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Rationalizations Within Neoliberalism:
Public schools, Protection, and the 1980s-1990s Culture Wars in Whatcom County, Washington

By
Vaughan Shubert

Accepted in Partial Completion
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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GRADUATE SCHOOL

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Master's Thesis

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Vaughan Shubert

March 2020

Rationalizations Within Neoliberalism:

Public Schools, Protection, and the 1980s-1990s Culture Wars

in Whatcom County, Washington

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
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March 2020

Abstract

This masters thesis is a case study of neoliberalism within Whatcom County, Washington during the 1980s and 1990s culture wars. I explore the interrelationship of State laws, rhetoric, economic policies, and local public discourse as a way to take seriously the ideological and emotional experiences of community members during the culture wars. Through examining public discourse, I focus on the ways in which people expressed their thoughts and feelings, and how these informed, legitimized, denaturalized, and destabilized established hegemonic practices and beliefs, as well as informed new rationalities, practices, and moralisms. As sites where social reality is created, I focus on new forms of education within public schools (removal of Christmas from public schools, *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum, the DARE program) enacted by State laws, policies, and local policies. These new forms of education acculturated students in values, morals, goals, and desirable behaviors in line with economic theories that saw forms of education as investment in human capital. The implementation of new forms of education placed increased demands and responsibilities onto families, teachers, and school officials to assume personal responsibility in addressing mounting systemic social and economic ills. Cultural tensions emerged in response to fundamental changes in the acculturation of students, and the ways in which public schools were to be used and operated by the State.

Acknowledgements

I pursued this study to better understand forms of power and the ways in which those forms legitimize and justify common sense realities which confine, exploit, and dominate. I wanted to modestly investigate how State power works in constructing our social realities that in my youth I could only sum up as, 'Fuck the Government.'

Without my experiences as the child of a passionate public-school teacher and a justice-oriented police officer, this study would not be possible.

I am grateful for the guidance and support of professors in the History Department at Western Washington University. Thesis Chair Dr. Josh Cerretti showed me what it meant to be an unassuming educator, how to hold students accountable in ways that took seriously positionality. Thesis committee member Dr. Johann Neem's introduced me to foundational culture war texts that helped enter this thesis into the historical conversation. He and Dr. Sarah Zimmerman taught me how to read, and re-read, like a historian. In Historical Theory and Method Dr. Zimmerman made space for humor amidst the weighted concept. Dr. Hunter Price's lectures exampled the art of historical narrative while I was his T.A., his writing methodologies resonated and helped me become a better writer. And Dr. Ricardo López-Pedreros — without his passion, expertise, and support this work would not be what it is. Within a variety of Dr. López-Pedrero's courses (as both his student and T.A.) the walls were full of writing and my brain hurt from all the specificities, but the frameworks for understanding he provided to students (both undergrad-and-graduate), were revolutionary and critical, and for that I am grateful.

And a special thanks to my cohorts, Jessey Roy, Michelle Shannon, Otto Schmidt, Emily Lampert, and Maria Parisot who pushed me to see, analyze, and understand in new ways. The friendship and kindness of Jessey, work ethic and humor of Michelle, struggle and growth with Otto, passion and care of Emily, and thoroughness of Maria's thoughts influenced me greatly during this period.

As I learned from Dr. Rand Jimerson, this research would not be possible without the archivists from the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies and the Northwest Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives, specifically Alison Costanza and Ruthe Steele. Their efforts in helping me locate the materials needed for my research, as well as maintaining and working with materials necessary for future scholarly research, is significantly appreciated and valued.

I would also like to acknowledge that I'm not from this region, Whatcom County, or the Lummi Nation, Nooksack Nation, Coast Salish peoples. There exist unique, multifaceted, and complex histories here far beyond the scope of this study and my understandings. Yet, I am grateful for the opportunity to exist in this place and find community here, because the people within my study cared, *a lot*. They cared about the safety and well-being of children, what is just and right and by that, I'm inspired.

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Introduction

The Bellingham Herald featured the article, "Brave New World," graduating class of 1988, six photos of smiling students who were said to want, "more than anything else [,] to be free of fear," and "the terrors of the unknown"[1]: "stability in their lives and careers," "the bomb, disintegration of the earth's protective ozone layer and, most fearsome of all, AIDS."[2] This local news story grappled with issues of economics, State power, a lethal epidemic, and centered the significance of student's feelings. Changes were occurring in laws, economic policies, and discourses, yet those changes meant nothing without the people they affected. And in the northernmost county of Washington during the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s, fear had nestled firmly in the hearts and minds of students, families, and community members.

The period of the culture wars has been dubbed a war of ideas, "a war of moral visions,"[3] "a war for the soul of America."[4] At the core, new American laws and policies had emerged, and within, ideas about inclusivity, morality, and the economy were refashioned and repurposed. State laws and local policies fashioned in the second half of the twentieth century provided new forms of education, frameworks, and rationalities. Refashioned forms of understanding would inform the way in which social reality, and culture, would be produced through the site of public education. The impact of these tectonic shifts in American laws and policies would be felt, and responded to, by students, families, teachers, school officials, and community members. People with ideas, moral visions, and beliefs about the future, safety, and well-being of their children, affected by laws and policies, conveyed their thoughts and feelings, comprised a significant and critical aspect of the

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[1] "Brave New World: Class of 1988," Bellingham School District 501, Administration/School District History Files, Press Clippings, 1984-1990, Washington State Archives, Northwest Regional Branch, Bellingham, Washington.
[2] "Brave New World: Class of 1988," Undated.
[3] James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1991), 296.
[4] Patrick J. Buchanan, "1992 Republican National Convention Speech," (17 August 1992): http://buchanan.org/blog/1992-republican-national-convention-speech-148 .

1980s and 1990s culture wars.

Like many histories, this is "a story about the struggle for power,"[5] to "define social reality."[6] The institution of public education exists at the heart of the culture wars "because skills, values, and habits of life are passed on to children in school"[7] and operates as a "central institution of modern life through which the larger social order is produced."[8] Public schools are sites in which cultural understandings become widespread, naturalized, replicated, as well as refashioned through specific forms of education. In other words, public school "*creates* a public," so the question becomes, "What kind of public does it create"[9] and what were some ways in which the public responded to significant changes in the creation of social realities?

As sites where social reality is produced and legitimized, in the 1980s and 1990s public schools were increasingly mobilized for neoliberal projects. National initiatives crafted in the second half of the century were informed by neoliberal ideologies which argued "[e]ducation programs ha[d] the capability to […] redress current trade imbalances."[10] The Committee on American Education and Labor argued, "for the future of our Nation, a better educated and trained citizenry [was needed] to enable [the American State's] economy to be competitive in the world."[11] During the 1980s and 1990s educational objectives introduced into the public education system were perceived as conducive to economic growth within the American capitalist framework. Public schools were increasingly a site where education on the ways in which "deterioration of health and erosion or obsolescence of skills" (representations of "the depreciation of human capital") were to be "offset, though not indefinitely, by maintenance activities such as the

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[5] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 35.
[6] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 39.
[7] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 37.
[8] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 174.
[9] Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 18.
[10] Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act, HR 99-597, (12 May 1986), 2.
[11] Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act, HR 99-597, (12 May 1986), 2.

production of health" through behavioral and social training.[12] Within neoliberal rationality, "all domains are markets" and "all market actors are rendered as little capitals,"[13] including public schools and children.

Integration of State driven market ideas within public school policies sought to make real connections between learned cultural behaviors and economic capital. New forms of education concerned with the physical body and behaviors were legitimized through discourses which asserted that these new proposed forms of education would be ensure the future successes, safety, and well-being of children. The safety and well-being of children included concepts such as being more inclusive to religious minorities, the expansion of sex-based knowledge due to the life and death urgency of the AIDS epidemic, and the insertion of cops into public schools as alleged alleviators or protectors against systemic issues of substance abuse and purported rising rates of crime and criminality. Public discourse in response to these new forms of education by parents, families, teachers, school officials, and community members, legitimized, rationalized, as well as attempted to reject changes in the ways in which their children would be acculturated.

The implementation of new laws and policies redefined the ways in which culture and morals could be materialized in American public schools; transforming ideological threats against Christian American hegemony into material reality. Once reproduced seamlessly through social activities and practices, the denaturalization of Christian American moral authority and religious ritual practices contributed significantly to affective experiences within the culture wars. Elements and beliefs which consisted Christian American cultural reproduction, underwent processes of

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12 Jacob Mincer, "Human Capital and Economic Growth," Working Paper No. 803, NBER Working Paper Series, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: *National Bureau of Economic Research,* 1981), 3. https://www.nber.org/papers/w0803.pdf

13 Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn, New York: Zone Books, 2015), 36.

denaturalization through legal delegitimization. Supreme Court decisions of the 1960s reverberated within local schools over the following decades into the 1980s and 1990s. Decisions of cases such as *Engel v. Vitale* and *School District of Abington Tp. v. Schempp* identified Christian American practices *as religious* rather than natural, effectively, elements of Christian America came separable, and legally distinctable from 1980s and 1990s conceptions of American cultural practices. Christian American cultural and moral authority was significantly curtailed "with the removal of Bible reading and prayer in public school" and in effect, "Protestant dominance cooled."[14]

Legal losses to Christian American cultural norms and moral authority were felt most intimately within the 1980s and 1990s through implementation of local policies and State curriculum. In the mid 1980s, local Whatcom County school districts implemented policies with explicit intent to enforce Supreme Court decisions regarding the removal and defunding of religious elements within public schools. As a county with time cherished cultural ties to Christian American celebrations, one being Christmas, many community members felt this removal to be an encroachment on, and threat toward, Christian American rights and beliefs. Additionally, by the late 1980s with the passing of the *Washington State Omnibus Bill* of 1988, the implementation of *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum* challenged Christian American conceptions of moral authority over the physical body, ideal notions of sex, and sexuality. Though legally legitimized through ideas based on inclusivity and life and death urgency, the expansion of sex knowledge catalyzed affective responses that alluded more was at stake for people and communities than law and policies could account for. The way in which people expressed feelings through public discourse via local media, provides a window in which to view how individuals experienced

[14] James K. Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal: The Clash of Christian Cultures in the Pacific Northwest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 236.

tectonic shifts in laws and policies, material changes within cultural norms, and conceptions of moral authority embedded within new curriculums.

Once naturalized, the identification of Christian American presence at the site of public education, altered the "agencies of socialization[, and they] were different than before."[15] Significant and deeply embedded cultural beliefs, values, and traditions of Christian America, once dominant in public schools, underwent processes of change and continuity. The integration of new forms of education transgressed precedented intimate cultural boundaries of moral authority, values, and personal responsibilities. Though Christian American cultural practices underwent legal denaturalization and material loss at the site of public education, ideologies rooted in Christian American cultural beliefs of personal responsibility, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism were refashioned and repurposed to be more inclusive and extend greater influence within commonsense understandings of the ways to be safe in a world, increasingly perceived and manufactured, to be unsafe.

Roots of the culture wars can be traced through ideas which structure laws, policies, and new forms of education, yet these ideological shifts inform and shape the crux, felt lived experience. Veronica Gago proposes a framework in which to view the processes of neoliberalism "*from below*," offering a way to problematize understanding neoliberalism as solely dependent on political legitimacy from above.[16] Gago argues "speaking of neoliberalism from below is a way of accounting for the dynamic that resists exploitation and dispossession and at the same time takes on and unfolds in this anthropological space of calculation, which is, in turn, the foundation for an

[15] Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 6.
[16] Veronica Gago, *Neoliberalism from Below: Pragmatics & Baroque Economies* (Durham Duke University Press, 2017), 2.

intensification of that exploitation and dispossession."[17] Meaning, the examination of ideas and rationalities of community members engaged in local public discourse, offers a window to view the way in which new rationalities and commonsense understandings acquire and maintain legitimacy.

Public discourse and individual affective experience consists the conflict shaping the culture *wars*. Rather than center dichotomization of political parties and ideologies, viewing the culture wars "*from below*"[18] offers a way to bridge the gap between political legitimacy stemming from the State, and affective experiences which legitimized, challenged, and reshaped material conditions and rationalities within everyday life. This disrupts the paradigm that pits one aspect of society against another and offers, rather, a more multifaceted understanding of the culture wars experience and outcomes. Individuals had feelings in response to the transformational processes underway in laws and policies that would alter the ways in which commonsense understandings of inclusivity, moral authority, and forms of capital would be materialized in public schools.

The ways people *felt*, believed, and rationalized gave legitimacy to the implementation of new forms of education. New forms being: increased inclusion and understanding of minority groups in regard to public school holiday ritual celebrations, *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* curriculum, and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program. Cultural education embedded within Christian American religious traditions were challenged and reshaped. Not merely a response to Supreme Court decisions, school officials and local religious leaders felt as if the implementation of secularized activities and practices would be best to address religious ostracization and well being of religious minority students. Feelings of fear surrounded the AIDS epidemic and perceptions of widespread social ills, like teen pregnancy and substance abuse, catalyzed feelings

[17] Gago, *Neoliberalism from Below*, 11.
[18] Gago, *Neoliberalism from Below,* 6.

of urgency in regard to the need for the medicalization of language and education which would contain more inclusive notions of *safe* sex than before. The laws that emerged syncretized old ideologies within new, taking old rationalities, repurposing and refashioning them, and in the process social reality was transformed into something new.

Due to the life and death urgency that the AIDS epidemic posed, laws were enacted that mandated inclusive medical knowledge for the safety and well-being of children. The curriculum, however, was constructed through etched grooves of Christian American commonsense understandings of 'lawful', monogamous, and heteropatriarchal family structures. The inclusion of concepts such as fidelity, anal, and oral challenged some Christian Americans' conceptions of moral authority over the physical body and interrelationships. In redefining the boundaries and conceptions of what *safe* sex could entail, an embodied challenge to a facet of Christian American hegemony. Economically driven understandings of the necessity of new forms of education to stymie detrimental things, such as STDS, teen pregnancies, and substance abuse legally and socially overruled Christian American logics of 'abstinence until legal-marriage only' education. Although increasingly perceived as medically necessary as the crisis grew exponentially threatening, its creation and implementation was in part due to pressure on the American government by AIDS rights activists, and Persons with AIDS (PWA). Sex-based education expanded for new economic fears in simultaneity with the true life and death necessity of medicalized knowledge. Curriculum students needed in order to practice sex *safely* or be faced with social and physical threats non-inclusive sex-education posed.

Economic fears intermingled with social rationalizations on how to secure ideal safety and well-being of children. Concerted political work of the Reagan Administration emphasized the necessity of education to meet new demands of the modern world; one in which economic goals

were integrally tied with student performance of ideal academic, behavioral, and health standards. State driven educational goals began to focus extensively on personalizing the responsibilities allotted to students, parents, teachers, and school officials, while simultaneously slashing necessary funds and resources to do so. In a world faced with a lethal epidemic, the alleged rises in drugs, crime, and criminality, and anxieties stirred by hegemonic shifts in moral authority and academic standards, "fear [became] a terrifically productive affect."[19]

In their multifaceted and complex understandings, local Whatcom individuals in varying capacities (families, teachers, school officials, community members), expressed public opinions, feelings, and rationalities for the necessity of these new forms and types of education. Fears fueled by: implications from diminishment of Christian American moral authority; fears for the safety and well-being of children in the face of an epidemic; and heightened fears and anxieties of how to adequately address an alleged wave of crime, criminality, and substance abuse which had become localized responsibilities of individuals and public schools. State-driven integration of law-enforcement into the site of education was predicated on fear-fueled discourses of rising rates of crime and criminality (drugs, substance abuse, gangs), in a time when crime and criminality were not, on average, rising above unprecedented rates. However, the American "public safety system runs partially on affect" and "police and prisons [were] offered as the solution to and the definition of safety," and the desire of people to *feel* and *be* safe cannot be trivialized.[20] Informed by new laws, local policies, social and emotional understandings and discourse, education to police the physical body (sex and drugs), and policing as education (police work as education), were rationalized into Washington state public schools during the culture wars.

[19] Seigel, *Violence Workers*, 94.
[20] Erica R. Meiners, *For the Children? Protecting Innocence in a Carceral State* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 187.

Historians Lisa Duggan, Andrew Hartman, James Davison Hunter, and Daniel T. Rodgers have contributed significantly to establishing a foundation for understanding what has been periodized as the American culture wars. Ideas of religious authority, morality, identity, and various definitions of success in desirable outcomes, informed the shape of the culture wars. Central to Hunter's argument is, rather than establishing alliances within old divisions and denominational lines, religious leaders of the 1980s and 1990s began to orient alliances based on commitments "to different and opposing bases of moral authority."[21] Duggan and Rodgers argue that ideas and conflicts surrounding identity, culture, and politics cannot be seen as separate from the economic arena.[22] And Hartman demonstrates civil and human rights struggles that fought for equality and inclusion, faced legitimate life and death opposition during the culture wars.[23] I trace these themes of religious alliances for political purposes, moral authority, Otherings, identity, and life and death urgency and argue the ways in which people felt and rationalized gave legitimacy to the changes and continuities that occurred during the American culture wars.

In *The End of White Christian America* pollster Robert P. Jones consolidated the concept of white Christian American hegemony into the term White Christian America (WCA). Though there are distinct and important theological and cultural differences between Christian American religious denominations, Jones traces the decline of significance in difference due to impacts of shifting demographics, religious affiliations, and losses of WCA political power to corporate and financial interests.[24] Further arguing, culturally, "for most of the nation's life, White Christian

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[21] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 43.
[22] Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2003), xii; Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 9.
[23] Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 156-160.
[24] Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2016).

America was big enough, cohesive enough, and influential enough to pull off the illusion that it was the cultural pivot around which the country turned."[25] Simultaneously broadening the ideological implications, as well as exposing the limitations and scope of this study, I consolidate further by using the term Christian America. The ideologies I seek to trace, though rooted within and informed by American whiteness and racism, traversed and transgressed racial boundaries within the celebration of Christmas, homophobia towards nonheterosexual individuals during the AIDS epidemic, and the reaches of State power through the DARE program.

When I refer to Christian America, I am referring to an expansive and extensive Christian worldview which "supports a strong social conservatism, promotes a traditional family mode, attacks the gay marriage movement, and advocates against abortion," as well as emphasizes behaviors of personal responsibility physically and economically.[26] The concept of Christian America derives from an understanding that the "terms "Christian" and "Protestant" were virtually synonymous" in American histories.[27] Religious scholar James K. Wellman, in addition to Hunter, identified the importance of large-scale religious cultural pivots informed by the "social and political issues of the 1960s and 1970s" which had "polarized Protestants."[28] The heart of this cleavage Hunter argued, could "be traced ultimately and finally to the matter of moral authority."[29] Even though political alliances increasingly diminished significance of religious denominational differences within American culture broadly, Christian America still maintained a hegemonic "worldview" which was "relatively homogenous and predictable even as they express different levels of fluidity and permeability in how they manage their boundaries relative to dominant

[25] Jones, *End of White Christian America*, 39.
[26] Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal*, 238.
[27] Jones, *End of White Christian America*, 38.
[28] Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal*, 4.
[29] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 42.

political centers."[30] The political and religious Christian American worldview transgressed old denominational boundaries during the last quarter of the century in efforts to 'win' ground in the war of ideas which would shape social and material realities.

This conceptual consolidation relates to Rodgers's argument that that during the last-half of the twentieth century, "strong metaphors of society" began to fracture, "supplanted by weaker ones."[31] In this disaggregate, a 'contagion of metaphors,' (the "nubs on which issues were forced, assumptions shattered, ideas broached, categories naturalized, paradigms strained and reconstituted") emerged.[32] Rather than a single dominant narrative defining reality Rodgers argues, "through argument and imagination, marginalization of some ideas and victories for others – the categories for social thinking were themselves remade."[33] Within new forms of education during the 1980s and 1990s, older concepts of "markets, identities, [and] rights" were reworked "for new occasions."[34] Dominant narratives which supported and perpetuated the Christian American worldview, which constructed cultural practices, beliefs, and morals were challenged, reshaped, and refashioned within a more disaggregate, yet encapsulating form of neoliberal logic, ultimately reshaping the production of culture at the site of public education.

The naturalization and power of Christian American hegemony is materialized through the use of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital; which "can exist in three forms," the embodied, objectified, and institutionalized state.[35] The embodied state refers to "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" and "external wealth converted into an integral part of the person," such as, material and social benefits that accompany performative allegiances to

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30 Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal*, 29.
31 Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 3.
32 Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 10.
33 Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 10.
34 Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 10-11.
35 Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in J.F. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenword Press, 1986): 47.

straightness and expressions of heterosexuality.[36] The objectified state "in the form of cultural goods," are things such as "pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines," as well as songs, ribbons, and awards.[37] This highlights the ways in which Christmas and DARE activities, songs, displays, and objects were imbued with cultural significance which produced and perpetuated certain forms of cultural capital, or were ways that cultural capital could be identified and removed. Lastly, the institutionalized state of cultural capital, makes real "conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a given academic capital."[38] The institutionalization of behavioral curricula (DARE and *KNOW:HIV/AIDS*) through public education, gave rise toward rationalizations that future economic, social, and physical well-being and success of students was dependent upon the performance of desirable behaviors as defined by the curriculums.

Within public education, Christian American cultural capital had historical precedence. Christian American hegemony was expressed through the naturalization of Christmas (rituals, songs, plays, etc.) and idealized personhood and behaviors (heterosexuality, abstinence, 'lawful' marriage) within public schools and public education. Identification of the dominance of Christian American cultural in public schools allows for a point to examine change and continuity within the cultural war of ideas. Dominant forms of cultural capital within the Christian American worldview shaped material circumstances within local community experience. The emergence of neoliberal laws and local policies that restricted material and ideological forms of Christian American cultural capital, however, amalgamated and supplanted Christian American hegemony.

