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Lauren Gatti
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lgatti2@unl.edu

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Learning to Teach in an Urban Teacher Residency

Lauren Gatti

University of Nebraska–Lincoln
61E Henzlik Hall, Lincoln, NE 68588-0355, USA

Abstract
In this article, I employ sociocultural theory to analyze the learning to teach process of two novice teachers enrolled in one Urban Teacher Residency (UTR). Findings show that Genesis and Jackie were differentially drawing on programmatic, disciplinary, relational, experiential, and dispositional resources as they learned to teach in an urban context. I show that programmatic resources of supervision and classroom management requirements (i.e., Doug Lemov’s *Teach Like a Champion*) not only differentially influenced teachers’ learning and development but also differentially impacted the development of trust with students.

**Keywords:** teacher candidates, urban education, cultural responsiveness, learning to teach, urban teacher residencies, activity theory

The Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) model of teacher preparation is one of the fastest growing reforms in teacher education in the United States. Since its inception in 2004, the number of programs in the Urban Teacher Residency United (UTRU) network has ballooned to over 20 UTRs, with more programs being created every year. Initially
cosponsored by former Illinois Senator Barack Obama, the Teacher Residency Act and the Preparing Excellent Teachers Act positions the UTR to be the “next big thing” in teacher education. The explosion of financial, scholarly, and programmatic support is due in large part to the confidence that policy makers have already expressed in the efficacy of the UTR, as expressed in the recent reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), which provides a path for developing UTRs. Modeled after the medical residency, the UTR foregrounds intensive and supported clinical experience for residents learning to teach in high-needs schools. Although each of the existing UTRs differs in course sequence and content, placement practices, and program curriculum, UTRs do share a set of common practices and values, including the marriage of theory and practice, university–community–school partnerships, a cohort model, and a year-long apprenticeship before becoming a teacher of record (see also Gatti, 2014). In addition, and perhaps most importantly, all residents commit to teaching for at least three years in a high-needs, urban school. UTRs “reveal that diverse teachers can be recruited, prepared, and retained for some of our nation’s most challenging schools . . . but across the teacher education community and within policy circles, too little is known about them” (Berry, 2005, p. 276).

As the UTR has gained momentum as a promising reform in urban teacher preparation, research on this pathway has also proliferated. Earlier studies tend toward the conceptual, focusing on the UTRs role in reforming urban teacher preparation (i.e., Berry, 2005; Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2009; Gatlin, 2009). As the UTR has become a more established and well-known pathway to urban teaching, empirical studies have grown in number. These studies include examining conceptions of teacher quality and the role of private partnerships with urban teacher residencies (Boggess, 2010), and an analysis of the Boston Residency’s impact on student achievement compared with teachers who did not go through the residency (Papay, West, Fullerton, & Kane, 2012). Most recently, Hammerness and Matsko (2013) have initiated important inquiries into how one UTR addresses the role of school context in novice teachers’ preparation.

Statistically, we know that UTRs are already having powerful effects on teacher retention, with 85% of residents staying more than 3 years in hard-to-staff schools. As successes like these gain greater
visibility in policy spheres, funding for large-scale studies is entering the picture. For example, in 2013, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation awarded UTRU US$446,000 to study the implementation of the residency in two different state and local contexts: the Denver Teacher Residency and Aspire Teacher Residency. Studies like this are aimed at identifying “the highest impact program levers” for issues of scalability. More recently, of the 24 Teacher Quality Partnership grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, 11 were residency initiatives in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), totaling almost US$80 million dollars over the next 5 years. The massive financial investment (and policy faith) that the UTR has garnered reflects the growing promise of this model of teacher preparation. However, research foci on impact, teacher retention, and scalability must be complemented (and complicated) by qualitative studies offering insight into the lived experiences of the residents enrolled in UTRs.

