or scientific, means that the overall conceptions must be augmented and filled in at a later time. An invitation recognizes what has been co-created requires further human involvement so that a project can be further engaged, tested, sharpened, and enriched. The implementation of such an educational framework is difficult to verify in strictly academic terms. Instead, the proofs are not solely of the past but of a future struggling to be born. The issue of validation is less one of truth claims than advocating and constructing knowledge that makes the world better for Filipino Americans as well as other racialized “border crossers” dispersed throughout the world. The revolutionary praxis of Filipino American activists in dialogue with the lived struggles and human aspirations of Philippine communities torn asunder by the sharpening forces of history is the source and inspiration of a FilCrit pedagogy. One day a FilCrit pedagogy may teach of the successful global struggles and social movement strategies pursued in overcoming an epoch blemished by U.S. imperialism and a myriad of other barbaric social conditions. Until then we have the words of Melissa Roxas to remind us:

[B]eing able to write this right now is testimony of how your collective love, support, prayers, and such action is helping me and others like me through this experience. I know that your support is also part of a larger movement to create change towards a world free of poverty and oppression. . . . There are many more desaparacidos, more abductions, torture, and extra-judicial killings going on in the Philippines and around the world. Let the new birth come when there is an end to all of the killings, abductions, and torture. Let the noise come from all directions. They are no longer whispers but shouts for justice.71

Acknowledgments

The author is indebted to Melissa Roxas, Sonny San Juan, Jr., Sandra Harding, Delia Aguilar, Suzanne Schmidt, Moon-Ho Jung, and Freedom
Siyam as well as the anonymous readers for their generative comments and thoughtful suggestions on earlier drafts of this article. The author also expresses much gratitude to JAAS editor Min Hyoung Song for his meticulous feedback on this article throughout the entire publication process.

**Contributor Biography**

Michael Viola is core faculty in the liberal arts program at Antioch University Seattle. His research fields include critical pedagogy, transnational social movements, cultural production, and critical theories of race and gender. He is currently working on a book project exploring the contributions of Filipino/a American activism to critical theory and social movement formations.

**Notes**


6. BAYAN-USA serves as a democratic clearinghouse of information pertaining to the national democratic movement in the Philippines. Its members are diverse and include youth, artists, women, and laborers. However, regardless of sector the various organizations are united in an anti-imperialist perspective and take the position that genuine democracy, peace, and cultural survival for global Filipinos will be possible only with the defeat of foreign hegemony in the Philippine homeland.

7. These community-based exposure programs are the antithesis to state-sponsored “homecoming” or *balikbayan* programs first instituted by the Ferdinand Marcos regime that continue to this day, seeking to attract overseas Filipinos and Filipino Americans to the islands in order to buttress a tourist economy, support foreign exchange, and attract further remittances to the country. Such state-sanctioned programs promote tourism to the islands and nurture an apolitical diasporic consciousness where overseas Filipinos as well as Filipino Americans connect to the islands and its history through the benign circuits of consumerism and tourism.

8. Freire thoroughly outlines and critiques “banking education” in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. He argues such a model of education represents a main process by which the ruling elite naturalizes the existing social order by expunging a contested history of struggle and resistance, impeding critical thought, disconnecting learning from social life, and emptying words from the historical activities they are meant to represent. Freire maintains, “The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them.” See Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 73.

9. Ibid., 65


11. Freire explains, the oppressed “have always been ‘inside’—living the structure that made them ‘beings for others.’ The solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression but to transform the structure so they can become ‘beings for themselves’” (Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 74).

12. The term “politicization” is used interchangeably with Freire’s concept of “conscientization” that I elaborate on further in the article.

13. Roxas interview.

15. See Catherine Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003). Choy explores the connections of institutional racism, U.S. colonialism, and labor for Filipino nurses who immigrated to the United States after 1965 and points to how the Filipino vernacular in hospitals (similar to other workplaces with a large number of immigrants) was discouraged, if not prohibited altogether.

16. Roxas interview.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.


21. Roxas interview.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. For instance, California’s Republican Party and Governor Pete Wilson proposed Proposition 187—a ballot initiative designed to deny undocumented immigrants access to social services such as health care and public education. It passed with 59 percent of the vote in November 1994, though it was later overturned in California courts. Proposition 187 was met with fierce resistance by immigrant rights advocates, labor, and in particular the youth of Southern California, with an estimated 150,000 people demonstrating in front of Los Angeles City Hall in opposition to the proposition. The Republican Party responded to the historic mobilizations with further ballot measures that aimed to criminalize immigrant workers further as well as create a climate of fear, repression, and intimidation directed toward working-class youth of color. During Roxas’s first year of college Proposition 209 passed, which eliminated affirmative action policies in public employment hiring and state university admissions. Two years later, Proposition 227 was approved by 61 percent of the electorate and eliminated bilingual education in California public schools.

26. Roxas interview.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.


31. Roxas interview.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.


37. Quoted in Gustavo Fischman and Peter McLaren, “Rethinking Critical Pedagogy and the Gramscian and Freirean Legacies: From Organic to Committed

38. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 39.

39. Roxas interview.

40. The first generation of Filipinos – or manongs as they were affectionately called – migrated to the United States in the 1920s and early 1930s.


42. Roxas interview.

43. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 32, explains "the social vision which impels us to negate the present order and demonstrate that history has not ended comes primarily from the suffering and struggle of the people of the Third World."


47. Okamura, Imagining the Filipino American Diaspora.

48. Ibid., 119.


50. Ibid.

51. Espiritu, Home Bound.


maintains the incorporation of service learning and collaborative community research is the avenue to “develop the skills and sense of empowerment needed [for students] to become politically active.”


56. Latin American poet Eduardo Galeano in Days and Nights of Love and War (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 170, explains this point much more eloquently: “To the extent that the [U.S.] system finds itself threatened by the relentless growth of unemployment, poverty, and the resultant social and political tensions, room for pretense and good manners shrinks in the outskirts of the world, the system reveals its true face.”


58. Ibid.


62. OBL was implemented in the Philippines shortly after the U.S. global “war against terrorism.” It enabled the Arroyo regime to target activist groups and deprive individuals of their rights through rendition, abduction, and even killings of suspected “terrorists.” In 2007, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston, recommended that military officers refrain from making public statements that conflated the democratic activities of activists and progressives with terrorists groups and “armed rebels.” Alston’s report denounced aspects of the counterinsurgency program that have led to the targeting and execution of many individuals working with civil society organizations. In fact, in April 2009, the UN Committee Against Torture released a twelve-page report expressing grave concern at the “routine and widespread use of torture” in the country and the “climate of impunity for perpetrators of acts of torture including military, police, and other state officials.”

63. Roxas interview.

64. Roxas, talk at Pagpupugay 2.

65. I utilize the term “standpoint” drawing greatly upon the scholarship of feminist standpoint theory. Feminist theorists such as such as Sandra Harding, Nancy Hartsock, Patricia Hill Collins, Martha Gimenez, and others argue that the conceptual frameworks of various disciplines are socially situated
and thus cannot be divorced from the interests of those who wield power. Feminist standpoint theory maintains that within systems of domination the perspectives of existing social relations are more easily available from the viewpoint of dominant groups to preserve their material interest. Thus, standpoint is not preoccupied with the attainment of “truth” as a discoverable thing outside of human activity but instead motivated by unveiling the conditions of domination that have rendered women and other oppressed groups as objects rather than the subjects of knowledge.

66. Roxas interview.
69. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.
70. Paulo Freire and Ira Shor, A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education (Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1987), 134.