The neoliberal economic arena had identified public education as a site to produce desired

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[36] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 47.
[37] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 47.
[38] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 51.

goals.[39] Through new types of education, ideal behaviors that would potentially generate heightened human capital were emphasized and invested in. The inclusion of HIV/AIDS education was predicated on the life and death urgency the crisis posed, as well as reinforced notions of heteropatriarchy via abstinence-before-'lawful'-marriage education. In tracing ideological lineages of large-scale shifts in the economic arena, it is important to recognize that "neoliberalism is a phase (and not a mere aspect) of capitalism,"[40] meaning that although the 1980s and 1990s experienced new forms of educational experiences, the ideological lineage is rooted within capitalist conceptions of society and social structure.

The expansion of inclusionary practices within public education, although undeniably beneficial in some capacities for marginalized persons, was significantly driven "by a desire to upgrade the quality of the nation's labor force and thereby increase the capacity of its business to compete in the international marketplace."[41] The integration of the DARE program was invested in educational policing of physical and behavioral aspects that had economic consequence. Policing as education led to the integration of cops into school systems as economic alleviates and educators as well as certifiers of the instillation of personal responsibility in regard to substance-abuse, drugs, crime, and criminality.

The repurposing and resfashioning of established categories of social thinking in relation to the institution of public education speaks to some of Antonio Gramsci's conceptions of an ethical State. In this understanding, a State is only ethical "in as much as one of its most important

[39] National Defense Education Act (1956); Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965); National Commission on Excellence in Education; Education for Economic Security Act (1984); Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act (1986); *A Nation at Risk : the Imperative for Educational Reform : a Report to the Nation and the Secretary of Education, United States Department of Education.* Washington, D.C.:The Commission : [Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. distributor], 1983.
[40] Gago, *Neoliberalism from Below*, 6.
[41] Harvey Kantor and Robert Lowe, "The Price of Human Capital: The Illusion of Equal Educational Opportunity," in *Public Education Under Siege*, Michael B. Katz and Mike Rose, editors (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 81.

functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes."[42] Arguing, the development and realization of the interests of the State cannot be separated from 1). "the aspect of force and economics"[43] and 2.) the way in which "total and molecular (individual) transformation of the ways of thinking and acting, reacts upon the State […] compelling them to reorganize continually and confronting them with new and original problems to solve."[44] Using Gago's framework of the way in which neoliberalism is given legitimacy 'from below' in conjunction with this view of an ethical State (and its actors, rhetoric, and laws), the ascendance of neoliberal rationality through the institution of public education becomes palpable.

The particular consequence of confronting new problems, perceived rising rates of crime, criminality, and substance-abuse, was the implementation of law-enforcement into public schools. Micol Seigel provides a framework for understanding the mythical boundaries of law-enforcement, a "tripartite fiction"[45] which gives cultural legitimacy to law-enforcement as violence workers to "*make* real – the core of the power of the state."[46] This "tripartite fiction"[47] that contributes to police legitimacy, works to conceal the fact that "police regularly cross whatever lines we think separate civilian from military spheres, doggedly protect private interests or work for market employers, travel abroad, and operate at all levels of government up to the federal

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[42] Antonio Gramsci, "The State," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1999), 258.
[43] Gramsci, quoted by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, "State and Civil Society: Introduction," 207.
[44] Gramsci, "Religion, State, Party," 267.
[45] Seigel, *Violence Workers*, 13.
[46] Seigel, *Violence Work*, 10.
[47] Seigel, *Violence Work*, 13. ["First myth: police are civilian, not military. Second: they are public, not private, that is, state rather than market agents. Third: they are local; they don't work for government bodies any higher than municipal or state levels in scale, and they certainly don't leave US national territory."]

scale."[48] The porous boundaries of State ability to wield State violence is shown through the integration of police into public schools as educators. With rising emphasis on personal responsibility and rapidly increasing rates of mass incarceration during the culture wars, new forms of education were created to address new, original problems of the 1980s and 1990s. Policing as education and education as policing interwove neoliberal concepts of kids as capital to older understandings of law-enforcement as protectors and ensurers of capitalist interests within the site of public education.

The following chapters are organized to show how these large-scale processes occurred in Whatcom County, Washington. Chapter 1 establishes the hegemonic positionality of Christian American cultural capital at the site of public education, and the ways in which its cultural capital underwent significant and tangible losses in ideological and material capital. Chapter 2 examines ideologies of Christian America concerned with sex-based education, sexualities, and personal responsibility, and how those ideas were changed and repurposed to be in alignment and expression of neoliberal values and logic. And Chapter 3 examines the full-scale implementation of neoliberal forms of education that extended the reach and pervasiveness of the State's power and logic though the mechanism of law-enforcement and public schools.

This thesis traces changes and continuities that occurred during the culture wars, focused very intimately on the affective and political responses of local community members in Whatcom County. It examines the shift of Christian American cultural hegemony to more encompassing and inclusive neoliberal logics. The cultural weight of Christian American ideologies were appropriated and syncretized within neoliberal forms of education, repurposed to address newly

[48] Seigel, *Violence Work*, 13.

emergent, sometimes manufactured, problems. It identifies various forms of cultural capital during the 1980s and 1990s, and the ways in which these forms of capital were lessened or strengthened through laws, local policy, narratives and discourses, and affective experiences which are the connection between the ideological realm and lived realities and material conditions. I historicize feelings in order to trace how certain ideas gained legitimacy and power through the establishment of new commonsense narratives of what was best for the safety and well-being of Whatcom County school children.

Christmas, an Idea:

Laws, Losses, and Cultural Capital

Local community members perceived the denaturalization of Christian American rituals and symbols at the site of public education as equatable to Nazi Germany, when "at first religion was tolerated, then subtly one practice after another was outlawed in schools, on radio […] and replaced with celebrations of paganism, the old germanistic gods of the dark ages, change of the seasons and much more[1]." The processes of identification and legal removal of naturalized Christian American cultural capital within public education catalyzed local policies, discourse, action, and tensions over the very ways in which social reality was to be defined. In response to Bellingham School District's policy 6500 'Religion and the Schools,' Whatcom County community members like Ruth Scheffler and Eva M. Gering were reminded "painfully of when Hitler came to power," a time when the State sought to remove religious cultural capital and implement new forms of education and commonsense understandings.[2] These community members were not alone in expressing their fears concerning the implications and impact new laws and policies that would alter the creation of social realities within public schools. Though decades earlier Supreme Court cases curbed the power of Christian American cultural reproduction at the site of public education, local communities and individuals felt and responded to the aftershocks when these laws and policies began to impact their direct lived and material experience in the 1980s.[3]

Public discourse concerned with questions of culture and religion intensified during 1980s-1990s. Engagement of community members intensified through media such as local newspapers,

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1 Ruth Scheffler and Eva M. Gering, "Discouraging," *The Bellingham Herald*. 15 November 1989.

2 Scheffler and Gering, "Discouraging."

3 Engel v. Vitale 370 U.S. 421, 422-426 (1962) and School Dist. of Abington Tp. v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).

where people felt they could politically contest and/or partake in various forms of defining social reality through emotive responses and expressions. In order to give social legitimacy and depth to their feelings, Scheffler and Gering evoked history "reduced to an ideology."[4] This was but one way "through which the social and political interests of each side of the cultural divide" attempted to legitimate their positionality.[5]" Effectively, this emphasizes that the culture wars were not only catalyzed by laws and policies, but fundamentally rooted in the emotions of historical actors. Incorporeal ideas and feelings of religion and culture could, and would, concretely shape material social reality.

The ideological positionality of 'sides' during the culture wars however, was malleable, contestable, individual/intrapersonal, as well as collective. Individual feelings of the processes of social changes came into conflict not only with emergent laws and policies, but also with local public contestations on what was to define 'shared community values,' moral authority, and inclusivity on the collective community level. The removal process of naturalized Christian American holidays and symbols from local public schools provides a point of intersection to see the ways in which individual conceptions of cherished religious beliefs were supplanted by collective beliefs in the legitimacy defining Christian American presence as religious, rather than neutral. Individuals were malleable and multifaceted; and the collective drive toward the removal of Christian American hegemony from public schools, legally and culturally, came into dialectic with deeply personal individual feelings.

Christmas is an idea rooted in Christian American hegemony; embodied through material objects and sociocultural gatherings/rituals imbued with meanings which directly impacted material and affective realities. In Whatcom County public schools, social reinforcement and

[4] James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1991), 116.
[5] Hunter, *Culture Wars,* 116.

acceptance of Christmas celebrations had for generations gone unchallenged. One resident, a Mrs. Jack Christy asserted that "until the last few years, generations of us have enjoyed school Christmas programs," where "everyone got a bag of candy and an orange and had a wonderful time."[6] The idea of Christmas, in other words, connects memories of community, education, families, spirituality, and material culture. As an idea, it structured a form of social reality through people's thoughts, feelings, and imbued traditions with intrapersonal and collective meaning.

The culture of Christian American Christmas celebrations had become naturalized through unchallenged repetition of tradition, powerful affective experiences supplanted with material objects and symbols imbued with Christian-ideological meanings. As Mrs. Jack Christy stated, for generations, Christianity's presence within holiday activities at the site of public schools had gone unchallenged until the Bellingham School Board passed a policy explicitly making the relationship of Christmas and Christianity definable, discernible, and detachable from wintertime holiday celebrations.

The accumulation and expression of Christian American cultural capital is exampled through the commonness of symbols and sociocultural gatherings, imbued with the historical weight of both Christianity and Americanisms. The concept of cultural capital is predicated on the fact that society is not a clean slate, it is richly and deeply embedded with accumulated cultural meanings that affect physical realities and potentialities. The accumulation of Christian American social and cultural capital in Bellingham is shown through the identified need that a policy had to be specifically formed in order to remove traditional Christian cultural presence through holiday celebration from the site of public education, as well as the way in which individuals within that culture and surrounding community responded to the shift in Christmas's naturalized presence.

[6] Mrs. Jack Christy, "This is Progress?" *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 November 1989.

Policy 6500, although supported by Supreme Court precedent, localized and *made real* ideas which changed material reproduction of traditions, values, and cultural rituals. Thus, it was inevitable that Whatcom County schools "would be an area of cultural conflict."[7] Community engagement, tradition building, and cultural production were intimately intertwined with the site of publicly funded education since its establishment. Interrelations between schools, teachers, students, and families were integral and significant in the dynamic development of the reproduction, shaping, and creation of culture. Law-based authority of new laws and policies during the 1980s and 1990s solidified boundaries of Christian American religious-cultural reproduction and shaped new American conceptions of legitimate cultural reproduction within public schools.

Activities at the site of public education that were not part of state-mandated curriculum blurred boundaries between what was academic-education and what was cultural education, often producing an amalgamation of ideological conceptions and traditions rooted in the hegemonic culture of a community. And in Whatcom County, Washington the "culture, history and art [had] all been influenced by the Christian faith," and many "aspects of these traditions" became "a part of the community," culture, and education.[8] The presence of Christianity through Christmas at the site of public education was integral in Whatcom County's local culture wars because it challenged the reproduction and construction of Christian American culture that had previously perpetuated traditions and beliefs of the dominant Christian community in the area. The strengthening of boundaries between religious culture and public institutions posed a tangible social threat to the dominant cultural presence Christian American culture had maintained and fostered for generations in this particular county community.

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[7] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 37.
[8] Jim Schmotzer, "Schools shouldn't ignore Christmas tradition," *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 November 1991.

In America, the separation of church and State was an ideal paradigm long before Supreme Court cases and local community policies of the 1960s-1980s *made real* the idea. However, due to the hegemonic nature of Christian American culture in which "the values and interests of one moral community overshadowed and oftentimes eclipsed those of other communities,"[9] the delineation between church and state required concerted political work by local groups and individuals. It was community members who sought true implementation, to make real, the separation of religious and academic education by clearly defining the spaces in which religious culture and education belonged and the ways in which it belonged there.

By the late 1980s, though laws and policies outlined the way in which religion belonged in schools, preexisting valuations of various forms of cultural capital imbued with significance and meaning to local community members, did not simply lose value or significance. In response to the continuation of Christian American cultural presence in holiday expressions, in spite of laws and policies, some local religious leaders felt the need to exert public cultural influence in order to actualize the District's policy within public schools. The Christmas culture war issue, like other "[c]ulture war issues," attracted "clergy resources because the issues concern radical debates about interrelated matters of authority, moral order, religion, and knowledge - concerns of particular salience to religious leaders."[10]

Although over the previous decades religious community leaders increasingly spent less time out of public spaces and relegated their activities to the private sphere, new alliances were formed that regarded political over denominational allegiances. Religious leaders, "based on their relative orthodox or progressive approach to religious, social, and political issues," were "reaching

[9] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 57.
[10] Jeremy E. Uecker and Glenn Lucke, "Protestant Clergy and the Culture Wars: An Empirical Test of Hunter's Thesis," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* v. 50, no. 4 (2011): 705.

across old boundaries and forging new alliances" in order to shape discourse around culture and its production.[11] The Interfaith Committee on Religion in Schools, a "seven-person committee – comprised of local pastors and parishioners from First Congregational Church, Faith Lutheran Church and Beth Israel Synagogue"[12] examples but one of these newly emergent nondenominational alliances.

Through this new alliance, the Interfaith Committee called for "the Bellingham School District to carefully and completely implement its policy on Religion and the Schools" enacted "four years" prior in 1985.[13] They felt collectively that public intervention concerned with holiday celebrations was appropriate and necessary in the name of protecting the "rights of minorities."[14] Due to the naturalized continuation of Christian American cultural expressions during holidays through rituals and symbols at school performances or in the classroom, the Interfaith Committee attempted to address potential feelings of ostracization or Othering that religious minorities could experience.

The alliance of the Interfaith Committee marks a significant sociopolitical and religious transition from the historical trend of large unified political-religious orientations toward alliances built more so on political understandings of inclusivity and equitability; alliances to remove the dominance of one religious culture's capital at the site of cultural production. However, the initiatives of the Interfaith Committee sparked intense local public discourse, less to do with the concept of separation of church and State, and more to do with what it meant to challenge and change Christian American cultural capital and authority at the site of public education, and real

[11] Jeremy Uecker and Glenn Lucke, "Protestant Clergy and the Culture Wars: An Empirical Test of Hunter's Thesis" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no.4 (Dec 2011): 692.
[12] Eric Jorgensen, "Christmas songs to stay, says 'sensitive' Bellingham board," *The Bellingham Herald*. 10 November 1989.
[13] Interfaith Committee, "Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
[14] Interfaith Committee on Religion in Schools, "Religion in schools: a caring response," *The Bellingham Herald*. 12 November 1989.

and perceived subsequent ramifications.

Laws and policies (both national and local) deconstructed the ways in which certain aspects of Christian American cultural hegemony had been naturalized within public schools. Christian American cultural practices that reinforced religious beliefs and ideologies became identifiable, definable, and thus removable, or at least stymied, for the sake of inclusivity within public schools. Local community leaders, community members, and journalists influenced the way in which the 'war of ideas,' occurred in the realm of public discourse through the medium of newspapers, where concepts of identity, beliefs, and ideologies became contestable and debatable. Traditional activities and symbols embedded with ideological meaning shaped the way social reality would be experienced on a material level. Individuals in Whatcom County engaged in dialectical struggle with changes in their material, spiritual, and cultural conditions. Through the examination of laws (Federal, state, and school district policy), public discourse (through the medium of local news), and analysis of accumulated capital (social, cultural, and economic) the delegitimization of Christian American hegemony within material reality is exampled.

Legal secularization of the site of public education led to a tectonic shift in awareness of the precarity of the continuation of Christianity American hegemony in public schools. Explicit legal separation of school-led and funded socioreligious rituals delegitimized the continuation of precedented community traditions that had gone unchallenged for generations. The rumblings of Christian American anxieties began decades earlier through legal contestations over public prayer in schools and the banning of official school sponsorship and/or engagement with the ritual of prayer at the site of public education.[15] Legal secularization of public schools was a way in which

[15] Engel v. Vitale 370 U.S. 421, 422-426 (1962).

Christian American culture, identities, and beliefs became identifiable, definable, and thus removable from State/publicly funded institutions.

Precedent-setting court cases such as *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* (1963) highlight the way in which legal intervention restricted the abilities of school officials and authorities to perform or engage with religious rituals and symbols at the site of public education.[16] Fundamentally, religious and cultural experiences amalgamate; Christian American social reality was dependent on a sort of cohesive fabric, perpetuating religious ideologies and constructing sociocultural capital. These court cases show how over the previous decades Christian America's legal standing in public spaces experienced "the acids of modernity, which burned gaping, irreparable holes in the fabric of Christian America," and yet remained dominant in religious-cultural presence.[17]

Federal laws and local policies catalyzed discourse regarding religious-cultural activities that had previously been permitted through the naturalization of Christian American hegemony, rather than explicit legal authority. These court cases defined the way in which school officials and educators possessed, and had previously exercised the ability to influence and conduct religious-cultural reproduction outside of curriculum within school parameters. The legal denaturalization process of Christian-affiliated religious rituals, celebrations, and symbols is a fundamental piece in the culture wars as it marked the dominant socioreligious culture as an identifiable, and thus a separable concept.

No longer could Christian American culture benefit from seamless integration into public schools where the boundaries of children's understandings of academic-educational and religious-

[16] Engel v. Vitale 370 U.S. 421, 422-426 (1962) and School Dist. of Abington Tp. v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).
[17] Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 71.

cultural instruction were blurred and susceptible. This signified Christianity and Christians were their own identity group, rather than status quo neutral; thus, Christian American culture could be desecularized and removed from publicly funded sites of education. These laws set precedent for identifying the way in which activities and rituals conducted by school authority figures could be seen as culturally coercive as well as non-inclusive to non-Christian/non-religious community members.

At the crossroads of community, religion, and education, the naturalization of Christian American culture was brought forth to be scrutinized and deconstructed on the local level through the adoption of a local policy "Religion and the Schools."[18] In 1985 after "a lengthy process of public hearings at which all positions regarding this sensitive issue were given full consideration," the Bellingham School District enacted policy which sought to define the acceptable sociocultural role of religions in their school district.[19] The policy sought to clarify blurred boundaries between the "promotion" and "the objective teaching" of religion through the identifying the physical and ideological material used in promotion.[20] Identifying the space of schools as a place of education both of culture and academic instruction, the school board was attempting to ideologically discern the spaces in which Christian American cultural influence, activities, and traditions belonged.

The creation of laws and policies indicate that actions were already occurring in a specified environment that prompted authoritative regulatory action to systematically bring to an end. In drafting policy 6500 "Religion and the Schools," community members such as Steve Adelstein,

[18] Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors, 12 December, 1985, Folder 6, Bellingham School District 501, School Board Minutes & Agenda Packets, 1892-2012, Washington State Archives, Northwest Regional Branch, Bellingham Washington.
[19] Interfaith Committee, "Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
[20] Interfaith Committee, "Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.

who would later form the Interfaith Committee, participated in the public forum to help shape the policies that would impact their local communities. Adelstein suggested the policy be tightened in order to "give greater structure to what teachers and principals" could do, as well as "the rights of parents and children" to "decline to participate in school activities which are inconsistent with their religious beliefs."[21] This indicated new commonsense cultural understandings concerned with inclusivity of and considerations to religious minorities, and the rights of parents and students, were being formulated through new laws, policies, and public discourse.

Although enacted unanimously in 1985, the policy went unenforced and unimplemented for approximately four years. In that time, Christian American religious culture was still active at the site of public education through Christmas activities, traditions, and celebrations. Even though the policy went on to prohibit "assemblies and/or programs that promote encourage, or disparage religion or non-religion," Christmas holiday songs and gatherings still occurred, and "public school funds, property, […] facilities" were still used for "decorational display of religious symbols."[22] As involved members of the community, several Interfaith Committee members had "actively supported school organizations and collectively attended" many winter concerts, meaning they possessed first-hand experience of the way in which the policy had not been implemented since its adoption.[23]

Community member reactions to the enforcement of this local policy varied; dependent on how they viewed authority, who they believed had the right to exert it, and where the authority was rooted. Even though the Interfaith Committee was a group of local religious community members, their united religious front against Christian American hegemonic cultural expression in schools

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21 "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors," *Bellingham Public Schools* (14 November 1985).
22 Interfaith Committee, "Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
23 Becky Elmendorf, "Critics overreact to Christmas at schools," *The Bellingham Herald*. 16 November 1989.

led to conflict and tension concerned with the matter of authority. About who had the authority to take Christmas out of schools and fear concerned with the implications of diminished Christian American cultural authority.

The "law of the land" was a contestable and malleable idea that was placed into the realm of public debate and discourse.[24] The implementation of the District's policy was predicated on State laws and guidelines; local community members attempted to follow this logic through examination of legal cases which supported their own views of the legitimacy of Christian American cultural presence. Predominant arguments for the inclusion of Christian American socioreligious rituals and cultural reproduction included: Christian American traditions as 'secular'/neutral and historically significant (embedded within Americanisms) and thus worthy of a place in academic curriculum. In contrast, alternative visions of Americanisms which prioritized the separation of Church and State and new forms of commonsense understandings of inclusivity of Others (religious minorities) were privileged and pushed forward in the public discourse arena.

In response to the Interfaith Committee's attempts to make real a policy that would alter tradition which had for generations gone unchallenged, some community members felt that the Interfaith Committee was a "prime example of a very few ministers who become so wrapped up in their own importance that they begin to see themselves as God."[25] Although the policy was predicated on Supreme Court cases, local community members who engaged in cultural-reinforcement of the "Religion and the Schools," policy, were blamed for going against the wishes of "hundreds of people."[26] Following this logic, some believed that the authority of Christian American culture and traditions to exist through celebrations of Christmas at public schools, were

24 Elmendorf, "Critics overreact," 16 November 1989.
25 Linda Montgomery, "Not God," *The Bellingham Herald*. 17 November 1989.
26 Montgomery, "Not God," 17 November 1989.

until this point, ordained by the authority of the Christian-god. Challenges to the assumed and naturalized authority of Christian American cultural presence within public schools prompted passionate discourses and individuals with their multifaceted beliefs and commonsense understandings of the way in which social reality ought to be shaped, sought to legitimize their conceptions of authority in spite or support of new laws and policies.