In response to Berry’s (2005) call for more research on UTRs, I explore how two residents enrolled in the same UTR, Leaders for Equity in Education (LEE), learned to teach in the context of the two different residency placements: Teaching Academy High School (TAHS), the flagship training site for LEE, and Orion Academy, a recently turned-around school. This line of inquiry is important for several reasons. First of all, as the residency model continues to gain traction, it is important that we critically explore how residents enrolled in a particular UTR are learning to teach, especially given the ways that racism, economic disinvestment, and unequal access to learning opportunities have historically shaped the experience of many students in urban schools. Second, it is crucial that we begin to interrogate the differences in teacher learning both between different UTRs as well as within the same UTR. This entails examining how residents’ learning to teach experiences are mediated by the particulars of their residency placement; the programmatic structures of the UTR including selection of mentors, required coursework; and the UTRs philosophical and practical orientations to be culturally responsive and their relationships to the school community.

This article analyzes the learning to teach experience of two LEE residents, Sam (placed at TAHS) and Jackie (placed at Orion), and aims to answer the following research questions:
Research Question 1: How do the programmatic resources made available to two different LEE residents shape the relational work of their respective classrooms?

Research Question 2: How do different residency placements—TAHS and Orion—shape the learning to teach process of novice teachers?

Research Question 3: What can we learn from one particular UTR about the limits and opportunities of learning to teach in urban schools?

The Role of Conflict in Learning to Teach

The complexities of learning to teach are well-documented. Studying teacher learning requires consideration of preservice teachers’ prior beliefs, including the “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975/2002), for these prior beliefs about students (especially students who are different from them), about teaching and learning, and about subject matter deeply influence their learning (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996). Studying teacher learning also requires examining the formal preparation within a program, including the coherence of coursework and fieldwork (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) and a foundation in the liberal arts (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996). Finally, preservice teacher learning must address the following domains: critically examining beliefs regarding good teaching; developing subject knowledge for teaching; developing an understanding of learning, learners, and issues related to diversity; developing a repertoire of teaching strategies; and developing the tools and dispositions to study teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

The process of learning to teach is fundamentally fraught with conflict; paradoxically, however, “the conflict that animates learning threatens to derail the precarious efforts of trying to learn” (Britzman, 2003, p. 3). These conflicts emerge largely from the uneasy interplay of prior experiences and beliefs, the “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975/2002), the divide between the settings in which preservice teachers learned about teaching and the settings where they were asked to enact teaching (e.g., Bickmore, Smagorinsky, & O’Donnell-Allen, 2005), and the reality of difference in the classroom—whether
that be between the preservice teacher and the cooperating teacher (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004), or the preservice teacher and her students (Buehler, Gere, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009). These conflicts spark dissonance on every level—intrapersonal, interpersonal, intrainstitutional, and even interinstitutional—as different students, mentors, teachers, and supervisors interact with the preservice teachers around the learning to teach process. The fabric of teaching is inherently and inevitably social and, as Lampert (2010) argued, “the matter of social connections is perhaps the most difficult to sort out in preparing for the work of teaching” (p. 22).

Activity theory provides many affordances for studying learning to teach. Because activity theory conceives of development as occurring through problem-solving action, the players within the activity systems are conceived as having agency. The settings where new teachers teach, therefore, are understood to be dynamic spaces, rather than static ones that promote a replication model of teacher education. An activity theory perspective also allows us to shed our myopic and limited understandings of the solitary learner acquiring a sterile and stable set of skills, instead enabling a three-dimensional, context-bound, and complicated way of understanding teacher learning and enculturation.

Activity theory stems from Leont’ev’s interpretation of Vygotsky’s work and advances particular conceptions of learning that prove useful for studying learning to teach. These include some of the following beliefs: Learning and development are inherently social processes; learning is a function of participation in social practices within particular settings; conflict, tension, and contradiction are the engines of learning (Engeström & Miettinen, 1999); and resistance is a productive force (Kerosuo & Engeström, 2003). Without conflict, there can be no development. Because learning to teach fundamentally entails conflict and is inextricably bound to the university and school settings where teachers learn, the lens of activity theory enables magnification of both the micro- and macro-dynamics and tensions that constitute the learning to teach process.

Engeström’s (1986) conception of activity theory is rooted in a revision of Gregory Bateson’s (1969, as cited in Engeström, 1986) hierarchy of learning, which held that there were four levels to learning. In Learning I, the subject uses an instrument upon an object
in a unidirectional and nonconscious way. There is one correct and fixed approach to problem solving. In Learning II, the subject is presented with a problem that she tries to solve in either (a) reproductive or (b) productive ways. A Learning II(a), or a reproductive approach to solving the problem, would manifest itself in a blind search of trial and error; it is unconscious and reflexive. On the contrary, a Learning II(b), or productive approach to solving a problem, would have the subject inventing a new instrument through experimentation (Engeström, 1986).