Bellingham resident Becky Elmendorf outlined the way in which laws and policies could be looked at from other regions, in order to assert the legitimacy of Christian American Christmas activities in public spaces locally. Specifically drawing on the case of *Lynch v. Donnelly*, a Rhode Island ruling where the city placed a nativity scene up for Christmas, Elmendorf cites that the Judge ruled that it was "farfetched" that "these symbols pose a real danger of establishment of a state church."[27] In using law from another region, she attempted to assert legal legitimacy of Christian American culture elsewhere in order to assert legitimacy in Whatcom County. Simultaneously, Elmendorf used the public platform to argue that Bellingham "children's lives will not be enriched if we are intolerant" of Christmas traditions which had "become so secular" and thus, according to their logic, not a threat to the amalgamation of Church and State.[28]

Yet, the argument of Christian religious activities, traditions, and symbols being 'secular,' as Bob Keller of Bellingham argued, "unwittingly debase[d] their faith," when they claimed "that Christmas is religiously neutral."[29] In order to assert the importance of Christian American presence at public schools, Elmendorf drew upon the entrenchment of Christian dominance in popular culture to assert the value of perpetuating traditions, which simultaneously undermined the faith-based aspect of Christianity in order to assert its place in the public education system.

[27] Elmendorf, "Critics overreact," 16 November 1989.
[28] Elmendorf, "Critics overreact," 16 November 1989.
[29] Bob Keller, "Debasing faith," The Bellingham Herald. 10 December 1989.

Whereas opponents of Christian American cultural hegemony in public school holiday rituals, drew on the ever-increasing power of legal authority to remove traditional religious cultural practices from publicly funded spaces.

In prior decades, the State had moved away from the direct implementation of Christianity within public school curriculum. However, efforts aimed toward secularization of *all* activities, norms, and symbols at sites of public education led to a tectonic shift in recognition from Christian Americans that their culture, religion, and belief in the ways in which society should be structured could not easily be pieced apart. Identities and conceptions of social positionality were embedded within the idea of Christmas, and its continued presence and existence as a socially supported activity.

Though curriculum had theoretically moved away from the promotion of specific religions, Christianity had an accumulated stronghold on cultural expressions of holidays through the public education system. Holidays not distinctly religious, such as Thanksgiving, were also infused with religious narratives. Such as Pilgrims (signifiers of Christian America), as "minority victims of a state-sponsored and majority-supported religious establishment."[30] Narratives and conceptions of the past were continuously formulated and reconstructed in "order to mold the present."[31] Because the two had been interwoven over years of asserting the supremacy of each, while intermingling their ideological foundations, It would be nearly impossible to separate the culture of Christianity from American culture.[32] As T.S. Elliot asserted, "no culture has appeared or developed except together with a religion," and Michael Kammen furthered the point in his assertion that "religion

30 Interfaith Committee, "Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
31 Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 3.
32 Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2016), 2.

often remains a vital cultural force long after its theological substance has been diluted."[33] So although in previous decades Christian American theological rituals and activities underwent extraction from the institution of public education, Christian American cultural components remained a "vital cultural force" to be reckoned with.[34]

A significant aspect of Christian American social structure is the reality of hierarchies predicated on dominance and subordination. Framed in commonsense understandings of hierarchies, fears concerned with the removal of Christian American cultural authority and dominance stemmed from established patterns of hierarchical structure; when one entity is deplatformed and another/'Other' can assume the ideologically dominant/superior position that shapes social and material realities.

Over the previous decades white Christian America "ultimately weakened […] as their members declined in both proportion of the population size and power."[35] In relation to these demographic losses were large-scale social movements, which Duggan argues impacted shifts in legal and commonsense understandings of "diversity,' if not toward substantive equality."[36] The relationship between social movements calling for diversity and equality challenged Christian American hegemony through the sheer diminishment of individuals who were perpetuating and reinforcing the Christian American worldview. Additionally, Hunter argues that "moral obligations of parenting and marriage commitment, the natural and legitimate boundaries of sexual experience"[37] also challenged precedented historical conceptions and social realities framed within Christian American hegemony. Therefore, the local policy which delegitimized the cultural

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[33] Kammen, *Mystic Chords*, 195.
[34] Kammen, *Mystic Chords*, 195.
[35] Jones, *End of White Christian America*, 60.
[36] Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2003), 44.
[37] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 194.

reproduction of the Christian American worldview affected members who identified and aligned with the Christian American worldview politically, culturally, and individually.

In response to processes of delegitimization, some local discourse occurred attempted to assert 'the will' of a precedented Christian majority over the separation of church and State in public education. Narratives which asserted there was not "any need for change," (and sentiments of, "After all, if it isn't broken, don't fix it") fostered perceptions that religious entities and/or Others not of Christian America, created an opening "for others to impose their own minority views on the children" of Whatcom County public schools.[38] And in following Christian American commonsense understandings of social reality premised on hierarchies, Othering, and moral condemnation (that had historical precedence in shaping conditions of material and spiritual realities), anxieties and fears of subordination were expressed in public discourse.

Local community members sought to assert the legitimacy of Christmas in public schools through discourse that gave the perception that the 'majority' of families wanted Christmas to remain in the schools, and, in simultaneity, claim victimhood from the imposition of 'minority views.' A survey conducted by the Columbia Parents Association evidenced that "approximately 130 of 200 families responded with 97 percent indicating a desire to maintain an annual Christmas program with some traditional elements" in order to argue for legitimization of Christmas in publicly funded spaces.[39] This survey served as a basis to assert that Christians, and those invested in the continuation of Christmas cultural traditions, were "more than a disgruntled minority and should be respected."[40] This demonstration of the 'will' of the majority was part of a broader national rhetoric that was attempting to assert legitimacy for Christian American traditions based

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38 Linda Montgomery, "Not God," *The Bellingham Herald*. 17 November 1989; Donna Packer, "Appreciation," *The Bellingham Herald*. 4 December 1989.
39 Jim Schmotzer, "Schools shouldn't ignore Christmas tradition," 19 November 1991.
40 Jim Schmotzer, "Schools shouldn't ignore Christmas tradition," 19 November 1991.

off existent hegemonic status. “In response to developments that they believed imperiled the nation - secularization, feminism, abortion, gay rights” Christian Americans “intensified their involvement in political activism,” with groups such as Moral Majority.[41] Though the ‘Moral Majority’ Christian American group claimed “to represent an unrealized “Moral Majority” [which] had enough credibility to be plausible […] it also betrayed a defensive undertone.”[42] Local affective responses to the removal of Christmas reflected the aforementioned large-scale culture war shifts and processes.

Policy 6500 sparked intense public discourse that showcased intimate associations of Christmas with Christian American beliefs. Although the goals of the Interfaith Committee as well as the Bellingham School Board was to strive for equitization within the public sphere of education, calls for removing Christmas felt personal due to embedded social meanings that Christmas represented. Although laws and policies on religion in public education were shaped by legal discourse, public discourse showed a complex range of human emotions and conceptions of self in relation to what it meant for Christmas to be removed from a precedented site of Christian American cultural reproduction. It was not simply Christmas being removed from schools, it was the diminishment of Christian cultural and moral authority, regardless of assertions of majority status.

Community members expressed fears and anxieties of censorship and prejudice against Christian America, propositions arose suggesting the integration of more diverse forms of religious holiday expressions, rather than the diminishment of Christian American Christmas. Yet these proposals discounted the vast reaching cultural dominance of Christmas in the United States.

[41] Hartman, *A War for the Soul*, 99.
[42] Jones, *End of White Christian America*, 37.

Equating Christianity as but one small ingredient in the giant "boiling pot" of American religious traditions, underplayed the hegemonic nature, and overpowering flavor, of Christian America. Arguments which equated Christianity's traditional and naturalized presence in the educational sphere as secular, failed to consider the accumulated and compounded social capital of Christianity. And in attempts to claim Christmas as "religiously neutral," one community member stated it, "unwittingly debase[d] their faith."[43] The downplaying of power that accompanied accumulated social capital allowed for a skewed sense of power dynamics to be emphasized and claims of victimhood to make rounds through public discourse.

Harking on fears concerned with dominance and subjugation, the Christian majority felt negotiation with the removal of Christian traditional practices from the public sphere constituted a threat to the hegemonic power of Christianity in society as a total. Some even went as far to feel that the "lack of proper recognition of Christianity" was "becoming an act of prejudice and censorship" against Christians and the Christian faith.[44] In efforts to substantiate their claims, some people drew on concepts of Americanisms imbued with religious meanings, such as concepts of freedom of choice and constitutional rights in regard to being able to freely practice religious-cultural traditions and display religious-cultural symbols. The policy on religion in schools called in to question the Christian American culture which posed threats to the presence of established cultural traditions, norms, and belief systems that constructed a fundamental Christian-American identity that had until this point, gone unchallenged for generations.

As stated by the Interfaith Committee "it is very hard for people in the majority to understand how something which is so beautiful to them could present a problem or discomfort to

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[43] [R.O.] Bob Keller, "Debasing faith," *The Bellingham Herald*. 10 December 1989.
[44] Jim Schmotzer, "Schools shouldn't ignore Christmas tradition," *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 November 1991.

others."[45] The things which are 'so beautiful' being symbols, objects, and songs that embody spiritual and intrapersonal components tied intimately with a communal and collective acknowledgement of their significance. Symbols imbued with religious-cultural meanings, such as Christmas "pictures, books," and songs which drew upon religious imagery and concepts, were objectified forms of Christian cultural capital.[46] Implementing Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital in its objectified state, "as symbolically and materially active" Christmas songs and displays were "effective capital" as it was "appropriated by agents and implemented and invested as a weapon and a stake in the struggles which go on in the fields of cultural production."[47]

The accumulation of cultural capital consists of the ways in which these symbols were reinforced in communal gatherings, sites of celebration, and rituals based on Christian American traditions. With Christianity as the hegemonic cultural group in American (State) history, the accumulated cultural capital of Christmas symbology reinforced the ideological supremacy and power of Christians. Attempts of the Interfaith Committee to provide nuance and enforcement of Policy 6500, challenged objectified Christian American cultural capital imbued with cultural meanings the continued presence of those objectified forms in public schools through performances and activities. A historically significant arena for Christian American cultural reproduction.

Whereas Christianity had migrated over on the first ships to colonize the Americas and vied for hegemonic power into the twentieth century, minority religions could not amount the same cultural power that local majority Christian members possessed during this time and in this particular place. Although some community members believed that "if these minority groups don't

[45] Interfaith Committee,"Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
[46] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in J.F. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenword Press, 1986): 48-49.
[47] Bourdieu, "Forms of Capital," 50.

wish to participate in these celebrations, they do not have to," the naturalization and commonness of Christmas did not permit non-participation. Christian ideological supremacy permeated in sociocultural spaces through material objects, symbols, and rituals that partook in the cultural celebrations of Christmas.

Through the continued assertion of the annual tradition of performing and practicing religious-affiliated songs within public school choirs, the use of Christmas decorational displays, and social gatherings rooted in honoring Christmas, non-participation for non-Christian community members was not an option. Christian American cultural capital was objectified in every store that sold religious Christmas objects, yards displaying nativity scenes, and Christian music playing over the speakers in stores and coffee shops. Places of Christmas time communal gatherings in Whatcom County were interwoven with Christian American ideologies, however, public schools would no longer be one of them.

Christmas as a holiday represented intra-and-interpersonal interactions which shaped the ways in which individuals participated communally. In response to the removal of "good old Christmas songs […] that did us no harm" one community urged people to "band together as members of this society, and let them know we do not appreciate it when someone is always trying to find ways to override our constitutional rights."[48] And one self-identified educators claimed that "to ban a certain kind of music could be likened to medieval book burning and censorship, which is never acceptable in any form."[49] The enforcement of separation of Church and State was perceived to be a threat to some individual's perceptions to their constitutional rights, as well as fears of Christian American culture itself experiencing Christian American time cherished traditions of censorship and subordination.

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48 [R.O.] Karen Morgan Pike, "Speaking up," *The Bellingham Herald*. 21 November 1989.
49 [R.O.] Eileen L. Wynne, "Tolerance," *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 November 1989.

On November 3, 1989 *Bellingham Herald* journalists Dean Kahn and Jeff Morrissette published an article titled, "Holiday songs in school hit sour note: Citizens group requests purge."[50] This framed the Interfaith Committee's public request for the cultural enforcement of Policy 6500 (predicated on State laws) as a localized attempt of a few citizens trying to rid public schools of time cherished rituals and 'holiday' songs. Local media's framing of specific components of the initiative significantly shaped public discourse to be oriented on symbols and songs embedded with cultural and traditional meanings, rather than on other key goals of non-religious equitization of public spaces. Within the article the authors stressed a narrative which implied the Interfaith Committee was the catalyst of this cultural dilemma, stating that "school officials said they see little need to change holiday practices and have received few complaints about school programs" and that the policy's implementation was only dependent on "if a local group has its way."[51]

Kahn and Morrissette emphasized the Interfaith Committee's call "for a ban of 24 familiar Christmas songs, including" 'Silent Night', 'White Christmas', 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town', 'Christmas Poem', 'On Christmas Morning', 'Drummer Boy', 'Jesus the King is Born', amongst others. Songs imbued with religious meaning and significance previously naturalized in Christmas performances and rituals. Framing the policy in this way indicated to local community members that the policy was within the realm of debatable public discourse, rather than stemming from an authoritative ritualized discourse that had occurred within the Bellingham School Board four years prior, as well as State laws which aimed toward the secularization of public funds and schools. The emphasis within the article on the idea of 'purging' traditional songs and symbols from holiday celebrations was a threat to the accumulated material, social, and cultural capital that Christians

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50 Dean Kahn and Jeff Morissette, "Holiday songs in school hit sour note: Citizens group requests purge," *The Bellingham Herald*. 3 November 1989.

51 Kahn and Morissette, "Holiday Songs," 3 November 1989.

had grown accustomed to during wintertime celebrations.

Points of contested cultural reproduction brought to the forefront for discussion were symbols (songs) and decorational displays imbued with religious meanings within publicly funded schools - a site occupied by non-religious and religious members alike, and most certainly not all Christians. Interfaith Committee members sought to call attention to the ways in which the presence of religious symbols, activities, and traditions which could be "so beautiful […] could present a problem or discomfort" for non-Christian or non-religious minorities.[52] Through pointed reference to affective experiences of beauty, in conjunction with potential feelings of ostracization, the Interfaith Committee attempted to reconcile public fears and anxieties that although their Christian American traditional Christmas activities and decorational displays were not meant to be harmful, they most certainly could be experienced and perceived in such a way. Some community members believed that "because" they " are a Christian" they had a "need to know if [they] have unintentionally hurt others," even though they were also "sure teachers have not meant to embarrass students or to not dignify their religious heritage."[53] These forms of denial of awareness in regard to feelings of religious ostracization to non-dominant or non-religious groups, did not detract from the actual social capital that Christian Americans possessed through songs and symbols.

In the article, Morrissette and Kahn emphasized the threat to religiously-embedded cultural symbols such as "Christmas trees and Easter bunnies," which focused discourse on the affective experience embedded within symbology and ritual, rather than embedded religious meanings.[54] Through this emphasis, the goals of the Interfaith Committee (grounded in legal

52 Interfaith Committee,"Religion in schools," 12 November 1989.
53 Elmendorf, "Critics overreact," 16 November 1989.
54 Kahn and Morrissette, "Holiday Songs," 3 November 1989.

legitimacy) to recognize the ways in which non-religious or non-majority religious members within the community would be ostracized by lack of representation or underrepresentation, was obscured. The relegation of symbols imbued with religious meanings to places of worship or the private sphere was but one way to attempt to ensure equitability.

Both within the public and private sphere, the ritual celebration of Christmas revolved around concepts and actions of exchange. Exchanges of goods and ideas embodied within goods perpetuated social meanings and significance. As public education is one of the "primary institutional means of reproducing community and national identity,"[55] the removal of Christian American elements meant loss in cultural and by relation moral authority at the site of public schools. News media and local public discourse focused on the removal of traditional holiday songs and activities addressed real affective experiences of fear and anxiety parents and families experienced on a wide scale in regard to fundamental changes in their social reality, specifically at the site where their children learned what social reality, commonsense understandings, and moral authorities entailed.

New laws and policies against religion in the schools (State and local), meant a reshapement of precedented forms of rituals (traditions and activities), symbols (songs and displays), and ultimately hegemonic power of Christian Americans to assert spiritual presence or authority within public schools. Equitization rooted in new laws and policies geared toward new forms of inclusivity, and this directly impacted precedented forms of social reality and cultural production at the site of public education. New laws and policies which altered precedented activities and cultural forms of education in public schools, meant changes in the responsibilities

[55] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 198.

of teachers and school officials. And the implementation of policies and laws, not just concerned with religion and schools, but with mounting cultural and social issues such as HIV/AIDS and substance abuse issues, shifted the way in which social reality was constructed by public schools (and ultimately the State). The blueprint of social reality within public schools, though drafted by legislators, policymakers, and State actors was dependent on the actions and participation of educators and school officials, families. New forms of education to address fundamental social and cultural shifts alongside heightened fears and anxieties required new conceptualizations of what commonsense understandings would entail within society.

The way in which religious education was to be performed was outlined within the guidelines of policy 6500 'Religion and the Schools,' which stated that "factual and objective teaching about religion, the impact of religion, and religious-based ideas and ideals may be included in classroom instruction."[56] Education was to acknowledge "the role religion ha[d] played in the historical and social development of" American "civilization" but was "to be distinguished from the teaching and promotion of religion."[57] One local second grade teacher related to the District how she felt about the teaching of "children's education from a cultural and historical perspective."[58] She indicated that "teachers were very careful to not appear to give a religious tone to the activities," but that "she fe[lt] it [was] unfair that she [could] go in depth giving background on Hanukkah and other traditional celebrations, but must be *fearful* of being thought of as indoctrinating children when teaching about Christmas traditions."[59] Within the District's policy the emphasis on the way in which religion could be taught 'objectively' within public schools,

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[56] "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors," *Bellingham Public Schools* (12 December 1985).
[57] Interfaith Committee on Religion in Schools, "Religion in schools: a caring response," *The Bellingham Herald*. 12 November 1989.
[58] "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors," *Bellingham Public Schools* (12 December 1985).
[59] "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors," *Bellingham Public Schools* (12 December 1985). [emphasis mine]

caused “feeling[s] of confusion” among some staff members.”[60]

When the District (driven by State laws) defined the way in which religion could be taught in schools, “question[s] of “objectivity” [were] raised” within public discourse.[61] The removal of Christmas activities from public schools was but one cherished tradition, and indicated broader losses to precedented Christian American moral and spiritual authority. As it seemed to one community member, the “educational climate” in our entire country” “fe[lt] more threatened by those students who’d like to say a prayer before home games, hold Bible studies, have Christmas plays focusing on Jesus Christ in a manger and include in their science classes creation as a valid alternative” than by kids wearing shirts “promoting […] behavior [such as] drug abuse, nudity, gang activity, violence and so forth.”[62] From the State’s legal arena emerged “a new conception of the moral order of society.”[63] Tectonic shifts occurred in law, social reality, moral authority and people experienced and discussed the aftershocks amongst themselves in local media and newspapers.

Social gatherings, such as Christmas performances, reinforced the naturalization of Christian American cultural reproduction and capital at the site of public education. Although some claimed that “singing Christmas songs and enjoying Christmas vacation [did] not mean that all these children [would] suddenly convert to Christianity,” it did reinforce the cultural presence of Christianity to children from Christian families, as well as children from non-Christian families.[64] The presence of Christian American culture shaped the lived and material realities experienced by

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60 “Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors,” *Bellingham Public Schools* (12 December 1985).
61 “Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors,” *Bellingham Public Schools* (12 December 1985).
62 [R.O.] Craig Moir (Bellingham), “Threats to education climate,” *The Bellingham Herald*, 4 October 1994.
63 Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 2.
64 Montgomery, “Not God,” 17 November 1989.

community members, and for generations had gone unchallenged.

Through State laws, the legal authority of Christian presence within public schools had been exponentially contested since the 1960s. *Engels v. Vitale* and *School District of Abington v. Schempp* established precedent in regulating religious activities, traditions, or rituals initiated at the site of public education by school officials or authority figures. Through the precedent established by these legal cases, local Bellingham School District sought also to regulate school officials and authority figures in initiating and perpetuating religious rituals and traditions enacted within schools. And although policy was established by the Board of Directors for Bellingham Public Schools, it took cultural-religious leaders to form a committee in order to push for the implementation of the policy attempt to religiously equitize sites of community gathering and cultural production.

By bringing the discourse into the public sphere, media stimulated intense public discourse on the ways in which this policy was targeting the removal of religious presence through symbols, songs, and activities. However, these components were integrally linked with perceptions of identity, community, and culture. Conceptions of Christianity were linked with concepts of Americanisms, and various people asserted the right of Christian American presence by drawing on generalized notions of Constitutional Rights and historical traditions. The loss of public funding for Christian American activities in public schools sparked fears of Christian Americans becoming 'religious minorities,' or having 'religious minorities' dictate the way in which the Christian alleged majority should live.

In the examination of the culture wars through public schools, the State can be identified as the core catalyst, however, the culture wars were the affective responses of families, communities, and local schools to changes in the very structure of their social reality. In Whatcom

County, Christmas as an idea was intimately associated with feelings concerned with the broader implications that removal of Christmas, or Christianity, from public school would indicate. The site of public education provides a clear lens of the ways in which core components of society engaged in ‘culture wars’ and that public discourse, between and of individual community members, were attempting to reconcile and understand fundamental shifts in their culture.

The threat of Christian religious cultural removal from the site of public education was to some, a true threat against how they wanted social reality to be structured and experienced. Although the culture wars can be understood as a ‘war of ideas,’ it exists within physical reality. Due to the ideological shift toward secularization and equitization of public schools, Christianity’s presence became visible as religious, rather than a naturalized unquestioned perpetuated presence. This component of the culture wars posed great ideological threat to the supremacy of Christian America. Yet, as stated by the Bellingham Herald in 1991, and is still relevant to this day, “to suggest that Christmas is not part of our culture is ludicrous. Look around.”[65]

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[65] Opinion of the Bellingham Herald, “Religion’s place in public school,” *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 December 1991.

Morals, HIV/AIDS, and Kids as Capital

The 'moral fabric' of Christian America was subject to alterations, Gloria Harriman of Whatcom County declared, "A new day is dawning! A change is coming upon our planet. We are becoming a new species of humans: "Homonoeticus," new spiritual man."[1] Harriman's affective declaration attempted to articulate great spiritual change, transmutation, and transformations in social reality, it captured a feeling that alluded to deeper tectonic shifts, and that people felt something new had emerged in place of what once was. Although Morris P. Fiorina and his coauthors declared "no battle for the soul of America rages, at least none that most Americans [were] aware of," public discourse of many community members, families, and students highlights a keen awareness that fundamental shifts in the ways in which morals and values were reproduced and emphasized in public schools.[2] During the 1980s-1990s culture wars, community members of Whatcom County engaged in affective and dialectical struggle with one another, in attempt to make sense of new forms of education which transformed particular morals and values within the site of public education. New forms of education such as the Washington State's *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum,* challenged precedented "languages of public morality in American society,"[3] Christian American beliefs that had once set an encompassing template for social reality, underwent what historian Daniel T. Rodgers identified as a process of "disaggregation, a great age of fracture."[4]

Christian American ideological associations between immorality, 'the Other,' disease, degeneracy, and notions of personal responsibility had established historical precedence.[5] Early

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[1] [R.O.] Gloria Harriman (Bellingham), "Beginning of a new species," *H.O.W. Subject Files - 211 Letters to the Editors/Columns,* 21 February 1994. (CPNWS) Collection: H.O.W. (Hands Off Washington, Box 2.

[2] Morris P. Fiorina, Samuel J. Abrams, and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture Wars? The Myth of a Polarized America* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004), 8.

[3] James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1991), 316.

[4] Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.

[5] Nayan Shah, *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* (Berkeley

twentieth century immigrants, nonheterosexuals, non-whites, and Others faced isolation and abandonment due to naturalized 'commonsense' understandings that personhood, positionality, and behaviors legitimized material conditions. Common "explanations for disease coexisted with the belief that external symptoms of health or sickness reflected an individual's moral state" which "provided comfortable nexuses for the prevalence of illness and high mortality rates among particular populations, as the privileged classes could associate poverty and illness with they they perceived as the natural immorality of immigrants, people of color," and later, people's whose sexualities transcended the heterosexual framework.[6] These understandings were more commonly favored over recognition of the way in which hierarchies of violence and subordination directly legitimized cultural conditions of life and death for Others. Established practices and beliefs of this form of 'moral fabric,' naturalized in American histories and commonsense understandings, ideologically informed initial State inaction to address the mounting crisis that disproportionately impacted a sanctioned and established 'immoral' Other of Christian America.

In monstrous coincidence, the AIDS crisis disproportionately impacted established and vilified Others of Christian America, people of color and individuals with sexualities that were not defined as heterosexual.[7] Historic hierarchization of sexualities rooted in Christian American ideologies, privileged heterosexuality as superior to nonheterosexualities. The system of heteronormativity, rooted in Christian American beliefs of moral authority, was reinforced through

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and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 136,146-147; Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 10, 94-95, 287; Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 211-214, George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 170-173, 337-347.

[6] Nancy K. Bristow, *American Pandemic: The Lost Worlds of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.

[7] Kevin J. Mumford, *Not Straight, Not White: Black Gay Men from the March on Washington to the AIDS Crisis* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 187; Phillip Brian Harper, *Are We Not Men? Masculine Anxiety and the Problem of African-American Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3.

laws, forms of education, and in some ways, more significantly, enforced ignorance and silence. The subcultures of Christian America sustained “moral worldviews that [were] relatively homogenous and predictable,”[8] a worldview which “support[ed] a strong social conservatism, promot[ed] a traditional family mode” and “attack[ed] the gay marriage movement.”[9] Though for many generations it had gone unchallenged, Christian American cultural authority to reproduce beliefs, morals, and values at the site of public education underwent significant processes of delegitimization through the laws, the life and death urgency that AIDS posed to the safety and well-being of children, as well as fundamental shifts in State-driven values embedded within new forms of education and curriculum.

In 1981, *The New York Times* published the first national media article on the disease titled “Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals,” which firmly established the mounting epidemic into an Othered, nonheterosexual sphere, outside the realm of eliciting widespread public concern, crisis, or outcry. The initial signification and association of HIV/AIDS with historically marginalized and nonheteronormative individuals, in conjunction with the precedent of attributing mortality and disease to personal failure, contributed to the initial inaction and failure of the State to acknowledge the epidemic as a crisis that required mass mobilization. HIV/AIDS, a virus and subsequent syndrome, became interwoven in the public imagination with dominant concepts of ideal sexualities, physical behaviors, and immorality.

Christian American practices which subordinated, marginalized, and oppressed individuals who did not conform to the heteronormative Christian American worldview has been well documented.[10] In addition, the ways in which the American government chose to silence, ignore,

[8] James K. Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal: The Clash of Christian Cultures in the Pacific Northwest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 29.
[9] Wellman, *Evangelical vs. Liberal*, 238.
[10] Gary L. Atkins, *Gay Seattle: Stories of Exile and Belonging* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press,

and insufficiently address the growing epidemic which disproportionately impacted individuals whose marginalized identities intersected in the crosshairs of the AIDS crisis, has also been evidenced.[11] As one self-identified gay activist and educator during the AIDS crisis, Jonathan G. Silin asserted, AIDS became "more genocide than plague," because even though "AIDS was declared to be the government's number-one health priority […] a presidential directive required that no new funds be allocated for its cure, only money that could be diverted from other diseases."[12] Four years after the media strongly associated the new disease with homosexuals, a 1985 report conducted by the Federal Office of Technical Assessment, "confirmed that interagency competition, lack of funding, and bureaucratic red tape subverted initiation of HIV/AIDS research."[13] The report asserted that it "has not always been clear […] that the amount of support for AIDS activities has been equivalent to the effort that individual researchers and PHS agencies [believed was] necessary" and that "issues that extend[ed] beyond the biological nature of AIDS [warranted] more attention from the Federal Government" than was given.[14] Assertions that the AIDS crisis was a health priority did not match on the ground material and cultural conditions, which were informed by Christian American conceptions of morals and values.

2013); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth Century America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009); Nancy E. Stoller ed., *Lessons from the Damned: Queers, Whotes, and Junkies Respond to AIDS* (New York and London: Routledge, 1998); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); and David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[11] Kevin J. Mumford, *Not Straight, Not White: Black Gay Men from the March on Washington to the AIDS Crisis* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 172-74; Gary L. Atkins, *Gay Seattle: Stories of Exile and Belonging* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2013), 332-337; Jonathan G. Silin, *Sex, Death, and the Education of Children: Our Passion for Ignorance in the Age of AIDS* (New York and London: Teachers College, Columbia University), 15.

[12] Jonathan G. Silin, *Sex, Death, and the Education of Children: Our Passion for Ignorance in the Age of AIDS* (New York and London: Teachers College, Columbia University), 15.

[13] Silin, *Sex, Death, and the Education of Children*, 15.

[14] *Review of the Public Health Service's Response to AIDS* (Washington, D.C: U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, OTA-TM-H-24, February 1985), 4.
https://www.theblackvault.com/documents/ota/Ota_4/DATA/1985/8523.PDF

Although the "sixties were a watershed decade due in large part to the role played by the New Left, a loose configuration of movements that included the antiwar, Black Power, feminist and gay liberation movements"[15] which "offered the promise of cultural liberation to those on the outside of traditional America looking in,"[16] the State and "conservatives fought for their definition of the good society, for their traditional normative America, by resisting New Left sensibilities."[17] Yet Duggan complicates the point and argues that certain gains had indeed been made by the 1980s-1990s, through "greater [social] acceptance of the most assimilated, gender-appropriate, politically mainstream portions of the gay population."[18] However, these social gains for historically Othered groups, enfolded within "an emergent rhetorical commitment to diversity" and "the adoption of a neoliberal brand of identity/equality politics" was a "nonredistributive form of "equality" politics."[19] Early inaction, coupled with the bare minimum exponential increase in funds geared toward AIDS prevention education, highlights the ways in which violent, time cherished beliefs informed the material and cultural conditions of death.

Economists participated in their own social movements, albeit quieter. Similar yet strikingly different from social movements fighting for equality, economists propelled ideas within the economic arena during the 1950s onward interested and invested in fostering wide-spread development of human capital through education.[20] The government sought to interconnect the institution of public education with national economic goals which emphasized notions that

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15 Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America*: *A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 10.
16 Hartman, *A War for the Soul*, 19.
17 Hartman, *A War for the Soul*, 37.
18 Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press), 44.
19 Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality*, 44.
20 National Defense Education Act (1956); Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965); National Commission on Excellence in Education; Education for Economic Security Act (1984); Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act (1986); *A Nation at Risk : the Imperative for Educational Reform : a Report to the Nation and the Secretary of Education, United States Department of Education.* Washington, D.C.:The Commission : [Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. distributor], 1983.

education was the key to the economic well-being of the individual, as well as the State. Alongside State laws, 1970s models for health development as human capital emerged; one of the "novel features of the model [being] that individuals "choose" their length of life," and "the most important ["environmental variable" was] the level of education of the producer."[21] These notions were expanded in the early 1980s with the "A Nation at Risk" report that "was to set strict curriculum standards and enforce them with high-stakes tests to shore up the American economy with higher achievement."[22] These new forms of education transformed values of personal responsibility via education as interrelated to the authority of market demands.

Yet "the notion that economic structures moved first, carrying ideas in their wake, does not adequately explain the age."[23] By the late 1980s socioemotional perceptions of the AIDS crisis as exponential, seemingly unstoppable, and vast made it "understandable that people [were] afraid that they or loved ones might be exposed to the disease;"[24] especially when there was no known cure, the inevitable result was lethal, and the only care possible was palliative. Although the economic arena was a driving force, the emotional and social conditions of the 1980s and 1990s played a significant role in the development of new forms of education and rationalities. Media reports of Persons With Aids (PWA) emerged that were not easily identified as blamable Others, such as babies who contracted the virus through blood transfusions.[25] Public discourse contained fears for the safety and well-being of children and in order to address rising panics caused by ignorance, "everyone – including young children – need[ed] to understand AIDS" which was, as

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[21] Michael Grossman, "On the Concept of Health Capital and the Demand for Health," *Journal of Political Economy* 80, no. 2 (Mar.-Apr., 1972): 225.
[22] David F. Labaree, "Targeting Teachers," in *Public Education Under Siege* ed. Michael B. Katz and Mike Rose (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 31.
[23] Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 9.
[24] "Opinion: Children and AIDS," *The Bellingham Herald*. 25 September 1987.
[25] Harold M. Schmeck Jr., "Infant Who Received Transfusion Dies of Immune Deficiency Illness," *The New York Times* (10 December 1982); Dirk Johnson, "Ryan White Dies of AIDS at 18; His Struggle Helped Pierce Myths," *The New York Times* (9 April 1990).

one Bellingham community member argued, a "task that [would] require the efforts of parents, educators, clergy and church school teachers and anyone else who tried to help people understand and get along in the world."[26] Although shaped and informed by economics, "just as fundamentally" the culture wars are characterized by social and cultural "ideas, practices, norms, and conventions,"[27] which are inherently informed by the feeling and thoughts of the people experiencing the age.

Eventually the magnitude and scope of the crisis catalyzed the Washington State *Omnibus Bill of 1988*, which legislated: "All teachers shall stress the importance of the cultivation of manners, the fundamental principle of honesty, honor, industry and economy, the minimum requisites for good health including […] methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases."[28] The emphasis here on the development of human capital through new forms of education stressed personal responsibility, health, and student success for the market. These new morals and values to be executed through the site of public education through new curriculums, posed direct and indirect challenges to precedented conceptions of Christian American moral authority. Students "in other words," were exposed to "neoliberalism [as] a kind of secular faith," with more inclusive forms of morals and values, "its priests […] elected by no one."[29]

The implementation of *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum challenged hegemonic Christian American beliefs and practices that had weaved together a particular moral fabric predicated on Othering, ostracization, and blame. Within HIV/AIDS education, medicalized language embodied notions about inclusivity in regard to forms of sex and sexualities that would not only produce

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26 "Opinion: Children and AIDS," *The Bellingham Herald*. 25 September 1987.
27 Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 9.
28 "Ch. 206 Sexually Transmitted Disease - AIDS - Public Health and Education," Washington Laws, (1988), 952.
29 Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?,* xiii.

'good health,' but would also be economically advantageous. The moral fabric of Christian America was contested during the culture wars by neoliberal values that privileged inclusivity and economic interests over precedented exclusive frameworks for educating about sex and sexuality. New forms of education reshaped conceptions of authority concerned with the morals and values of the human body and this process syncretized Christian American conceptions of heteronormativity and personal responsibility with neoliberal conceptions of inclusivity, and the student as an agent who needed specific forms of education to exert personal responsibility in ideal ways for the market. Although these new forms of education incorporated Christian American moralisms (abstinence, 'lawful marriage'), the incorporation of neoliberal logics which provided limited-yet-more-inclusive forms of sex-based education (fidelity, anal, oral, broader definitions of safe-sex), threatened the very 'moral fabric' that had once been the ultimate moral authority in public schools. Hegemonic Christian American beliefs which had once constructed "strong metaphors of society," were supplanted by new commonsense understandings that came "to seem themselves as natural and inevitable: ingrained in the very logic of things."[30]

The struggle of everyday people to comprehend these tectonic shifts in social reality is highlighted in the ways in which community members engaged in public discourse of the culture wars. Whatcom community members engaged in public discourse were most concerned with the diminishment of moral authority rooted in Christian American ideologies and the life and death urgency of the AIDS crisis. These more inclusive forms of physical/sex-based education attempted to syncretize time cherished Christian American beliefs (which privileged heteronormativity and superior material conditions for heterosexuals) into a more all-encompassing spirituality, the market. As the State is only so ethical "in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise

[30] Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 10.

the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes"[31] there cannot be a separation of new forms of education from the economic arena.

Valued concepts within Washington State's *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum emphasized abstinence, 'lawful' marriage, fidelity, and safe-sex. Simultaneously inclusionary and exclusionary, these forms of education embodied forms of ideal behaviors that would economically benefit the state. In response to threats such as HIV/AIDS, drugs, substance abuse, and children posited as potential economic burdens on the State, precedented Christian American cultural morals, practices, and norms of Othering were delegitimized. The AIDS epidemic required new forms of inclusive medicalized education, however late, that did in fact have true potential to save children's lives. However, embedded within new forms of education (such as *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum, drug education, academic performance) were new morals and values that amalgamated older notions of Christian American heteropatriarchy and market. And "to watch one traveling, versatile set of ideas lose value to another ["markets, identities, rights"], is to see a historic intellectual shift in action."[32]

Due to no small efforts of advocates since the early 1980s, and the simultaneous rise of an overall sense of urgency within the general psyche, in July 1988 the Legislature of the State of Washington enacted the AIDS *Omnibus Bill*. The *Omnibus Bill* required the construction and subsequent implementation of HIV/AIDS curriculum at the site of public education which

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[31] Antonio Gramsci, "The State," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1999), 258.
[32] Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 11.

provided "a unique and appropriate setting for educating young people about the pathology and prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)."[33] The Omnibus Bill legitimized the implementation of AIDS curriculum in public schools through assertion that "sexually transmitted diseases constitute a serious and sometimes fatal threat to the public and individual health and welfare of the people and of the state."[34]

The bill passed not only due to the acknowledgement of the legitimate threat that sexually transmitted diseases posed to students, but also due to the rationalization that STDs "result in significant social, health, and economic costs."[35] The economic impact that the epidemic posed was a way in which AIDS education was legitimized for public education, it was not only for the sake, safety, and well-being of students, it was also for the well-being of the economy. As a way in which to not only prevent additional burdens on the State, but also to ensure students were able to survive through their childhood and into their productive adult years. Mounting fears and anxieties about the pervasiveness and far-reaching effects of the epidemic justified the implementation of *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum into Washington's public schools, marking a significant shift in the ways in which public education produced knowledge concerned with the physical body, personal behaviors, and ideal interpersonal relationships.

The introduction of the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum* handbook iterated the necessity of the new curriculum based on the scope and magnitude the threat of HIV/AIDS posed to the safety, well-being, and productivity of children. By July 1988 over 60,000 cases of AIDS had been reported in the United States and facing "estimates that 1- to 2 million people" were "infected" were said to give "rise to great concern," due to "the outcome for all those whose

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[33] Atkins, *Gay Seattle*, 300-301; Hartman, *A War for the Soul*, 156-160; "AIDS Education in the Common Schools," Omnibus AIDS Act, Washington Laws, 1988, Senate Bill No. 6211, 950.
[34] Washington State, *AIDS Omnibus Act of 1988*, SB no. 6221, 961.
[35] Washington State, *AIDS Omnibus Act of 1988*, SB no. 6221, 961.

infection proceeds to actual AIDS is death."[36] And in facing these estimates of individuals threatened by HIV/AIDS, Washington State public education argued, that the "level of concern is legitimate," and the "responsibility for this effort must be shared by all" who had "access and influence" on Washington youth.[37] The fact that "few health issues [had] presented the magnitude and scope of challenges that have been experienced with the HIV/AIDS epidemic," justified the new curriculum.[38]

Alongside the life and death urgency the epidemic posed, fears of its impact on the potential productivities of children was given attention by Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction Judith A. Billings. Superintendent Billings asserted that students were at "risk of HIV infection" just as they were to "embark upon their most productive years."[39] In expressing the dangers and consequences of not educating students, Superintendent Billings went on to delineate a direct correlation between the injuries that the disease not only posed to students health, but also to their capabilities to be productive market actors, amalgamating health, economic, and academic goals. Wide scale efforts to address the epidemic would be the responsibility of public schools. More specifically, teachers, educators, and school officials would be tasked to assume the responsibility of education that could and would have life and death consequences.

The Washington State Board of Education fashioned the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum and used the site of public education to address the unprecedented proportions and proximities of the epidemic. The site of public education was an established mechanism for knowledge production and dissemination (e.g. Christmas). Superintendent Billings asserted that the magnitude and scope

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36 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum Grades 5 through 12* (Olympia, Washington: Officer of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1990), 1.
37 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum*, 1.
38 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum,* i.
39 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum*, i.

of threats experienced during the AIDS crisis required "that parents, schools and community work together to provide effective education to students."[40] Stressing the magnitude of the epidemic and the dangers it posed, fostered a sense of urgency that required a specific form of mass mobilization between families, communities, and public education. The life-and-death urgency of HIV/AIDS in addition to the threat is posed to students abilities to be productive members of society, shifted commonsense understandings of the ways in which the State could educate on medicalized understandings of sex, sexualities, and sexual behaviors which introduced new forms of education that previously did not have a foothold in the Washington state public education system.

Albeit somewhat tenuous, the distinction of the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum and other forms of sex-based education was vital for the initial integration of HIV/AIDS education in Washington state. Due to the legitimate threat that lack of knowledge posed in regard to HIV/AIDS, concessions were forced to be made by sex-conservatives who wished to enforce, as some critics called it, "ignorance only" sex-education.[41] Ignorance-only education was abstinence-only-until-heterosexual marriage education rooted in Christian American understandings and reinforced through law. Emphasis on abstinence from sex before marriage indicated to nonheterosexual people who could not enter 'lawful' marriage, that they did not have legitimacy as couples, families, or as sexual beings. And in a social reality which placed social and economic value in marriage, the lawful exclusion from marriage rights barred nonheterosexual couples and nonheteronormative family units from material benefits and social capital that came with marriage. However, concepts such as fidelity and safe-sex, more inclusive than Christian American notions of abstinence-until-marriage to address the life and death urgency of HIV/AIDS as well as

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40 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum* i.

41 Gilbert Herdt, *Moral Panics, Sex Panics: Fear and the Fight over Sexual Rights* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2009), 24.

economic threats that teen-pregnancy seemed to pose. These concepts were simultaneously introduced within sex-based curriculum, which challenged precedented forms of Christian American moral authority.

The *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum was constructed to address HIV/AIDS, however, in addition to providing knowledge on how to prevent the contraction or dissemination of the disease, the curriculum also reinforced cultural understandings of the ways in which sexualities and interrelationships were to be performed in society. Education which placed emphasis on abstinence, fidelity, and waiting for 'legal' marriage meant education for performance of idealized behaviors in social reality; simultaneously inclusive and exclusive. The *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum's inclusion of forms of sex and 'fidelity' based sexual relationships typically associated with nonheterosexuals during this time, was seen as a "fundamental attack upon Christianity, a fundamental attack upon the traditional, biblical family and marriage ideal."[42]

Behavioral policing was hegemonic in that it was offered in coercive, rather than forced methods of education. In "The ABCDs of HIV" Core Review section of *KNOW:HIV/AIDS*, the concepts of abstinence, fidelity, and condoms are listed under C, for Choices. In the curriculum, fidelity is defined as "Two people who are mutually monogamous, (neither has another sexual partner) […] Such a relationship is found within the context of lawful marriage."[43] And during the 1980s-1990s, lawful marriage in its definition and sociolegal implementation, excluded and delegitimized relationships, families, and sexualities that were not heterosexual in nature.