Learning III embodies Learning II(b), but is markedly different, in that there occurs a change in the actual process of learning. It is the inner contradictions in Learning II that lead to Learning III. In this sense, Learning III is distinguished by what Engeström (1986) called a “double bind,” or a seemingly unresolvable problem. In Learning III, the subject asks, “What is the meaning and sense of the problem in the first place? Why should I try to solve it? Who designed it and for whose benefit?” (Engeström, 1986, p. 30). This need state, or dilemma, must be “resolved” through regression or expansion. Resolution through expansion is the move into a zone of proximal development, which necessitates joint problem solving. When the subject's need state is recognized as a double bind, she experiences “a contradiction which uncompromisingly demands qualitatively new instruments for resolution” (Engeström, 1986, p. 39). There is also a fundamental change in the subject: “the individual self is replaced—or rather qualitatively altered—by a search for a collective subject” (Engeström, 1986, p. 30). In this sense, the conflicts that a subject experiences are both catalytic and generative, catapulting the subject out of an individual problem-solving mode and into a collective one. Engeström (1986) referred to this as the “paradox of the search”:

The paradox of the search . . . becomes conscious to the searchers themselves, it has reached the quality of a genuine double bind, and it has been resolved through collective, conscious action in the present. In other words, the type of development we are concerned with here—expansive generation of new activity structures—requires above all an instinctive or conscious mastery of double binds. Double bind may now be reformulated as a social, societally essential dilemma.
which cannot be resolved through separate individual actions alone—but in which joint cooperative actions can push into emergence historically new forms of activity. (p. 34)

Conflict, contradiction, and “paradox of the search,” therefore, have the potential to lead to “expansive learning,” which is collective and works to generate new instruments for problem solving.

**Study Context: The LEE Residency**

Started in 2001 by a venture philanthropist, the LEE residency is a partnership between a large, urban school district, a private non-profit—LEE—and a university-based teacher preparation program, Partner University. LEE’s mission is twofold: to turnaround a portion of the city’s failing schools, and to prepare urban teachers—through its paid residency program—to teach in that growing network of turnarounds. A competitive program, LEE accepts 10% of applicants. Those who are accepted are paid an US$18,000 salary plus a US$12,000 stipend (they are also eligible for a US$5,500 AmeriCorps grant) for their residency year. Importantly, they commit to teaching in one of LEE’s turnaround schools for four years after completing their residency. If the resident does not finish her residency year or if she does not teach the full four years, she must pay a prorated portion of the US$12,000 stipend. The residency year is a full year of preparation beginning with five weeks of intensive summer courses (8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.) taken at Orion Academy, one of LEE’s recently turned-around schools. Courses continue throughout the year with professors from LEE’s partnering university, Partner University, teaching courses in urban education, foundations of education, and methods. Of the required coursework, at the time of this study there was only one class that addressed issues of equity, race, and social class in urban schooling and that class (urban education) was a condensed summer course where the professor was also required to teach Doug Lemov’s techniques for classroom management (described below). Similarly important to note, there was no nonevaluative space in the program for LEE residents to engage in reflective and critical conversation about cultural and racial awareness. Residents who enter the program without
certification earn a master of arts in teaching (MAT) from the partnering university; those who enter with a teaching certification earn a master’s in urban education (MEd).

All residents are required to take a summer course focused exclusively on learning and practicing classroom management techniques taken from Doug Lemov’s (2010) book *Teach Like a Champion*. The text’s primary goal is to offer techniques that are “specific, concrete, and actionable” (p. 3) and which provide a “tool box for closing the achievement gap” (p. 3). The art of teaching, Lemov explains, is in “the discretionary application of the techniques” (p. 13). Lemov’s text was not the only one used in the LEE residency: Charlotte Danielson and Lee Canter’s work were also used, and it was this combination of texts that comprised LEE’s coaching and evaluative platform. Lemov, however, was the curriculum that operationalized the others. Because Lemov’s techniques are observable, concrete, and named (e.g., “Cold Call”), they not only operationalized the other frameworks used but also provided the social language for the residents, their mentors, coaches, and professors (Gatti & Catalano, 2015). Sean, the director of partnerships for Partner University and LEE, explained the selection of Lemov in the program:

> We had adopted [Danielson] . . . but Danielson is a *performance* framework, it’s not a judgmental [evaluative] framework. We didn’t have any common language or any common practice . . . So we started to say, “We need a common language. We need common practice so we can help people get better.”