The *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum explicitly emphasized abstinence as the ideal behavior among a few behavioral choices to curb the transmission of HIV/AIDS. However, this was unaccepted by individuals invested in maintaining the hegemonic ostracization of individuals

[42] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 4.
[43] "The ABCDs of HIV," Lesson #2, Grade 12, *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum*, S-199.

based off of their sexualities, sex-acts, and the ways in which people chose to have interpersonal relationships beyond monogamy. The promotion of abstinence was a way to assert "shared community values" and provide a "moral framework" that would uphold "the institution of family, fidelity, and commitment."[44] And "when oral and anal intercourse are included in the definition of sexual intercourse and made synonymous with vaginal intercourse, a powerful political and sociological message" was conveyed.[45] The political message being that one that was a "lie" when students were told "that the gay population 'just happened to be the one to get AIDS"; meaning a message that did not demonize the existence of the nonheterosexuals and the way in which they were disproportionately affected by the crisis. These 'moral frameworks' and family values were predicated on the exclusion of individuals who did not adhere to specific forms of behaviors and interpersonal relationships; and the cultural practice of ostracizing individuals based off of their sexualities lost hegemonic cultural capital through knowledge-dissemination.

The way in which sex-based acts and notions of family was taught became "an important symbolic territory because the social arrangements and relationships found there are very much a microcosm of those in the larger social order," therefore any education that subverted heteropatriachal family structures became a threat to the larger Christian American moral fabric that had precedented cultural dominance.[46] Ignorance-only education supported the cultural hegemony of heterosexuality. Cultural reinforcement of ignorance in regard to the wide spectrum and potentialities of sexualities was a productive tool to maintain heteropatriarchal social power. Although accumulated over centuries and expressed in different histories in different ways, the fight for maintained ignorance came to a breaking point in the face of the life-and-death urgency

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44 [R.O.] Peggy L. Koskela, "AIDS cop-out," *The Bellingham Herald*. 11 May 1989.
45 Koskela, "AIDS cop-out," 11 May 1989.
46 Hunter, *Culture Wars,* 173.

that AIDS indiscriminately posed. Due this urgency, “the question was no longer whether schools would teach about sex; it was what they would teach, and how, and to what end.”[47]

The introduction of new forms of medicalized sex-based education to address the life threatening crisis of AIDS, one Whatcom County resident felt, “represent[ed] nothing less than the mental molestation of our children.”[48] The combination of medical language and the inclusion of values beyond abstinence and ‘lawful’ marriage mightily concerned certain Bellingham community members. The inclusion of medical facts such as, “when discussing body fluid: Anal intercourse poses an extremely high risk for both men and women because of the lining of the human rectum is thin and fragile,” were considered by some to be forms of “verbal and mental abuse by order of the state.”[49] And that through curriculum which explicitly included “sexual references to practices like anal and oral sex,” Bellingham community members were allowing the “state to steal [their] children’s innocence.”[50]

A “newly formed organization of community members” called Concerned Citizens of Whatcom County also claimed that the curriculum was a threat to the “physical, mental, and emotional well-being of children.”[51] The organization’s chairwoman, Audrey McKeever stated that “the state’s AIDS curriculum (KNOW) [was] promoting homosexuality and legitimizing sodomy under the guise of AIDS education.”[52] Republican Representative Glenn Dobbs followed McKeever’s address and preached of “the evils of a homosexual political agenda in which the

[47] Johnathan Zimmerman, *Too Hot To Handle: A Global History of Sex Education* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015), 117.
[48] [R.O.] Jack Petree, “Model AIDS curriculum is disgusting,” *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 April 1989
[49] Petree, “Model AIDS curriculum is disgusting,”19 April 1989.
[50] Petree, “Model AIDS curriculum is disgusting, 19 April 1989.
[51] Lori Siebe, “AIDS education,” *The Bellingham Herald*. 14 April 1989.
[52] Siebe, “AIDS education,” 14 April 1989.

homosexual population [was] plotting to use AIDS curricula to induct children into their ranks."[53] One advertising consultant of the county asserted in public discourse that "it really is important to teach children that AIDS is a deadly disease spread through sexual contact and misuse of drugs," yet argued that it was "not necessary to instruct children in various methods" of how to practice safe-sex, because it was a "disgusting attempt by the state to achieve a political agenda."[54]

The inclusion of concepts which taught that anal, oral, and unmarried sex could be performed as *safe*, was a particular way in which the "[S]tate's AIDS curriculum (KNOW) [was] promoting homosexuality and legitimizing sodomy under the guide of AIDS education."[55] One community member urged their fellow community members to join them in pressuring legislators to "drop" the curricula that included "sexual references to practices like anal and oral sex […] and simply teach the truth" that "AIDS is a deadly disease spread through sexual contact and the misuse of drugs."[56] The truth, it seemed, was relative and dependent on a specific "moral worldview" which attempted to reinforce the hegemony of ignorance-only education.[57]

Any form of sex-based education beyond abstinence or waiting until 'legal' marriage went beyond the realm of Christian American understandings of what could be defined as *safe* sex. Although the *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* curriculum did not explicitly support nonheterosexualities as valid sexualities, it did encompass forms of sex that were associated with nonheterosexualities, as well provided legitimacy for methods of safe sex outside of 'lawful' marriage. Regardless of lube or condoms, anal sex and sex outside of Christian American ideological conceptions of marriage,

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53 Siebe, "AIDS education," 14 April 1989.
54 Petree, "Model AIDS curriculum is disgusting," 19 April 1989.
55 Siebe, "AIDS education," 14 April 1989.
56 [R.O.] Jack Petree, "Model AIDS curriculum is disgusting," *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 April 1989
57 James K. Wellman Jr., *Evangelical vs. Liberal: The Clash of Christian Cultures in the Pacific Northwest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 238. "The American evangelical moral worldview supports a strong social conservatism, promotes a traditional family mode, attacks the gay marriage movement, and advocates against abortion."

could not be considered safe. Associations with sin, subordination, and Othering made it categorically *unsafe*. Yet, new medicalized understandings of what could be considered safe sex was not limited to heterosexual reproductive sex acts. The concept of ways in which sex could be considered safe, now encompassed inclusive and informed decision making, and tools to practice safe sex, rather than strictly cultural customs such as marriage or abstinence. Knowledge of forms of sex which could be seen as safe which didn't uphold hegemonic heterosexual understandings of acceptable sexualities, was a political act that degraded precedented understandings and adherence to Christian American moral authority.

Homophobic Representative Dobbs was not entirely inaccurate about the agenda of inducting children into the ranks of the living. There were many political agendas during the AIDS crisis, one being sex-based curriculum which legitimized ideas that sex could be safe without legal marriage, and queer people deserved to have access to life knowledge that would have embodied consequences without. However, this new moral authority did not necessarily overtake, but rather combined with historically precedented Christian American practices and beliefs which had legitimized the denial of necessary material conditions for the survival of Others. New forms of physical education were legitimized through the necessity of and urgency for medicalized language.

Public schools, as sites which produce culture and social reality, exist fundamentally as sites of power. Discourses about sex "did not multiply apart from or against power, but in the very space and as the means of its exercise."[58] Within the site of public education, academic discourses about sex were State sanctioned which legitimized certain understandings of sex, sexualities, and

[58] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 32.

sexual behaviors. Before the epidemic and the *Omnibus Bill of 1988*, the institution of public education had "a certain fundamental prohibition"[59] on discourses of sex and sexuality. However, "definite necessities - economic pressures, political requirements - were able to lift this prohibition and open a few approaches to the discourse on sex, but these were limited and carefully coded."[60] The sex-based education implemented was coded, limited, and influenced public understandings of condoned sex discourses, social structures, and behaviors. The medicalization of language and concepts to address the epidemic provided necessary legitimization to encompass new forms of morals and values within the site of public education via sex-based discourses.

In response to fellow community members who asserted Christian American sentiments calling for the restriction of medicalized language, one local emphatically asserted: "Get real! Tell them the truth and tell them in plain medical English, specifically."[61] Medical professionals in Whatcom County supplemented legislative legitimacy with their social standing for the integration of medicalized sex-based education via public discourse. Medical professionals argued that *more* efforts were needed to address the lethal threat HIV/AIDS posed to the safety and well-being of children. They argued that curriculum geared toward actual knowledge of how the disease operated, and ways it could be stymied, needed more emphasis and time than it had thus far received. Increased pressure to focus on medical facts were especially critical when public political representatives like Rep. Dobbs were engaged in the spread of misinformation such as "the virus can stay alive seven to 10 days on a dry surface," in attempts to give credence to "fear and prejudice surrounding homosexuality."[62]

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[59] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 34.
[60] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 34.
[61] [R.O.] David Doran, "Tell the truth," *The Bellingham Herald*. 1 May 1989.
[62] [R.O.] Frances Gass, R.N. and Kenneth Gass, M.D., Ph.D., "Good program," *The Bellingham Herald*. 27 April 1989.

With mounting social fears and anxieties about the dangers of HIV/AIDS, health, student safety and well-being, portions of the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum sought to address the way in which "fear and suspicion is always heightened by the unknown."[63] The board of education used the site of public education to bridge intergenerational gaps in knowledge because "many parents lack[ed] information on HIV/AIDS or [had] misinformation" which could hinder "the smooth implementation of a sensitive program such as HIV prevention."[64] It was a delicate cultural process to address AFRAIDS (Acute Fear Regarding AIDS) through medicalized information targeting both students and parents. But the cultural process of addressing "unfounded fears" which could "stifle a community's ability to combat the actual threat of this disease and foster discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS" was critical to impede the rapidly growing number of PWA.[65] Because medicalized educational knowledge was a "life and death issue" commonsense understandings of integrating *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum into public schools came to hold the sentiment that it became "time to get the word out."[66] Christian American moral frameworks were no longer seen as a legitimate solution (legally, and exponentially socially) to address the very real fears and anxieties concerned with the safety and well-being of children.

In a meeting of "about 30 doctors, nurses and other medical professionals" the Whatcom County Health Officer Dr. Frank James challenged the "professionals to pressure educators to boost the schools' emphasis on AIDS."[67] Although Bellingham School Board President Mary Swenson "said the district's AIDS curriculum me[t] state requirements for AIDS education," Dr. James asserted that the "curriculum [gave] scant mention to the fact that condoms and spermicides

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[63] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum,* 9.
[64] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum*, 9.
[65] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum,* E-3.
[66] [R.O.] Juliana Hale (Bellingham), "Not a behavior," *The Bellingham Herald*. 17 December 1991.
[67] Carol Ferm, "Health officer criticizes schools' AIDS education." *The Bellingham Herald*. 19 January 1990.

are the most effective means of protection from AIDS for sexually active people."[68] Dr. James argued that "forty-minute (classes) in groups of 90 once a year" was not going to help "the biggest pool of people at risk" which were "high school and junior high students."[69] This shows that although medicalized sex based knowledge was legislated and integrated, in actuality, its integration was not on a consistent or of a meaningful enough depth, to be as effective as was needed to address the scope and magnitude of the epidemic. The life-and-death urgency of the epidemic required the "gift of knowledge," because in this crisis, "ignorance [was] not bliss, it [could] be fatal."[70] The medicalized language that was to address the lethality of the epidemic, was actually limited in both time and content, and subordinate to "the importance of sexual abstinence outside law marriage and avoidance of substance abuse in controlling disease."[71] The curriculum was limited and coded in such ways that attempted to negotiate medical necessities, religious beliefs, as well as forms of political and economic sex-based education.

Even though the curriculum was legitimized by medical necessity, medicalized sex-based education could not simply *just tell the facts*. The integration of the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum was predicated on the combination of time cherished behavioral beliefs and beliefs in the medical necessity of giving kids lifesaving information against a very real, and very lethal epidemic. Yet, the *Omnibus Bill* legislated that "information directed to the general public and providing education regarding any sexually transmitted disease […] shall give emphasis to the importance of sexual abstinence, sexual fidelity, and avoidance of substance abuse in controlling disease," which encompassed morals and values.[72] Though physical sexual behaviors and substance abuse

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[68] Ferm, "Health officer criticizes schools' AIDS education." 19 January 1990.
[69] Ferm, "Health officer criticizes schools' AIDS education." 19 January 1990.
[70] [R.O.] Kathy Green, "Fatal ignorance," *The Bellingham Herald*. 2 May 1989.
[71] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS*, 41.
[72] "Sexual Abstinence and Avoidance of Substance Abuse," Omnibus AIDS Act, Washington Laws, 1988, Senate Bill No. 6211, 949.

did in fact address the epidemic, the concepts of substance abuse and fidelity simultaneously went beyond the controlling of the disease, alluding to larger national narratives that were gaining emphasis of personal responsibility and family values.[73]

The legitimate life-and-death urgency to integrate medical knowledge may have overpowered abstinence-only education, but the *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* curriculum's "emphasis to the importance of sexual abstinence, sexual fidelity, and avoidance of substance abuse" asserted old beliefs and morals yet in new, refashioned ways.[74] Recommended curriculum approaches for grades six-twelve were stated as: "the focus should be on healthy behaviors rather than on the medical aspects of the disease," "students should examine and affirm their own values," "students should know they have a right to abstain from sexual intercourse or to postpone becoming sexually active," and "discussion of critical social issues […] such as protecting the public health without endangering the individual liberties" was recommended.[75] Healthy behaviors rather than medical emphasis, privileged the prevention of teen-pregnancies, valuation of the formation of heteropatriachal family units, and avoidance of drug use; all of which interrelated with economic utility.

New forms of morals and values inspired new forms of performative rituals. Some local Whatcom County teens participated in activities which engaged with, and cemented the significance of, specific idealized behaviors. At one "pro-abstinence rally" sponsored by the interdenominational Christian American Whatcom Pregnancy center, "dozens" of "young people" filled out cards "pledging to deny having sex before marriage."[76] The local paper pictured groups

[73] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 23.
[74] Omnibus AIDS Act, Washington Laws, 1988, Senate Bill No. 6211.
[75] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS,* 18-19.
[76] "Whatcom County teen-agers take vow of responsible sex," *The Bellingham Herald*. 14 November 1994.

of teenagers signing yellow post it notes, captioned “SHE’LL WAIT.”[77] The participants at the pro-abstinence rally held at the Bellingham Boys and Girls Club, heard from Miss Whatcom County, Melanie Russell, “as she and her boyfriend [who] also made the pledge.”[78] New forms of education reinforced time cherished Christian American beliefs, yet refashioned them in new ways that would also include rituals and pledges (albeit outside of school) to assume new forms of direct physical responsibility as educated through public school curriculum.

Remaining abstinent until marriage was not only a matter of HIV/AIDS, but also of the economic and social burdens that STIs and unwed teen pregnancies posed. Fears and anxieties rose within discourses from the adults in the community, that asserted if curriculums did not include “the promotion of abstinence outside marriage, society could be headed for disaster.”[79] In a 12th grade lesson, “Effect of AIDS” a section titled “Financial” listed the economic costs of HIV. Citing costs of treatment at “$40,000/+ per year” and assertions that “nationally, AIDS related costs are approximately $1 billion a year in direct costs and $7 billion a year in indirect costs,” and goes on to state the “projected costs” at “$8.5 billion in direct costs and $55.6 billion for indirect costs annually.”[80] Students learned from the State, from their communities, that it was their role and responsibility to choose and adhere to the correct sexual behaviors in order to not have a negative impact on themselves, their families, or society. Teenage participation in the pro-abstinence ritual were but one way it was shown that children were trying to assume the personal responsibility of their own behaviors, as well as deflect mounting rhetoric against teenagers and their “destructive behavior[s] that [would allegedly bring] disease and a great economic burden to

77 “Whatcom County teen-agers take vow of responsible sex,” 14 November 1994.
78 “Whatcom County teen-agers take vow of responsible sex,” 14 November 1994.
79 Robinson, “Sex education: Parental forum pushes for more talk about abstinence for teens,” *The Bellingham Herald*. 25 October 1988.
80 “Effect of AIDS,” Lesson #2, Grade 12, *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum*, S-201.

the rest of society."[81]

Students underwent direct education both in their communities and in their schools on the ways in which to assume personal responsibility, under a more inclusive moral fabric for the sake of economics, safety and well-being. The way in which public schools educated new forms of sexual and physical responsibilities during the culture wars, rapidly encompassed a life-and-death seriousness, for the individual as well as the social. Public discourse exponentially mounted against the economic and social burdens of teen pregnancy due to perceptions that "more often than not, teen-age parents [did] not work," ending up "relying on public assistance and support."[82] Teachers were instructed that, "as consumers of products, services, and information that influence their health, students need[ed] to know how to analyze various sources and determine the accuracy and/or appropriateness of each. [As] [m]aking decisions without this knowledge [could] be hazardous to one's health!!" in addition to hazardous to the health of the economy.[83] And with mounting rhetoric that "drugs and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and inadequate education" were "seriously damaging [student's] life chances," the integration of new forms of embodied education to address threats to the safety and well-being of kids, became legally and socially legitimate.[84]

New forms of education restructured forms of labor and social and emotional responsibilities placed upon families, teachers, and school officials. Although these forms of labor had existed through the site of public schools, the Washington state legislated they were now requirements of labor exerted at the site of public education. In order to create the forms that

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[81] [R.O.] Bill Vandersys (Lynden), "Threatens society's moral fabric," *H.O.W. Subject Files - 211 Letters to the Editors/Columns,* 6 February 1994.
[82] Robinson, "Sex education: Parental forum pushes for more talk about abstinence for teens," 25 October 1988.
[83] "Student Learning Objective(s) "Facts and Fears," Lesson #2, Grade 11, Teacher Use Only, *KNOW:HIV/AIDS*, S-155.
[84] "Report: Help for kids must be united," *L.A. Times* - *Washington Post*. [Undated, 1995]

KNOW:HIV/AIDS curriculum would be implemented into schools "dozens of meetings with thousands of teachers and school officials" had "been held to explain what [was] expected under the law."[85] Efforts toward addressing the epidemic had to be met by various parts of the community, yet it was public schools and school educators who had to "provide leadership and expertise"[86] on the disease, as well as be capable to "answer student's tough questions."[87] Similar to answering tough questions about Christmas and the removal of certain forms of cultural reproduction from the site of schools, teachers and school officials experienced increased responsibilities at the site of public education to explain discourses about sex, sexuality, and various forms of life and death threats that faced students during the 1980s and 1990s.

With increased responsibility placed on public schools to address the epidemic, school officials felt heightened social pressures to address it in ways that would be perceived as adequate. A Whatcom County public school Superintendent, Lee Olsen said "that schools have had to find middle ground between "people who think we're doing too much (and) … people who think we're not doing enough."[88] School officials increasingly felt pressure to adequately meet and address the growing list of social and emotional responsibilities of the public school system. The law required "the state to develop a model curriculum" but put the responsibility of each school district to develop its own.[89] This legislation expanded the requirements, responsibilities, and expectations of teachers and school officials for development and investment in the safety and well-being of children's physical health and behaviors.

The new moral fabric was to be more inclusive of previously marginalized Others (albeit

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[85] Bob Partlow, "Legislators assail AIDS course: School officials, parents defend programs," *The Bellingham Herald*. 30 April 1989.
[86] *KNOW: HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum,* 1.
[87] Becky Elmendorf, "What is it you expect of teachers?," *The Bellingham Herald*. 18 May 1989.
[88] Ferm, "Health officer criticizes schools' AIDS education." 19 January 1990.
[89] Partlow, "Legislators assail AIDS course: School officials, parents defend programs," 30 April 1989.

still exclusionary), and new values were broader than before to encompass forms of education that simultaneously promoted 'good health' and informed students of which behaviors were unwanted. Specifically, ones that had the potential to be economically burdensome or not advantageous to State goals for productivity. The legitimization of medicalized language ushered in the integration of limited and coded language about "healthy behaviors."[90] Abstinence, safe sex, fidelity, 'lawful' marriage, as well as emphasis on substance abuse avoidance were promoted to be healthy ways to exert and assume personal responsibility over physical health. And "one way to invest in human capital is to improve emotional and physical health."[91] Although personal responsibility of ones health can be seen as beneficial for the individual as well as the collective, it also is a mark of new neoliberal rationalities that connected the development of human capital with the economic interests of the State.

This coded language of health and ideal behavior alludes to frameworks produced within the economic arena in earlier decades. At the University of Chicago in the 1970s, political economists began to construct models for the "demand for the commodity of "good health."[92] These models identified "education" as a means to produce the commodity of "good health" because it was "shown that the shadow price rises with age if the rate of depreciation on the stock of health rises over the life cycle and falls with education if more educated people are more efficient producers of health."[93] Within these models, individuals "choose their length of life," and the "most important" variable was identified as "the level of education of the producer," meaning, education on the importance of personal responsibility that an individual exerts over their

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90 *KNOW: HIV/AIDS*, 18.
91 Gary S. Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1975,) 40.
92 Grossman, "On the Concept of Health Capital and the Demand for Health," (1972): 223.
93 Grossman, "On the Concept of Health Capital," 223.

own health would take precedence over other "environmental variables."[94] New emphasis emerged from national reports such as *A Nation At Risk* which "emphasized the importance of a high shared level of education for realizing American social and political ideals, and expressed commitment to enabling all Americans from all backgrounds to fully develop their abilities through schooling."[95]

Commitments to "inclusion of the historically marginalized became more deeply institutionalized in the national faith,"[96] alongside new discourses that taught personal responsibility was more significant than other social, material, historical 'environmental variables.' Through these new forms of education, "the United States could create equality and opportunity for all and redesign its own citizens to meet all perceived threats to its economic and political preeminence.[97] New curricula simultaneously increased pressures on physical behaviors which would encourage conceptions of "good health," alongside academic behaviors , both of which would "upgrade the quality of the nation's labor force and thereby increase the capacity of its businesses to compete in the international marketplace."[98]

Within neoliberal logics the push for education on State identified ideal behaviors which would address 'good health,' promote certain forms of academic learning, was directly meant to influence "increases in a person's stock of knowledge or human capital" which were "assumed to raise his productivity in the market sector of the economy."[99] New economic driven morals and values were invested and produced in at the site of public education. These more inclusive morals and values syncretized some dominant Christian American conceptions of ideal sex behaviors and

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[94] Grossman, "On the Concept of Health Capital," 223.
[95] Carl L. Bankston III and Stephen J. Caldas, *Public Education - America's Civil Religion* (New York and London: Teachers College Press, 2009), 131.
[96] Bankston and Caldas, 132.
[97] Bankston and Caldas, 132.
[98] Harvey Kantor and Robert Lower, "The Price of Human Capital: The Illusion of Equal Educational Opportunity," in *Public Education Under Siege,* 81.
[99] Grossman, "Health Capital," 223.

relationship models but expanded to encompass behaviors that were now more significantly influenced by American economic morals and values. The use of public education to address the magnitude and scope of the epidemic legitimized new forms of moral and physical education through public schools. However, this delineation meant new forms of educational and affective responsibilities would be placed upon chronically underfunded and under-sourced teachers and school officials to address mounting social issues, fears, and anxieties.

Christian American beliefs such as abstinence and 'lawful marriage' were refashioned and supplemented new modes of semi-secular medicalized education that reinforced emerging notions of personal responsibility and productivity. The incorporation of physical and sex-based education placed emphasis on the adherence to, and performance of specific behaviors and laws which would economically benefit the State simultaneously diminished Christian American moral authority. New neoliberal morals and values at the site of public education contributed to a particular manufacturing of social reality, a dawning of a new day, the creation of a new spirituality.

The *Omnibus Bill* and the life-and-death urgency of HIV/AIDS education delegitimized ignorance-only education. Public discourse concerned with the ways in which the new curriculum subverted Christian American beliefs in abstinence-before-'lawful'-marriage-only education did not possess enough legal or social power to undermine the medicalized necessity of inclusivity. Although this was a legitimate, documented, verified life-and-death situation, some community members in Whatcom County resisted this specific new form of education based off precedented beliefs and practices which historically legitimized the ostracization of Others, and the denial of material (and immaterial) conditions which impact the safety and well-being of children.

Christian American conceptions of management of the self through abstinence and 'lawful' marriage were in integrated in the *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* curriculum, yet refashioned in certain ways,

which would ensure not only the safety and well-being of students, but also orient behaviors away from becoming economic burdens on the State, or to face social consequences of going against public education. The public discourse shows the ways in which certain community members engaged in the 'war for the soul of America,' however, the political effectiveness of such discourse is questionable as it was in response to laws which had already fundamentally subverted and altered Christian American moral authority. Wrapped within this altered moral fabric, 'Homonoeticus,' a new spiritual being emerged alongside new rationalizations for forms of education that connected children's knowledge and abilities to exert specific forms of personal responsibility and behaviors to the socioeconomic well-being and safety of the nation.

DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) - The Neoliberal Trojan Horse

In an interview conducted on increased policing within public schools, one local Whatcom County teen asserted: "Drugs are hurting the country. I think anything that stops drugs is helping the people."[1] The increased rationalization of policing for this student, was predicated on the belief that drugs posed a legitimate and violent threat to the people, and *anything* that stopped this particular form of violence, would be helpful for their safety and well-being. Drug users, substance abuse, 'gangs,' crime, and criminality were predominantly signified as the "enemy" of the 1980s and 1990s culture wars, both within State rhetoric and local discourses.[2] In response to these seemingly surmounting threats, beliefs that new forms of protection were required to ensure forms of safety and well-being, more specifically for children within public schools. Although "the nation was not experiencing a crime wave,"[3] State-driven laws and rhetoric asserted and advocated otherwise. In both response and reaction, local community members engaged in public discourse where real fears, anxieties, and rationalizations were conveyed, which provided legitimacy to State-driven solutions for the alleged increase of social ailments concerning drugs, crime, criminality. In the form of new educational programs and expanded methods of policing, law-enforcement (wielders of State power) were integrated into the site of public education, as educators.

Whereas the removal of religion from schools and the introduction of sex education were hotly contested, Americans expressed widespread consensus of concern and need for action in

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[1] Carol E. Robinson, "Drug law reaches into school lockers: Students express privacy concerns," *The Bellingham Herald*. 10 May 1989.

[2] Radley Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2014), 165.

[3] Heather Ann Thompson, "Criminalizing Kids: The Overlooked Reason for Failing Schools," in *Public Education Under Siege* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 133; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016), Note 10 & 11, 346-347.

regard to drugs, crime, and criminality; regardless of spiritual or political alignment.[4] Concerted bipartisan political work by State actors infused cultural discourses with moralisms on the 'war against drugs.' Rhetorics and reforms of the 1970s expanded and legitimated increased community policing, police-community approximation, police education, and the justification of increased numbers of "people under state surveillance and control."[5] State laws mounted in the 1980s posing substance abuse, drugs, crime, and criminality as problems of "national defense."[6] And by the mid-1980s, laws emerged that legally integrated law-enforcement into the site of public education.[7]

Former Secretary of Education (1985-1988) and George H.W. Bush appointed drug czar William Bennett asserted: "The simple fact is that drug use is wrong [...] And in the end, the moral argument is the most compelling argument."[8] New moralisms emerged that "cast the drug fight as a biblical struggle between good and evil, and in the process" turned the "country's drug cops into holy soldiers," as well as educators, specialists, and alleviates.[9] New "mental frames and pictures" of the legitimacy of law enforcement to exist within the site of the most vulnerable and susceptible members of society, came to be seen "as natural and inevitable: ingrained in the very logics of things."[10] Tectonic shifts in public school's culture, responsibilities, and mounted perceptions of social ills which threatened the safety and well-being of children, politically and socially legitimized the integration of law-enforcement into the site of public education.

Within the decade of implementation, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)

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4 Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016), 8.
5 Micol Seigel, *Violence Work: State Power and the Limits of Police* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2018), 3.
6 Hinton quoting Senator Joe Biden in 1982, *Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, 310; Revision of *Posse Comitatus Act of 1878* with *Military Cooperation with Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies Act* (1981); and *Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984*.
7 *The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986*; *Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988*.
8 Radley Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2014), 164.
9 Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop,* 139.
10 Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 10.

program in Whatcom County had "become a real cornerstone" of the drug-prevention education in public schools.[11] Monopolized and mandated by the State in the mid-1980s to be operated through police departments across the country (including Washington state), school districts across the nation were "to support activities of local police departments and other local law enforcement agencies to conduct educational outreach activities in communities" explicitly to "facilitate coordination and cooperation among […] local education" and cops.[12] Although there were alternatives for substance abuse and drug education, resources, and outreach services, the DARE program (and therefore violence workers as State mechanisms of power) were awarded State monopoly.[13] Through coordinated political work of State policies and public discourse, by 1995, the positionality of violence workers within local public education, had become naturalized and embedded in commonsense, in the very logic of things. As one Whatcom curriculum director stated, cops became "very familiar faces in the community and the school system."[14]

The DARE program was a Trojan horse. The integration of cops into public education as educators is a quiet aspect of the war of ideas because although it faced little conflict or resistance, it marked a significant shift in cultural perceptions and commonsense understandings of the boundaries, sites, roles of police, and policing. The idea that law-enforcement officers belonged in schools as educators was sheathed in concerned media portrayals of lawlessness, criminality, fears, and anxieties concerned with the current and future well-being of children. As a primary site of cultural production, socialization, and learning of the ways in which commonsense is constructed and conducted in particular societies the State-mandated implementation of cops into publicly

[11] "DARE program links cultures, communities," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.
[12] *Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988*, Public Law 100-690, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 102 (1988): 4254.
[13] Micol Siegel, *Violence Work*, 120. The term "Violence workers […] highlight the work state officials do to justify the violence required by capital by stabilizing the notion of the state: state agents' efforts to separate civil from military arenas, delineate public and private spheres, and draft images of police as local, domestic workers, are critical pieces of the legitimation rule."
[14] "DARE program links cultures, communities," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.

funded schools serves as a transition marker of commonsense understanding of the reaches of State power. It is important to recognize that "Police realize - they *make real* - the core of the power of the state,"[15] and within the American capitalist State, law-enforcement has "long labored in the service of capital."[16] In analyzing the role of law-enforcement within public schools, when "police and prisons are offered as the solution to and the definition of safety,"[17] one must contend with the "intertwined centrality of capitalism"[18] and the ways in which the State forged "new linkages between schools" and punitive systems.[19] In tandem with emergent neoliberal logics which connected the economic arena to the development of 'human capital' (children) within public education, the implementation of police into public schools manifested new forms of education, education as policing, and policing as a form of education.

The fabrication of necessity for drug-education programs was in part a reintesification process of the 'War on Drugs,' as well as directed neoliberal efforts to ensure productive and lawful laborers, educated in State mandated personal responsibilities. The goals of neoliberal was to protect and make productive forms of human capital on an intensified individual plane, one angle being heightened emphasis on the role personal responsibility in ensuring the success of the nation. Shortly after the election of neoliberal pioneer Ronald Reagan, Nancy Reagan engaged in concerted political work to individualize and personalize drug and substance abuse as an individual criminal failure. The highly publicized "Just Say No" campaign catalyzed growth in public concern and directed media attention to the undesirability and unlawfulness of illicit drug use. Central to

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15 Seigel, *Violence Work*, 10.

16 Seigel, *Violence Work*, 74; and 21, "Police function to produce race, a category essential to the workings of the state-market under racial capitalism. Any analysis of US policing must consider its constitutive relationship to the racialization of Black and brown subjects, not only theoretically but also in history, with the US police's structural formation as an antiblack force."

17 Erica R. Meiners, *For the Children? Protecting Innocence in a Carceral State* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 187.

18 Meiners, *For the Children?*, 9.

19 Meiners, *For the Children?*, 7.

the "Just Say No" campaign was Reagan's emphasis on the significance and importance of education in drug prevention, believing that with the right education, citizens would exert *personal responsibility* in 'just saying no.'

Reagan's rhetoric emphasized the individual responsibility to 'just say no;' substance-abuse therefore became simplified to an individualized personal responsibility, and failure to assume that responsibility was a personal, criminal, failure. Directing institutional, financial, and social roles and responsibilities previously allocated to the State onto individual people is a neoliberal tactic. In doing so, institutional social failures such as mass incarceration would be placed into the rhetoric of personal responsibility rather than a flawed system that ensured the accumulation of specific forms of capital. In order to prevent (and/or legitimize) mass-individualized criminal failure in material reality through rhetoric and discourse, the State sought to directly participate in educating children that choosing drugs was indeed a choice, and after being taught that it was unlawful and unwanted behavior, the State could justifiably incarcerate individuals who knowledgeably personally failed to comply with the required individual responsibility of not engaging in substance-abuse.

Not a standalone institution, public education is where the social and State dialect manifests into generalized boundaries for potential lived experience and thus shapes the production of social reality and commonsense understandings. This process involves not only shaping the way in which students understood culture, society, values, but also families, teachers, and school officials. Significantly impacted by emerging neoliberal discourses on new forms of personal responsibilities attributable to families, teachers, and school officials, these various social actors were affected by rising discourses of the necessity to ensure the security of children.

During this heightened moment of cultural fluctuation, the concept of 'personal

responsibility' impacted potentials of support; meaning, various forms of personal responsibility were attributable to a person, group, or institution and if that responsibility was not fulfilled, then there would be consequences. Substance-abuse, crime, drop-out rates, low-standardized test scores were all seen as 'personal' failures, rather than systemic. The concept of 'personal responsibility' could be applied to individuals, groups of workers, local school districts or individual schools, but never the State, and always an abdication of public responsibility. However, the State assumes the responsibility of directly shaping the way in which personal responsibility is taught and understood, specifically in ways that financially benefitted the State itself.[20]

Teachers and school officials within the education system were impacted by the perceived successes or failures of their abilities to facilitate generalized social goals in regard to children. In essence, teacher valuation was dependent on their ability as laborers to produce a desired product, the modern neoliberal student. The neoliberal student was one that would subjugate the self to the desired modes of behavior that would be productive and would "contribute to strengthening the economic security of the United States."[21] A drug-using student could not perform academic levels of achievement necessary to achieve status as a productive, responsible worker that could contribute to the State's gross domestic product.[22] And with underfunded and overcrowded classrooms, new standards posed challenges and contradictions to the roles and responsibilities teachers were supposed to assume, perform, and fulfill. Concurrently wanting to meet new

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20 Antonio Gramsci, "The State," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1999), 258.

21 *Education for Economic Security Act*. Public Law 98-377 (11 August 1984): 8; The Act was "designed to: (1) provide assistance to improve elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education in mathematics and science; (2) provide a national policy for engineering, technical, and scientific personnel; (3) provide cost sharing by the private sector in training such personnel; (4) encourage creation of new engineering, technical, and scientific jobs; and (5) address other issues and concerns," Document Resume, Abstract.

22 *Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act*. Committee on Education and Labor Report Together with Supplemental Views to Accompany H.R. 4727. House-R-99-597 (12 May 1986), 3. "The Committee feels that investing in human capital is at least as important to improving our long-range competiveness as investing in equipment or negotiating trade agreements. Education programs have the capability to both redress current trade imbalances and prevent us from losing ground in the future."

standards in order to better help student success, teachers were increasingly unable to meet all the additional social requirements regarding increased fears of substance abuse that were also being placed on educators and school officials without the adequate resources to address the issue within individual school districts.

In this manufactured crisis of educational quality and outcomes, police integration as educators is that of a scab, usurping precedented authority of teachers and school officials, as well as funding. In this tangled skein there are overworked and underfunded teachers, the State unwilling to provide resources within existing educational institutional frameworks, and the implementation of police as a solution to the perceived rise of social ailments. Although this multifaceted ideological struggle is happening on a national level, it is within the local that discourse, understandings, and feelings impact lived experiences. Teachers, students, school officials, families, and community members were the real individuals who faced exponential fears and anxieties of how these ideas would impact their material conditions and affective experiences.

The collective pressures felt by individuals, influenced through State policies, practices, rhetoric, and public discourse, legitimized police integration as an alleviate, rather than as violence workers within the Trojan horse of State power, into the site of public education. However, with neoliberal State policies that asserted the "need for enhanced efforts to assure, for the future of our Nation, a better educated and trained citizenry to enable our economy to be competitive in the world," kids were defined as an essential capital to the future economic success of the American economy.[23] Although the DARE program was implemented on the local level, the larger State mechanisms and political work which contributed to its legitimation must be taken into account.

[23] Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act. House-R-99-597. 12 May 1986, 2.

In a Senate hearing focused on memorializing aspects of the 'War on Drugs,' Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates asserted that he believed that casual drug users "ought to be taken out and shot."[24] Defending his remarks even further, he stated: "We're in a war" with individuals "who blast some pot on a casual basis," and argued that marijuana users were committing "treason," against the State.[25] Domestic public enemy number one were now individuals who made the personal decision to engage in casual drug use, a personal failure in the assumption of responsibility to remain (perceived as) productive workers, was treasonous; and according to a nationally renowned cop, deserved to be murdered. William Bennett also "floated the idea of suspending *habeas corpus* for drug offenders" when he stated "It's a funny war when the 'enemy' is entitled to due process of law and a fair trial."[26] And later, he told Larry King that "he'd be up for beheading drug users," though he conceded that doing so might be "legally difficult" but that "morally" he had "no problem with it."[27]

The identity of drug users had become militarized as a way to legitimize new forms of education and social relationships between law enforcement and children. Ideas such as these, reinforced beliefs that educational action was necessary in order to prevent an increase in individuals who deserved to be 'taken out and shot.' Especially worrisome in these portrayals of dehumanized criminals, was who was felt and perceived as the most vulnerable and susceptible to the dangers of drug use *and* becoming a drug user. Children, if not educated properly, possessed the potential of becoming these very criminalized and thus dehumanized individuals.

Driven to stymie potential increased numbers of treasonous anti-American illicit drug users, Gates founded and fought for the implementation of the DARE program into public schools

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[24] Ronald J. Ostrow, "Casual Drug Users Should Be Shot, Gates Says," *Los Angeles Times* (06 September 1990).
[25] Ostrow, "Casual Drug Users Should Be Shot."
[26] Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 165.
[27] Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 165.

in the early 1980s.[28] President and founding director of DARE Glenn Levant, believed the "obvious approach was to get to children before their first exposure to drugs and to give them the educational tools and personal skills to make smart, healthy choices - the right choice," and asserted "the most effective place to reach them was in the schools."[29] As with sex-based forms of education, schools were identified as sites to address social ailments of 'good health' and development of human capital.

Founding the program, however, differs from creation. Developed by University of Southern California researchers, doctors, and professors, Project SMART (Self-Management and Resistance Training) was appropriated by LAPD and Gates to construct the DARE curriculum. Dr. Ruth Rich, LAUSD's health education specialist tasked with implementing the first drug prevention education in their school district, was in agreement with LAPD, who believed that drug education ought "to be taught by police officers themselves, not doctors or teachers."[30] Believing that "when it comes to drugs, [cops were] more credible than a teacher," Rich approached Andy Johnson, leader of the USC research team with the "idea of sharing SMART with cops," and Johnson "said, no, he had problems with [police in the classroom], so [LAPD/LAUSD] took SMART and used" it as the basis for DARE's curriculum, which directly and intentionally placed police within the classroom as educators with the direct help and aid from school officials.[31] In attempting to locate original DARE curriculum however, it could not be located within the local public school archives, local police archives, and the national DARE organization could not

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28 "A Brief History of the Drug War," Drug Policy Alliance. http://www.addisonlibrary.org/sites/default/files/Packet-%20July%202015.pdf.

29 Glenn Levant, *Keeping Kids Drug Free: D.A.R.E. Official Parent's Guide* (San Diego, CA: Laurel Glen, 1998), IX.

30 Rosie Cima, "DARE: The Anti-Drug Program That Never Actually Worked," *Priceonomics*, 19 December 2016, https://priceonomics.com/dare-the-anti-drug-program-that-never-actually/ .

31 Cima, "DARE: The Anti-Drug Program."; Jeff Elliot, "Drug Prevention Placebo: How DARE wastes time, money, and police," *Reason* (March 1995), https://reason.com/archives/1995/03/01/drug-prevention-placebo/4 .

provide the historical documents. The inability to locate DARE curriculum in one archival position speaks to the ways in which the DARE program traversed and transgressed precedented barriers between public schools, law enforcement, and police as a State tool for the implementation of direct rhetoric and discourses with specific neoliberal goals.

Law-enforcement transgressed precedented boundaries within public education, as well as American policing. With cops as educators in the classroom, education and policing shifted to encompass different meanings than once commonly understood. In an early assessment study on the impact of DARE, a metanalysis showed a significant impact on student's attitudes of cops and noted the socialization and thus naturalization processes that occurred when police engaged with children as educators.[32] Police within the classroom became a form of education for students, parents, teachers, and school officials to equate the positionality of cops with the positionality of teachers within the institution of public education. This exemplifies Micol Seigel's framework of police legitimacy, which rested on a "tripartite fiction," consisting of borders and myths which gave the illusion that "police are civilian, not military," "they are public, not private," and that "they are local; they don't work for government bodies."[33] Cops became naturalized within the boundaries of public schools, yet were still connected to larger State apparatus of power.

The naturalization of police presence was based on an assumed specialty concerning knowledge of drugs; however, police are not chemists, doctors, lawyers, or trained in how to address the needs of substance abuse, or the causal factors, or the systemic issues that contribute toward it. Their trained specialty is law-enforcement, enforcing laws by force, and then, throughout local school districts, were engaged in educating children (as well as indirectly teachers, school

[32] Susan T. Ennett, Nancy S. Tobler, Christopher L. Ringwalt, and Robert L. Flewelling, "How Effective Is Drug Abuse Resistance Education? A Meta-Analysis of Project DARE Outcome Evaluations," *American Journal of Public Health* 84, no. 9 (September 1994): 1397.
[33] Seigel, *Violence Workers*, 13-14.

officials, and families) on how to obey specific laws and the consequences of not. As cops were a required component of the DARE program, their uniformed presence within the classroom functioned as a form of policing, compounding the authority of public-school educators and police officers. This process of integration was legitimized through new commonsense understandings of cops as simultaneous protectors and educators against complex real and imagined threats to children; bad/unhealthy behaviors, drugs, substance abuse, 'dirty' needles, and gangs. The integration of cops into schools through the DARE program, although mandated by the State, was supported by local school officials, because of the sincere concerns about the safety and well-being of students.

Shortly after Don Pierce became Bellingham Chief of Police, he began working to strengthen the relationship between Bellingham School District and the Bellingham Police Department. He was a significant advocate for the expansion of the DARE program, cops as law-enforcers within public schools, as well as a local State actor refashioning national narratives of alleged exponential threats of crime and criminality, Chief Pierce asserted "Bellingham [was] changing," in regard to an apparent "increasing number of violent crimes involving young teenagers."[34] Through this, Pierce argued that Whatcom County needed "a stronger [police] presence in the middle schools," in order to combat supposed 'gang' activities.[35] By the early 1990s, new curriculum and cops were integrated and "used in every elementary school in the county."[36] This rhetoric combined with efforts of State and Federal lawmakers, established a commonsense understandings that cops belonged in schools to directly address the alleged growth in criminals and criminality which threatened children.

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34 Carol Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops: D.A.R.E. to fight drugs and gang," *The Bellingham Herald*. 1990.
35 Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops: D.A.R.E. to fight drugs and gang," 1990.
36 Eric Jorgensen, "Educators saying yes to D.A.R.E. school program," *The Bellingham Herald*. 30 September 1991.