LEE residents in my study were placed in pairs in one of two high schools for their residency year: Orion Academy, a LEE school in its third year of “turnaround,” and TAHS. The participants in my study openly shared their perspectives about the differences between TAHS and Orion.

Genesis: And I’ve spoken with Keisha [a resident coach at TAHS] about it, but she was actually a teacher at Orion. She’s like, “I was a rock-star teacher at Orion, but I got to Teaching Academy and realized I couldn’t really teach.” So there’s the
whole different environment. You got someone really thinking they’re doing something and they’re not. That’s what happened first semester. “Oh Genesis, you’re doing great.” Yeah because your biggest piece over here is classroom management! I haven’t taught a darn thing and don’t know where to start this coming year. (Exit interview, May 10, 2011)

Jackie: There’s a [LEE] curriculum map but I don’t think that’s based on [certain] text[s]. I think it’s just based on skills and standards, and I actually haven’t seen it which I think is a bad thing. The people at Teaching Academy have all seen it . . . And all the people at Teaching Academy know about it, but the [residents] at Orion seem not really to know anything about . . . It’s you know, you’ve been there . . . It’s totally different . . . I think they plan in teams a lot more than we do . . . [and] they’re teaching three standards a day, and we’re not. . . I think they’re like, “Ok we need to hit this, this, and this.” And they’re doing it. (Interview, November 17, 2010)

Judith: And actually at first when we were assigned our mentors I really wanted to be at Orion because I thought that would be the best training [for ultimately being placed in a turnaround]. That would be better training because Teaching Academy had this reputation of being this well-run school, attendance at Teaching Academy is like 92-93% and Orion is more around the high 50s, so we don’t have that daily truancy problem. We don’t have as many we don’t have issues with behavior. We don’t have a lot of fighting . . . This is kind of the consensus around the [LEE] network too . . . because Teaching Academy was founded as a teacher-training academy there are a lot of master teachers at Teaching Academy, so the mentors say if you train at Teaching Academy you really learn how to teach. [If] you train at Orion, you really learn how to manage. (Interview, November 15, 2010)

Sam: So we tried using some of those tools [from Lemov] at Orion over the summer and like for the most part they
weren’t as effective as they have been with the Teaching Academy schools, and I think it’s because they came from a school, a lot of them came from the [LEE’s] elementary school[s] [so] . . . they understand what it means when I say, “Stand up. Do it again. Go out of the room and come back in again.” And at Orion they’re like, “Do it again?” They’re like, “Fuck you.” (Interview, September 30, 2010)

As the above excerpts illustrate, the residents were acutely aware of the differences between the two different teaching contexts at Orion and TAHS. However, as the following excerpt from Rachael illuminates, at the core of these differences in the residents’ perceptions of Orion versus TAHS were serious and complicated race and class dynamics. Rachael shared an experience working with students at Orion in a summer class:

The kids [at Orion] said the most outrageous things to me this summer. And that’s where I was saying this whole idea of feeling like a missionary. And I had to get into my little car and drive back from the west side and really process this . . . . [For example], I was using my flip [camera] and I wanted them to interview each other as part of a summer requirement for our urban education class. We had to do community research or whatever. And I didn’t want to be like, “Ok kids I’m going to take your picture.” Like I wanted them to talk. You know I’ve been working with these kids for weeks and I didn’t care that they were goofing around with the camera, I’m just like, “Just don’t drop it.” You know what I mean? But it was so interesting. But one of the kids said to me, this kid Jarrell, and he was like, “I’m sorry Ms. Johnson. I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” because I didn’t hold up well under what he said. He said, “Yeah I’ll come out with you and make your movie because I know you all want to see a bunch of dumb niggers clown on film,” or something. And I was like, Ahhhh [Ugh]! It is, but it is the elephant in the room. That’s how they feel with all of those observers and all of these people with clipboards and all of these people with agendas. And he was like, “I’m sorry Ms. Johnson. I don’t think you
feel that way personally, but that’s what it looks like. That is exactly what it looks like.” (Interview, November 11, 2010)