The rhetoric of criminality and lawlessness stoked fears about student safety and police were posed as the viable solution, not only by the State, but also by school officials. Although this rhetoric of fear and danger regarding "gang recruitment" was admitted to *not* be "a major problem" during this moment in Bellingham, Superintendent Lee Olsen stated: "I *feel* like it *could* be one."[37] School officials, such as Olsen, were tasked with the responsibility of ensuring student 'safety,' which meant increased pressure on school officials to preemptively respond to threats in ways that would be understood as adequate. His *feeling*, informed by surrounding rhetoric about encroaching dangers of 'gangs' and 'drugs,' was enough to team up with Chief Pierce to request additional funds for the expansion of the DARE program. In part influenced by this teamwork between violence workers and school officials, "the Bellingham City Council […] unanimously approved a $120,000 allocation to the city's D.A.R.E. program."[38] This shows that *perceived* threats, even without tangible evidence, were enough for local government to provide the material conditions necessary to support the expansion of cops into schools, for the alleged sake of perceived prevention of crimes and safety.

School officials were not unaffected by surrounding fears and anxieties about the potential dangers that students could experience, and through this, perpetuated the very same rhetoric. In response to questions of the legitimacy of increased policing activities on students, Olsen replied: "The question is: Is it a safety issue as far as the school is concerned, or is it a privacy issue as far as the students are concerned?" School officials believed that the integration and expansion of law-enforcement within Bellingham's public schools would help not only educate against drug-use, but also be a way to prevent "gang recruitment efforts."[39] And the prevention of 'gangs' was an

[37] Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops," 1990.
[38] Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops," 1990.
[39] Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops," 1990.

empty signifier, imbued with meanings which sought to erase additional boundaries of law-enforcement and public schools.

The use of the term 'gangs' in Bellingham was a reverberation from racialized national rhetoric. The term 'gangs' in common imaginations had become intimately associated with Black and brown folks, criminality, and lawlessness. When a shooting occurred at the Bellis Fair Mall in 1995, a Fairhaven resident told the local newspaper that they "fear the city is becoming more like Los Angeles," which he referred to as "a slime pit."[40] Although the comment does not explicitly state the racialized conception of gang and criminal activity to be connected with race, the allusion to the criminality, lawlessness, and undesirability of Los Angeles, in commonsense understandings, was explicitly related to Black and brown people.[41] Commonsense racism, in Bellingham and the nation, associated Black and brown students with 'gangs.'[42]

Bellingham student and president of the Whatcom Committee for Educational Advancement told *Bellingham Herald* reporters that there were racist instances where teachers "referred to some East Indians as 'Saddam's nephew.'[43] The student went on to recount further that one "teacher thought a youth's black eye came from a "gang initiation" when it was a sports injury."[44] Teachers too, could be workers of violence. The imagined associations of Black and

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40 "Gangs," The Bellingham Herald. [Undated, 1995]

41 Hinton, *Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, 263. "Testifying before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency in 1974, Los Angeles police chief Ed Davis brought a "new phenomenon in the black community" to the attention of Congress […] Outside of Los Angeles, police departments and researchers reported that low-income youth […] had organized into groups […] seemingly lacking political objective entirely, the rise of these so-called gangs coincided with the sharp increases of the federal crime control budget and the doubling of juvenile arrests during the first half of the 1970s."

42 Hinton, *Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, 329. "The rendering of black citizens as suspect, regardless of their class status, had characterized American policing since Emancipation. Now, under the shield of statistical "truth" that grounded widespread assumptions about race and criminality and the Supreme Court's refusal to accept criminal justice racism as fact, members of law enforce had the license to exercise their discretion to stop, question, harass, and detain any and every person who they suspected of being a gang member, as they saw fit."

43 Mark Porter, "Youths take up torch of activism in tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.," *The Bellingham Herald*. 17 January 1995.

44 Mark Porter, "Youths take up torch of activism in tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.," *The Bellingham Herald*. 17 January 1995.

brown students with the racialized notion of 'gangs' exacerbated and were informed by historically precedented forms of racism against students of color in Whatcom County.[45] Though the sources shed brief insight onto the affective experiences of students of color in local public schools, the naturalization of violence workers into the site of public education had, as shown on more systemic levels, the potential to erode Black and brown students' "relationships to learning and schools."[46]

Situations like the Bellis Fair Mall shooting provided opportunities for the Bellingham police department to reassert the necessity of police positionality and labor within public discourse. Chief Pierce told the local paper after the incident that the "Bellingham police work to head off gang and other criminal activity through many programs such as the [DARE] programs, and hiring officers on overtime to work downtown and at the malls during the holidays."[47] Pierce performed concerted political work through the use of language that contained subtexts of racism and criminality. Though Pierce was an individual historical actor, his position as Chief of Police meant that his discourse fell in line with State discourses which sought to socially legitimize the presence of police in public schools and spaces, as well as justify increased public funding for labor that would supposedly ensure protection.

State-driven laws established the legality of increased forms of surveillance and the diminishment of forms of privacy within public schools, justified by the risks threatening children's safety and well-being. Embedded within Washington State's *Omnibus Alcohol and Controlled Substances Act* of 1989, was the assertion that "no right nor expectation of privacy exists for any student as to the use of any locker issued or assigned to a student by a school and

[45] For historical racism in Whatcom County see, Nayan Shah, *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 25, 27-29, 30, 35, 39, 149.
[46] Meiners, *For the Children?*, 8.
[47] "Gangs," The Bellingham Herald. [Undated, 1995]

the locker shall be subject to search for illegal, drugs, weapons, and contraband."[48] Commonsense understandings of privacy shifted due to the legal authority that if a "reasonable suspicion" was felt that a "search [would] yield evidence of any particular student's violation of the law or school rule," then school officials and police had the social and legal authority to search.[49] New rationalities emerged that believed it was "an acceptable thing, [to diminish forms of privacy] because anyone that's abiding by the law doesn't have anything to worry about."[50] Ensuring student safety was predicated on compliance with an increased sense of personal responsibility, police presence, surveillance, and lowered standards of privacy.

Due to mounting laws and discourses mandating schools and communities had the responsibility to be drug free, teachers and school officials initiated small steps to address systemic issues. Bellingham School District began operating a drug and alcohol abuse program in 1985, employing "two fulltime 'intervention specialists" in order to work with "students and teachers in the city's two high schools and three middle schools."[51] These volunteers, as in not receiving additional wages for their labor, would "get extra training in recognizing and counseling students with drug and alcohol problems, including students whose lives [were] being disrupted by the drug or alcohol abuse of another family member."[52] Significantly, the distribution of core social burdens to working women to address gaps in care due to reduced public funding became more prevalent within neoliberalism.[53] These 'core teams' of volunteers highlight the way in which teachers were willing, even during times of financial and professional duress, to perform unpaid additional labor

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48 H.B. No. 1793, Omnibus Alcohol and Controlled Substances Act, 1313.
49 H.B. No. 1793, Omnibus Alcohol and Controlled Substances Act, 1313.
50 Carol E. Robinson, "Drug law reaches into school lockers: Students express privacy concerns," *The Bellingham Herald*. 10 May 1989.
51 John Stark, "Substance abuse efforts in schools expanding," *Bellingham Herald*. 26 January 1987.
52 Stark, "Substance abuse efforts in schools expanding," 26 January 1987.
53 Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn, New York: Zone Books, 2015), 105.

in order to provide support and counseling for students whose lives involved substance-abuse. Teachers and school officials assumed "more social responsibility on education that it ever had before" without enough institutional support to make their efforts sustainable.[54]

These specialists and 'core teams' of volunteers were not a comprehensive solution. Before this point there had been "little specialized assistance available in county high schools for students with drug and alcohol problems," emphasizing an unfulfilled responsibility on the part of the country and the public education system.[55] Local school officials faced increased pressures on assuming the social responsibility of addressing drug and alcohol problems within their student population while simultaneously experiencing chronic lack of institutional funds and resources.

Local teachers faced increased responsibilities with overcrowded classrooms, underfunding, rising standards to achieve academic 'results,' and layoffs.[56] In response to these increased demands, teachers attempted to work with the community and State in order to assert the value of their labor. In 1985, "six teachers each presented the governor [Gardner] with a red rose wrapped with a slip of paper, each rose bearing a complaint," while he attended a Democratic party fundraiser on Forest St.[57] However, instead of addressing the educators, he addressed the children present asking: "Are your classes too crowded?' Some heads nodded, 'yes.' 'But can you talk with your teacher and get the extra help you need when you have trouble understanding things?' The same heads nodded 'yes.' 'Well, that's 80 percent of the battle right there isn't it?"[58] Effectively ignoring the legitimacy of the concerns posed by Washington state teachers as well as setting precedent for the way in which teachers would have to fight for labor valuation as well as

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[54] Trask Tapperson, "Educators say schools take on more family responsibilities," *The Bellingham Herald*. 9 November 1992.
[55] Stark, "Substance abuse efforts in schools expanding," 26 January 1987.
[56] "Teachers fight layoff action" Joan Connell, staff of *The Bellingham Herald*. 9 May 1985; "Governor talks with local students," *Herald*. 30 May 1985.
[57] "Governor talks with local students," *Herald*. 30 May 1985.
[58] "Governor talks with local students," *Herald*. 30 May 1985.

assuming additional responsibilities.

Public teachers and public schools were increasingly criticized over how they should be performing their jobs, under what pay circumstances, and in regard to what they should be emphasizing academically, as well as addressing systemic problems on personal and individual levels with students. Within the community, members published their criticisms through the local paper, which highlight labor sentiment toward the profession of teaching. In a direct statement toward teachers arguing for reduced class sizes and more support in resources and funds to adequately support the material conditions necessary for basic standards of living, one community member used the public platform of *The Bellingham Herald* to assert the following:

Get yourself a piece of chalk and a blackboard and teach our children to read, write and calculate! Stop whining and telling us how much you "care," how dedicated you are, and how the parents of the community are the problem in education. Teach our children, for the salary we are willing to pay, or find another profession.[59]

The actions of teachers asserting unfair labor conditions went against proscribed notions of 'care' that had historically been associated with women and childcare. In addition to parental public devaluation of teacher's assertions of needing adequate material conditions to conduct effective teaching and address the increased responsibilities attributed to them, was student devaluation of teachers as well. A student claimed that "if teachers truly cared about their students, they would not be on strike, complaining about low pay and overcrowded classrooms, but in school, teaching."[60]

The value of teacher labor and social positionality shifted in culture at the same time police

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[59] [R.O.] Charles W. McInnis (Bellingham), "Stop whining, do the job," *The Bellingham Herald*. 23 November 1994.

[60] [R.O.] Juliette Jackson (Bellingham), "If teachers cared," *The Bellingham Herald*. 27 October 1994.

departments received increased funding for DARE officers and gained more authority and cultural capital within the site of public education. Principal Bill Kelly (at neighboring Blaine Middle School) went as far to assert that public schools were "the best social service agencies [Washington state] has, and they're taking advantage of us."[61] Noting the discrepancy of work demands and labor devaluation, "many teachers [said] they're frustrated by a public perception they aren't doing their jobs as well as 20 or 30 years ago" and asserted that "the job is harder and state and government hasn't chipped in to support them."[62]

The State was not chipping in to support them and in 1987, for the "first time in 30 years the Washington average [teacher salary] dropped below the national average." Washington State teachers received an average 2.9% wage increase, where the national average rose 5.6% the last year, dropping to 47th "in the nation in the average student-teacher ratio" as well.[63] According to Judy Tucker, a fifth-grade teacher, asserted that any one additional student over the 25-to-1 student to teacher ratio felt "like five more students" and "it's a lot harder to work with kids individually."[64] However, the State's legislative staff researchers estimated that reducing the average class size "to 17 or fewer students" would "cost nearly 1$ billion per year," the cost itself being cited as a legitimization of continued labor exploitation and overworking of educators.[65]

According to the *Bellingham Herald* "one of the most common complaints of educators in Whatcom County and elsewhere [was] the increasing numbers of students described as being "at risk' of failing because of family or other problems."[66] However, a Bellingham teacher said that the local educators were "at risk,' too," and "because we care so much about our students, more

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[61] "Children," *The Bellingham Herald*. 2 June 1991.
[62] "Children," *The Bellingham Herald*. 2 June 1991.
[63] Herald Staff, "Teachers' average pay," *The Bellingham Herald* and the *Associated Press*. 06 May 1988.
[64] Herald Staff, "Teachers' average pay," 06 May 1988.
[65] "Children," *The Bellingham Herald*. 2 June 1991.
[66] "Children," *The Bellingham Herald*. 2 June 1991.

and more of our time is spent dealing with drugs and divorce, suicide and abuse," rather than focusing on education that would "stimulate minds and awaken imaginations."[67] Steadily though, public discourse and sentiment gravitated toward demanding that teachers assume additional responsibilities of (healthy) behavioral education, classroom performance, and now acting as liaisons between State goals of addressing substance-abuse in the private sphere through public education while existing in a "society [that] simply [did] not hold teaching in very high regard."[68]

New academic and institutional standards for students placed additional labor demands on teachers. Teachers underwent increased forms of professional scrutinization under emerging 'national' standards. The profession of teaching and the labor occupation of accredited teacher became more defined and rigid during the time. Teaching standards were being scrutinized and reshaped and educators were facing ever increasing demands to acquire more and better training to adhere to the new intensified standards. The rise of standardized tests, threats of "creation of national performance standards," "hiring of non-licensed instructors to teach their specialties," "national curriculum," and implementation of broad standards of "essential learnings," were redefining what subjects were deemed important to learned as well as defining the specialists who should be performing the education.[69]

Within these shifting standards was yet another additional social responsibility to produce students who would "grow to lead productive lives," meaning that the increased standards of teaching were in direct correlation to the way in which student success was defined.[70] By this time in the 1980s, discourse surfaced concerned with the implementation of teacher certification

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[67] Becky Elmendorf, "What is it you expect of teachers?," *The Bellingham Herald*. 18 May 1989.
[68] Elmendorf, "What is it you expect of teachers?," 18 May 1989.
[69] Eric Jorgensen, "County educators lukewarm," *The Bellingham Herald*. 1 October 1989.
[70] Elmendorf, "What is it you expect of teachers?," 18 May 1989.

programs aimed at "establishing high standards for training and employment" of teachers.[71] Along with a slew of requirements concerning "documentation of academic background," "official evaluations of teaching performance," and testimonies from "colleagues on the candidate's effectiveness as a teacher," was the minimum requirement that "a teacher must have at least 3 years of teaching experience."[72] Acquiring and maintaining legitimacy as a certified teacher was requiring more labor accompanied by less social and economic valuation than before.

As teachers and school officials experienced social devaluation, chronic lack of funds and resources, and increased social and professional responsibilities, parents, families, and local community members showed support for the integration of cops in schools through raising financial capital. Community members and businesses such as Lynden Transport, Bellingham National Bank, Trillium, and ARCO raised over $25,000 to fund DARE "educational materials for youngsters all over the county."[73] Driven by the Bellingham National Bank "the money was a combination of business and citizen donations and a matching grant from the bank," showing that community members and businesses alike were willing to invest time and capital in order to support DARE educational materials "for more than 2,800 students."[74] The fact that businesses contributed capital toward DARE, highlights that DARE could be seen as an economic investment in the creation of human capital.

Although this local fundraiser is not comparable to the costs of reducing class sizes, pay increases, or social valuation of the profession of teaching, this local fund drive for DARE highlights what aspects of education the community of Bellingham believed should value. This

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[71] John Walsh, "Teacher Certification Program under Way," *Science* New Series, 235, no. 4791 (Feb. 20, 1987), 838. (839-839)
[72] Walsh, "Teacher Certification," 838.
[73] "Bank, donors raise $25,000 for D.A.R.E.," *The Bellingham Herald*. 14 January 1992.
[74] "Bank, donors raise $25,000 for D.A.R.E.," *The Bellingham Herald*. 14 January 1992.

new form of education was seen as socially legitimate enough to provide money, time, and cultural resources to supporting, whereas other forms of education, such as the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum that would contend with the life-threatening epidemic, met social, cultural, and financial opposition. As teachers were experiencing cultural and institutional devaluation of their profession, the DARE program was discussed as not only valuable and meaningful, but necessary.

By "sending uniformed police officers into fifth-grade classrooms to talk about drug abuse and teach children how to avoid substance abuse" cops were placed into the role of recently, and barely, trained educators.[75] DARE officers were brought in to the educational sphere as 'educators,' although they had only underwent a measly "80 training hours in classroom management, teaching strategies, communication skills, adolescent development, drug information, and curriculum instruction."[76] Though teacher certification and educational standards were becoming more specialized and rigorous during this moment, the State believed that 80 hours of training was enough to assert police were specialists concerning drug-education and prevention. The notion that cops had more intimate knowledge of substance-abuse, crime, and criminals because they worked in law-enforcement, was used to rationalize that they were specialists who should educate on the subjects. Iterating a common sentiment, Deputy Dori Bowhay (DARE program officer) said "children are going to get information about drugs somewhere," and asserted that they can "get it accurately" from "police officers, or they can get it inaccurately from someone who says, 'It never hurt me when I sniffed glue."[77] Bowhay simultaneously depicts cops as specialists on drug-knowledge while also reinforcing the fear rhetoric of uneducated children falling prey to substance-abuse. Cops however, were not legal, drug, or substance-abuse specialists though posing

[75] Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops," 1990.
[76] Ennett, et. al, "How Effective Is Drug Abuse Resistance,"1395.
[77] "Cuts threaten DARE: Anti-drug program in schools caught in budget crunch," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.

cops as 'specially' trained was concerted political work to legitimize police presence within the classroom space. While teachers were experiencing underfunded labor, overcrowded classrooms, additional pressures to tackle increasing social ailments, cops were posed as the viable alternative to alleviate particular demands.

Some teachers and school officials were "delighted" that substance-abuse had been identified by the U.S. Department of Education as a "serious health concern to be addressed by schools."[78] However, this placed additional responsibility on public educators, and was met with some dismay "at the prospect for enforcement with no dollars to address the basic problem."[79] As above mentioned, teachers did not have adequate resources or funding to address pre-existing academic needs, let alone addressing systemic issues of substance-abuse on the individual school level. Yet teachers and educators were placed into positions of responsibility in addressing the ailments, regardless of funding availability. A Whatcom County Superintendent, Robert Gilden of Blaine School District, commented on the increasing social pressures saying that it was one of his "pet gripes," that "people often seem to expect the schools to try to solve major social problems like drug abuse" however "if (schools) ignore it" who was "going to do it?"[80]

The premise of the DARE program was the allocation of responsibility onto law enforcement, rather than on public education teachers or school officials, while using public education as the site of dissemination. This allotment of responsibility onto cops instead of underfunded and overworked educators (who had already shown initiative in addressing systemic issues and perceived threats of substance abuse), could be seen as a relief from underpaid and underfunded responsibilities. Cops alleviated teachers and school officials from social

[78] Joan Connell, "School role in drug-abuse fight unclear: Federal ruling defines addicted children as handicapped," *Herald*. 4 July 1985.
[79] Connell, "School role," 4 July 1985.
[80] Stark, "Substance abuse efforts in schools expanding," 26 January 1987.

responsibility and underfunding because they required no additional educational funding and did not require certified teachers to teach new curriculum. This alleviation could be why there was no marked resistance to the integration, because teachers were placed into a chokehold without other alternatives for addressing the growing concerns of substance abuse, and the production of productive, responsible children in 'good health.'

New State standards and goals for student's success and performance meant efforts needed to be oriented toward keeping students in schools and not using drugs in order to meet proposed new levels of achievement. To address social ailments, which would and/or could prevent the production of high numbers of successful, healthy, and 'productive' students, the State allotted funding to police departments through the DARE program rather than intra-public educational funding. Reiterated in various public laws over the 1980s, State resources would be allocated "to support activities of local police departments and other local law enforcement agencies to conduct educational outreach activities in communities" in order to explicitly "facilitate coordination and cooperation among [...] local education" and cops.[81] In essence, the State implemented new forms of physical and behavioral education and used law enforcement as educators. Policing came to include education and education itself became a way in which to police not only students, but also teachers, school officials, families, and community members.

The idea of criminality became intimately associated with 'personal choice' during this moment. By the 1980s, police community relations became less directly interested in "the sick, the incompetent, and the deviant as individuals" and became more concerned with the "conditions of existence, to the social fabric, and to cultural change."[82] The hyper-emphasis on individualized

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[81] *Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988*, Public Law 100-690, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 102 (1988): 4254.
[82] Egon Bittner, *The Functions of the Police in Modern Society: A Review of Factors, Current Practices, and*

criminal responsibility was the “practice of responsibilization” which “reconfigures the correct comportment of the subject […] to engage in a particular form of self-sustenance that meshes with the morality of the state and the health of the economy.”[83] So although the emphasis was on the individual, the broader rationalities altered the creation of social reality within public schools. Through inclusive and widespread implementation, DARE as a new form of education, emphasized specific ideal behaviors that would have legal consequences if not performed properly, allegedly equally distributed to everyone. Every child that went through the DARE program was instilled with the personal accountability to ‘just say no.’ And in simultaneity, were also socialized that policing was equitable, fair, and had the legitimacy to perform of educators, to train a particular “conduct of conduct.”[84]

As with other forms of education implemented and shaped within public schools, this specialized form of education contributed to increased cultural and ideological capital of law-enforcement. “From the perspective of the police,” teaching children behavioral curriculum through participation in “these programs are taught to identify with cops, thus readjusting their social values in accordance with the law-and-order objectives of police agencies.”[85] Public schools, as has long been recognized, are “outfitted with countless mechanisms for surveillance and correction: a classroom design, detention, student “tracking,” examinations, and other disciplinary measures subject students to diverse pressures and programs of behavioral modification.”[86] Although individual historical actors may have had different affective experiences with the program, the objectives of the State, law-enforcement, and DARE were to ensure the

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Possible Role Models (Cambridge, MA: Oelgschlager, Gunn & Hain, Publishers, Inc., 1970), 117.
83 Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 84.
84 Foucault quoted in Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 21 and 117.
85 Reeves, *Citizen Spies*, 110.
86 Reeves, *Citizen Spies*, 123.

safety and well-being of children in a very specific capacity, which legitimized increased rates of surveillance, influence, and levels of incarceration.

The presence of DARE officers as educators within public schools socialized and taught children to abide laws or face consequences. Alongside sex-based forms of education that had lethal and social economic consequences, children were also taught there would be punitive measures for undesirable behaviors regarding drugs, crime, and criminality. They were required to engage in additional forms of workbooks, homework, and rituals that would be rewarded with affective experiences and material objects such as graduation certificates.[87] Students were continuously influenced by objectified forms of cop cultural capital such as "tee shirts, pens, banners, coloring books, pendants, rulers, bumper stickers, and stuffed animals."[88] Within these new forms of cultural capital and curriculum were messages which "urged children to turn in their friends who used drugs to police," framing it as "an act of true friendship," in essence, rewarding children for snitching.[89] Students experienced heightened forms of social and legal consequences by education that condoned and rewarded peer-surveillance, which gave legitimacy to new forms of personal responsibility and punishments for nonadherence.

Through DARE, policing became education and education became policing. Police work expanded to include educational outreach and students were educated to police themselves and others. The new role of police as educators enfolded public school within the realm of policing. The primary objectives of the DARE curriculum were to simultaneously engage in preventative law-enforcement education to 'just say no' as well as "to cultivate specific practices of seeing and saying that help authorities monitor, police, and engage a relatively hard-to-reach sector of the

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[87] Reeves, *Citizen Spies*, 131.
[88] Martha Rosenbaum (former director at the Lindesmith Center), quoted in *Citizen Spies*, 131.
[89] Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 165; Reeves, *Citizen Spies*, 122.

citizenry," through the site of public education.[90] Students, teachers, families, and school officials were trained and taught to assume personal responsibility of the Self, as well as greater social responsibilities that encouraged and trained to police others, giving the act of policing and punishment more credence within social reality.

In tune with the neoliberal tenor of the times, efforts toward proving the efficacy of DARE and other drug prevention programs meant facing societal evaluation in light of increasing studies showing that DARE was "not producing results."[91] Within the first few years of the DARE programs implementation, "USC researchers made an alarming discovery about SMART: early versions of the program didn't work […] in fact, some of them had a 'boomerang effect,' by which participation correlated to *higher* rates of drug use;" LAUSD and DARE officials had become "distant."[92] Yet, DARE was widely popular and found extensive community support through discourse and funding. Superintendent Olsen believed that "sending uniformed police officers into fifth-grade classrooms to talk about drug abuse and teach children how to avoid substance abuse," was "effective."[93] Even though this assertion was not founded upon any published analyses of the time, the sentiment pervaded. In Whatcom, even though local school counselors acknowledged that "statistics don't show there's a decrease in drug usage because of the DARE program," there was evidence that students were becoming educated in social responsibility and desired attitudes toward drugs and police.[94]

By the mid-1990s, the DARE program in Bellingham faced threats of being cut out of public schools due to accumulating research of the program's ineffectiveness at actually preventing

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90 Reeves, *Citizen Spies*, 111.
91 "Report: Help for kids must be united," *L.A. Times - Washington Post*. 1995.
92 Cima, "DARE: The Anti-Drug Program."
93 Ferm, "Middle schools to get cops."
94 "Cuts threaten DARE: Anti-drug program in schools caught in budget crunch," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.

substance abuse. One researcher went as far to state that "D.A.R.E. is the world's biggest pet rock. If it makes us feel good to spend the money on nothing, that's OK, but everyone should know D.A.R.E. does nothing."[95] However, DARE did not *do nothing*. It socialized children, families, school officials, and community members to the presence of cops as educators, authority figures, and helpers. In asserting the efficacy of the DARE program, Whatcom County Deputy Dori Bowhay recalled an interaction she had with a "first-grade girl whose family has had a long history of arrests."[96] Deputy Boway recalled that during "the first recess," of the DARE program, the little girl "held [Boway's] hand and said, 'My mom and dad don't like cops, but I think I want to be like you.'"[97] Significantly highlighting the way in which cops were not only educating children on how to not engage in substance-use or abuse, but also, shaping the very perceptions and attitudes that students, school officials, families, etc., had about local police officers, and in correlation, the legitimacy of the reaches of State power.

Over the duration of DARE's integration and implementation, certain members of the community felt as if the presence of cops was legitimate even if the "statistics don't show there's a decrease in drug usage because of the DARE program" because there could be "many kids out there who may not use drugs because of it."[98] Even if DARE prevented just one student from drug use and ensured the student's potential as a productive, contributing member of society, it was enough to legitimate the presence of violence workers. The threatened removal of DARE made parents *feel* "a deep hurt and concern, once again, about the direction the country is taking when it concerns" children, their future, and their safety by the implications of the *removal* of cops from

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[95] Stephen Glass, "Truth & D.A.R.E.," *Rolling Stone,* 05 March 1998. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/dope/dare/truth.html

[96] "Cuts threaten DARE: Anti-drug program in schools caught in budget crunch," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.

[97] "Cuts threaten DARE: Anti-drug program in schools caught in budget crunch," 5 October 1995.

[98] "Cuts threaten DARE: Anti-drug program in schools caught in budget crunch," 5 October 1995.

public education.[99] Within neoliberal rationalities, it made sense to have the State provide a source of education that would be perceived to ensure to the safety and well-being of children; even if it meant these new forms education integrated and legitimated the presence of law-enforcement into public schools.

The way in which people chose to "use or even endorse the police and prisons cannot be dismissed as a form of false consciousness, ignorance, or conformity," because people truly "want to be and to feel safe."[100] Posed as a preventative, alleviative, and safety measure to ensure the well-being of children, the movement of law-enforcement into public schools was legitimized through affect. Over the previous decade, it became rationalized that cops were the solution to sociocultural problems of drugs, criminality, and lack of resources. They had not only become "very familiar faces in the community and the school system," their presence as a solution to social problems had become naturalized and seen as necessary to get children and teachers the perceived help that they needed to address systemic issues of substance-abuse and resources.[101] Deeper than emergent neoliberal rationalities, people genuinely wanted their children to be safe, productive, happy, and healthy.

Yet, this perspective of safety was predicated on and legitimized through the belief that law-enforcement officers were safe and that students would be safe with cops in the classroom. The impact of police within the classroom on the affective and material conditions of students of color and/or students with parents or family members who suffered or engaged in substance use-or-abuse, goes beyond the scope of this study. However, as scholar Erica R. Meiners stated, "Putting more police in schools does not reduce violence. Building more prisons does not act as a

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99 [R.O] Cathy Madsen (Bellingham), "DARE program is too valuable to cut," *The Bellingham Herald*. 20 October 1995.
100 Meiners, *For the Children?*, 187.
101 "DARE program links cultures, communities," *The Bellingham Herald*. 5 October 1995.

deterrent or reduce harm."[102] It did, however, reinforce beliefs of the legitimacy of cops to enforce specific forms of behaviors and laws, and fostered a skewed sense that social reality enforced equitable justice.

State enforcement of the DARE program and consequent placement of police into the roles of educators, shifted historic cultural authority of certified teachers and school administrators at the site of public education. Public discourse concerned with increased funds for educators did not receive social support in the ways cops were shown public support through social and financial capital. Even though law-enforcement did not possess the same level of education and training that actual teachers had to acquire before entering a classroom, they were allotted intimate roles that would foster interrelationships between law-enforcement officers and children. The cultural authority and capital of police significantly increased through socialization of children and police co-opting the classroom space as 'trained' educators.

Within new standards and goals for student success and performance were concerted efforts toward keeping students in schools and not using drugs in order to meet these new levels of achievement. Social validation of the DARE program was acquired through manufactured discourses of the necessity to ensure student safety and well-being. Overall, it was irrelevant that the curriculum was not effective at substance-abuse prevention because it *felt like* a solution that would address fears and anxieties, through direct action and implementation.

The DARE program facilitated cultural socialization of law-enforcement through the presence of police as educational authority figures, rituals, and objectified forms of cultural capital; within the site of the most vulnerable and most susceptible. Although the DARE program was

[102] Meiners, *For the Children?*, 187.

discontinued from Bellingham public schools and various other school systems in Washington state by the mid-1990s, violence workers had become naturalized and 'familiar' faces within the site of public education.

This naturalized presence speaks to the contemporary ways in which police departments and school districts continue to facilitate cooperation between violence workers and students within new roles, such as school resource officers (SRO) and college campus police. The impact of the DARE program's implementation is wider than the scope of this study, but it may speak to the ways in which the school-to-prison pipeline has become a naturalized consequence of increased police presence and the allocation of 'personal responsibility' onto K-12 students within public education. The DARE program's emphasis on personal responsibility, surveillance, performance of 'healthy' behaviors, made students personally responsible for combatting systemic issues regarding substance-abuse and criminality. Development, socialization, investment, and protection of children was made-real through new forms of education. As sites where a 'public' is created, these new forms of education changed culture, social reality, morals, and values. People wanted to ensure the safety and the well-being of their children, and "Fear is a terrifically productive affect."[103]

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103 Seigel, *Violence Work*, 94.

Conclusion

By the 1980s-90s culture wars, tectonic shifts within State laws and rhetoric concerned with religion, sex education, and law-enforcement were made real at the site of public education. In this process of ideological materialization, county school district employees, families, students, and community members engaged in discourse which contended with alterations in the hegemonic Christian American moral fabric,[1] new understandings of being such as homonoeticus[2] and *homo oeconomicus*,[3] a great age of fracture,[4] and a war for the soul of America[5]. By the mid 1980s, local community members of Whatcom County were impacted by State laws and economic policies constructed in the last half of the twentieth century. Christian American moral and cultural hegemony was denaturalized through the identification of Christian American practices and rituals *as* religious, in effect weakening Christian American cultural capital and reflected broader losses in power. Yet, Christian American beliefs still possessed significant degrees of cultural and social capital and had to be reckoned with in the struggle for sex-based education, even though it was a legitimate life-and-death necessity. The *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum emphasized behavioral forms of education that contained Christian American values such as abstinence before legal marriage. This curriculum was introduced alongside emergent neoliberal rationalities and discourse which connected STIs and unwed pregnancy to personal economic choice and negative social impact. Neoliberal rationalities that sought to "financialize" everything, informed laws and economic policies, and through this, new forms of education emerged, catalyzing dialectic public

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1 Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 71.
2 [R.O.] Gloria Harriman (Bellingham), "Beginning of a new species," *H.O.W. Subject Files - 211 Letters to the Editors/Columns,* 21 February 1994. (CPNWS) Collection: H.O.W. (Hands Off Washington, Box 2.
3 Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn, New York: Zone Books, 2015), 79.
4 Daniel Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.
5 Patrick J. Buchanan, "1992 Republican National Convention Speech," (17 August 1992): http://buchanan.org/blog/1992-republican-national-convention-speech-148 .

discourse and affective responses.[6] In effect, public schools were brought within the rationality of "neoliberalism's "economization" of political life and of other heretofore noneconomic spheres and activities."[7] Through the financialization of everything, kids became capital. Local public media opened a window in which to view the negotiation process of beliefs and rationalities. Fundamental change occurred in content which created social realities through public education, and these changes affected and impacted communities within Whatcom County, emotionally, materially, ideologically, and spiritually.

If a State can only be ethical "in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes"[8]; then the United States was only as ethical as it pertained to the interests of the economic elites. Through the development and language of human capital, health care and behavioral forms of education such as the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* curriculum and the DARE curriculum were tailored to police the physical body into an ideal state for potential contribution to the national Gross domestic product. State-driven laws and rhetoric implemented through the site of public education was a concerted effort toward shaping the consciousness of children (and in effect school employees, families, community members) to particular understandings, behaviors, and rationalities which corresponded to the wants of a capitalist driven State. These rationalities strengthened individual responsibility while simultaneously advocating the necessity to integrate law-enforcement into public schools for the safety and well-being of children.

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[6] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 33.
[7] Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn, New York: Zone Books, 2015), 17.
[8] Antonio Gramsci, "The State," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1999), 258.

As part of the State, public schools simultaneously experienced increased obligations to achieve academic and economic goals, address cultural shifts (Christmas, denaturalization of certain forms of Othering), and mounting social ills (AIDS epidemic, substance abuse, criminality) within a devalued and underfunded framework. Within neoliberal policies and rationalities of the 1980s and 1990s, an "intensification occur[red] through the shrinking, privatization, and/or dismantling of public infrastructure supporting families, children, and retirees," and placed the responsibility of making the public, "to individuals, disproportionately to women."[9] Teachers and school officials attempted to address mounting ideological and social concerns through things such as volunteer groups to address substance abuse, and requests for lowered class sizes. In response to increased labor demands, teachers and school officials expressed public support and welcomed the integration of law-enforcement as solution and alleviate for social ills of substance abuse, criminality, and underfunded and overworked teachers to address new forms of education.

As sites where a 'public' is created, public schools were increasingly mobilized to implement new forms of education. New curriculums which refashioned Christian American beliefs weighted with cultural capital, were repurposed to include physical behaviors ('good health'), into the realm of economic responsibility. Teachers and school officials were increasingly mobilized as individual actors and districts to implement new neoliberal rationalities that were simultaneously undermining the very public services they were trying to integrate.

These forms of education simultaneously challenged, repurposed, and refashioned ideas of moral authority, inclusionary practices, and forms of personal responsibility for students, families, teachers, and school officials. Other scholars have contended with a variety of arenas framing the culture wars, however, little attention has been paid to the site where culture was reproduced,

[9] Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 105.

created, and contested during this period. By taking seriously the interrelationship of the State, public schools, the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs of community members, a lens is constructed to view the ways in which new forms of education, imbued with neoliberal logic, though posing conflict, were afforded political and social legitimacy and credence within a neoliberal capitalist framework.

Supreme Court decisions which identified Christian American cultural practices *as religious* delegitimized and denaturalized Christian American cultural presence and production at the site of public education; in effect, altering hegemonic holds on cultural capital of ideologies and beliefs. Phasing out Christian American Christmas activities from public schools, caused feelings of uncertainty, fear, and grief from the loss of cultural practices that had for generations, gone unchallenged. However, these changes were legitimized not only through laws and policies, they became naturalized through shifts in commonsense understandings, new norms which took into consideration the feelings and positionalities of religious-Others within American public schools.

In addition to Supreme Court decisions, Washington State's 1988 *Omnibus Bill* mandated new forms of education that would address the AIDS crisis. The lethal epidemic embodied and challenged familiar patterns of thought within American history in regard to established, vilified Others, of white Christian America. In a monstrous coincidence, during the decline of Christian American cultural authority, the epidemic disproportionately impacted individuals who were not heterosexual, straight, or white. Initial inaction by the State matched historical actions of the American State and Christian Americans to attribute disease and death to personal failure and moral depravity, rather than providing the means to alleviate, stymie, and prevent. However, due

to the efforts of AIDS activists, the exponential magnitude and scope, and broadened commonsense understandings that recognized the personhood, rights, and positionality of marginalized Others (alongside the mounting threats to heterosexuals, regardless of piety), new forms of sex based education were integrated into public schools. This integration directly challenged Christian American belief in the legitimacy to ostracize and Other based off of sex-acts, sexuality, and morality. Yet, the *KNOW:HIV/AIDS* education syncretized naturalized Christian American values with legally legitimized neoliberal rationalities; emphasizing abstinence and 'lawful marriage' as morally and economically ideal, while simultaneously expanding notions of sex and sexual relationships to include nonheterosexual Others and unwed sexually active teens.

Notions of inclusivity, identity, and the legitimacy of medical knowledge sought to alter religious ostracization, lethal forms of marginalization and discrimination within the AIDS epidemic, as well as expand education on substance abuse. Yet, embedded within education that accounted for lived experiences of historical-Others, Christian American forms of moral authority were repurposed, refashioned, and were ultimately replaced with expanded notions of economic responsibility through sex and substance abuse education. Neoliberal morals emerged that included historically marginalized Others in ways that were economically beneficial to prevent STDS and pregnancies, rather than full social inclusion.

Community members responded with concerns about the diminishment of Christian American moral authority, others responded with the life and death necessity, however, social and economic undesirability seemed to be a point of agreement. New moralisms emerged within economic policies identifying all children (regardless of religion, race, sexuality) as human capital. And thus in need of certain types of education, as form of investment. The *KNOW:HIV/AIDS*

education was necessary not only due to the life and death urgency, but due to the allegedly detrimental economic and social costs that STDS and teen pregnancy posed to State and society, within a capitalist system. And in simultaneity, neoliberal logics expanded notions of inclusivity of relationships, sex, and sexualities beyond the Christian American worldview.

The integration of physical and behavioral education imbued with State driven market ideas and rationalities, earned legitimacy within public discourse due to correlation between these forms of education, and the future successes, safety, and well being of children. In order to address genuine fears and anxieties, the *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* curriculum and the DARE program were perceived as critical and legitimate. These new forms of education amalgamated Christian American beliefs of personal responsibility and neoliberal logics which attributed personal responsibility as an economic responsibility. *KNOW: HIV/AIDS* and DARE embodied State rhetoric that all children needed to be educated in ways that emphasized personal responsibility and interwove personal choice with economic responsibility and consequences.

The concept of personal responsibility in the 1980s and 1990s culture wars, included mass mobilization of individual actors, doing their part, without much State aid or resource in public schools. Students, teachers, and school officials were held accountable and educated in personal responsibility of the physical, which not inherently detrimental, diverted causal roots of inadequate systemic frameworks, to the individual. Individuals included students, families, teachers, school officials, community members, and school districts, "responsibilized" to address mounting social, and economic, ills.[10] Within this framework, people in their varied capacities and multifaceted social roles, were put under extraordinary pressure to address large scale threats, questions, and

[10] Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 84.

limitations of economic policies that did not support them.

Concepts of criminalization and personal responsibility embedded within the DARE curriculum, explicitly defined desirable and undesirable behaviors, simultaneously educating about and providing justifications for, legal consequences. Criminalization of substance use and 'gang' members was predicated on the systematic and rational disconnect between larger systemic problems, and the 'responsible' individual's ability to 'just say no.' Policing as education and education as policing was conveyed as for the safety and well being of children, however, the fact that it was an extension armed State power into the site of the most vulnerable and most susceptible cannot, and should not, be trivialized.

The process which legitimized law-enforcement's entrance, and sustained presence, into sites of public education was predicated on fears and anxieties about the safety and well-being of children. Driven by State laws and rhetoric on drugs, crime, and criminality alongside economic policies that defined children as human capital, DARE was seen as a solution. Narratives of the necessity for police to occupy roles as educators at the site of public education became rational alongside depictions of uneducated and untrained children as threats to their own safety and well-being, economic, social interests. In addition to State driven rhetoric, State laws and economic policies interwove the institution of public education and law enforcement. Predicated on authority rooted in violence, force, dominance, and the enforcement of laws which protect capitalist interests, law-enforcement as educational figures of authority within the site of publicly funded education was unprecedented. However, with neoliberal State policies that asserted the "need for enhanced efforts to assure, for the future of our Nation, a better educated and trained citizenry to enable our economy to be competitive in the world," kids were defined as essential capital to the

future capitalist success of the American economy.[11] Through law, police were placed within public schools, as educators and protectors against rising perceptions of abundant crime, criminality, and substance abuse. And since police "long labored in the service of capital" and the protection of capitalist interests[12], the rationalization of cops protecting kids as capital, did not require a great leap of rationalization.

Using frameworks provided by intellectuals, scholars, and historians, I have taken seriously the interrelationships between State laws, rhetoric, public discourse, social beliefs and values, and feelings. Historians James Davison Hunter, Daniel T. Rodgers, Lisa Duggan, and Andrew Hartman provided the intellectual framework I used to understand what aspects of culture underwent cultural conflict during the culture wars. Scholars on religion such as James K. Wellman (for the Pacific Northwest specifically) and pollster Robert P. Jones, gave legitimacy to my consolidated notion of Christian America. Cultural theorist Pierre Bourdieu's conception of cultural capital, allowed me to identify the ways in which power can exist within the quotidian. And significantly, Antonio Gramsci's conception of an ethical State, gave me the courage to interconnect the laws, rhetoric, and actions of the State and its actors, as ethical only in ways that could be considered economically beneficial. Yet, Veronica Gago's problematization of the notion that political legitimacy only comes from above, encouraged me to take seriously affective experiences within neoliberalism that legitimized new forms of rationalities. Through these works I located the significance of religion, social movements, identities, narratives, cultural capital, economics, and affective experiences, providing the intellectual groundwork for this work.

[11] Education and Training for American Competitiveness Act. House-R-99-597. 12 May 1986, 2.
[12] Micol Seigel, *Violence Work: State Power and the Limits of Police* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2018), 74.

This thesis has traced how large-scale State driven processes impacted local communities and lived experiences during the 1980s and 1990s in Whatcom County, Washington. Changes occurred in wintertime practices that altered the spiritual and social nature of celebrations within local public schools. In addition to altered forms of social and spiritual practices, new forms of education challenged precedented forms of moral authority, beliefs, and practices rooted in ostracization of historical Others. Fears rooted in the processes of delegitimization and denaturalization of Christian American moral, cultural, and spiritual authority intermingled with rising fears of crime, criminality, 'gangs,' and substance abuse, shaping new solutions and rationalities. Within public schools, teachers and school officials experienced increased pressures to adequately address mounting social, and economic ills. Law-enforcement was presented as the alleviate and solution, and the acquired social legitimacy of this particular form of State power into public schools, was a critical victory in the culture *wars*.

Neoliberal logic was crystallized within new rationalities that emerged during the 1980s and 1990 culture wars. Rationalities which asserted personal responsibility in lieu of State funds and resources, legitimized increased surveillance, policing, and education of unideal behaviors (a justification of mass incarceration as a solution to social and economic ills), and gave credence to the idea that children had human capital to be invested in for the economic benefit of the State. As sites of social creation, public schools of the 1980s and 1990s contributed to the creation of society as market and kids as capital.

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