Rachael’s account of the student’s reaction to her asking them to videotape themselves indexes the deeper issues of insider/outsider and of cultural trust/mistrust that underpin the learning-to-teach experiences of those placed in Orion. Even though Rachael’s decision to give the students the camera (rather than taking pictures of them) emerge from her intention to not make them feel objectified, the students’ experiences with “all of these people with clipboards” and “agendas” shape their response to Rachael. Rachael might be a Black woman who shares the students’ racial demographic, but to them she is by and large a stranger akin to the other outsiders, in part because they see her as a middle-class woman coming in with an expensive camera. The intention that guides her interactions with them—to include them more centrally and creatively in this community project—is not important. The students see Rachael as asking them to “clown.” Given the school’s history of turnaround and economic disinvestment from the community, poverty, and racism, what students are expressing is a deep—and justified—mistrust of people coming in to watch them. TAHS, however, was not a turnaround school and did not share Orion’s complicated and painful history of school failure and turnaround by LEE.

Research Methods

In the larger year-long study from which this article is drawn, I selected five participants from LEE. Selection criteria included a desire to teach in an urban setting and an expressed commitment to facilitating discussion in their urban classrooms. From those five participants, I selected Sam and Jackie as focal cases for this article. First, I wanted to explore how residents’ learning to teach experience was shaped by the particulars of their LEE placement—a teaching academy and a turnaround school. Second, because Sam and Jackie were two White residents, I wanted to better understand how they negotiated the challenges of teaching students who did not share their linguistic, cultural, or racial background. Finally, I wanted to see how
programmatic resources (e.g., Doug Lemov’s techniques, observation, and evaluation cycles, etc.) were taken up and leveraged in two different teaching placements.

**Participants**

Sam was one of the three residents in the study who was placed in TAHS. Sam was a 24-year-old White, gender queer person with a BA in English from a small liberal arts college. Before starting LEE, she had lived in Seattle working in a City Year program for students who had dropped out of high school. For her residency year, Sam was placed with another resident, Rachael, at TAHS. Located on the northwest side of the city, TAHS is a small school with 497 students. In 2010, 82.4.1% of students were identified as low income, 17.3% were identified as needing special education accommodations, and 2.8% were identified as limited English learners. The largest racial majority at the school was Hispanic, 55.4%, with the next largest populations being Black (23.0%), and White (17.4%), a vast majority of whom were from White ethnic immigrant families. The “flagship” school of LEE’s UTR, TAHS was the city’s first contract school with LEE and served a dual mission as both a neighborhood elementary and high school and a school-based teacher preparation program for residents enrolled in LEE who opened the school under its aegis in 2004. In the 2010-2011 school year, juniors at TAHS taking the reading and English portions of the ACT met the ACT college ready benchmark of 18 on reading and English, averaging 18.3 and 18.2 on those tests, respectively. However, because college readiness is determined by achieving benchmark scores in three of the four tests on the ACT, only 14.4% of juniors were categorized as “college ready.” In addition, although TAHS is LEE’s flagship teacher training site and is perhaps the most established of LEE’s network of residency high schools, the school still did not meet Federal Education standards in the 2010-2011 school year. On the state level, only 40.1% of students met or exceeded standards on the State Achievement Examination (SAE). That said, TAHS is performing better on average on the state exam and on the ACT than the large urban district or the state in which it is located.

Jackie was one of the two residents in my study placed at Orion Academy. Jackie was a 25-year-old White woman with a BA in English. Before starting LEE, she taught English in Taiwan. Jackie was
placed with Genesis, a 29-year-old African American woman with a BA in psychology, an MA in Black literature and creative writing, and an MEd in instructional leadership. Statistically, Orion school is one of the lowest performing of the large urban district’s schools. According to the city’s “report card” in the 2010-2011 school year, Orion had 1,238 students, 85% of whom were designated low income. Demographically, 83.7% of the student body was Black, 11.8% was Hispanic, 3.9% was multiracial, and 0.6% was White. On the SAE, which is a series of three tests—the four sections of the ACT, a science test created by the state’s board of education, and the ACT WorkKeys that measures “real world reading and math skills”—only 10.1% of juniors met the standards, and only 1.1% exceeded them. The average composite ACT score for juniors was 14.7, with the average for English being 13.2, and for reading 14.4. Thirteen percent of juniors met the benchmark score of 18 on the English section of the ACT, and 2.3% of juniors met the benchmark score of 21 on the ACT. Perhaps most striking is that 0% of Orion students were “college ready” as determined by meeting the benchmark scores on three of the four sections on the ACT. Finally, the graduation rate in 2011 was 69.2%.7

Data collection and analysis

Data collection occurred over one academic year (2010-2011). Because a requirement of case study research is the use of multiple data sources to triangulate data and confirm findings (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009), I used several data sources. For each of my primary participants (novice teachers), I included the following data sources: two to four field observations, each lasting between two and five hours; analytic field notes; four to five in-depth interviews, ranging from 50 to 90 min in length; and document analysis, which included lesson and unit plans as well as relevant program documents. Secondary participants in this study included methods instructors, field supervisors, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and LEE participants’ resident mentor coaches. I interviewed each of these secondary participants one to two times, each interview lasting between 45 and 90 min. Finally, in-depth interviews were conducted with the dean of LEE’s partnering university to understand the larger programmatic context. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.
Given the emphasis on activity in local settings, I observed my participants in the spaces where they were learning to teach. Merriam (1998) outlined the primary elements to observe in any setting: the physical setting, the participants, activities and interactions, conversation, subtle factors (nonverbal communication, informal and unplanned activities, connotations of words), and my own behavior. My specific role was “observer as participant” wherein my activities were known to the group and my participation in group activities was secondary (Merriam, 1998, pp. 100-101). Field notes were taken in each setting and included my own commentary, feelings, initial interpretation, and working hypotheses, as well as direct quotations from people in the setting, and detailed descriptions of the people, activities, and setting (Merriam, 1998). All field notes, interviews, and analytic memos were transcribed verbatim and coded by hand. Using the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I read and reread my data sets, generating, collapsing, and revising codes; emergent themes were identified throughout data collection.

**Conceptual Framework of Resources**

Five central analytic categories emerged through data analysis and these categories coalesced into a conceptual framework of resources for learning to teach. This framework was comprised of five distinct but overlapping resources: programmatic, dispositional, experiential, relational, and disciplinary. This framework of resources informed all subsequent data collection and analysis and became the primary analytic tool in my research (see Gatti, 2016).

*Programmatic resources.* Programmatic resources included the official curriculum (required texts) and unofficial curriculum (recommended reading) of required courses (e.g., Methods, Urban Education, and Special Education), professors and instructors working within the program, the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, co-residents/cohort members, and resident mentor coaches. For example, Judith cited the powerful influence her mentor teacher, Charmaine, had in her learning to teach process, citing the ways in which the books and strategies Charmaine used in her English classroom both complemented and complicated what Judith was studying in her
university methods course. This was identified as a programmatic re-
source. Jackie frequently talked about the requirement that she (and 
other residents) teach in ways that explicitly and consistently showed 
their use of the required Lemov’s techniques or “teacher moves.” These 
references to Lemov were coded as programmatic resources.

Dispositional resources. I identified dispositional resources as the per-
sonal attributes that shaped the participants’ perspectives around stu-
dents, the curriculum, and teaching. For example, Jackie’s dogged com-
mitment to contending with what she referred to as student “push 
back”—an approach that Jackie, her coresident Genesis, her mentor 
teacher Emily, and her university supervisor all consistently com-
mented on—was coded as the dispositional resource of resilience. An-
other example of a dispositional resource was Paul’s use of humor 
and rapport-building in the classroom, an approach to which he at-
tributed his ability to develop what he perceived as classroom com-
munity. Genesis’s deep Pentecostal faith was also coded as a disposi-
tional resource as she talked frequently about the many ways that her 
faith gave her hope and strength in teaching.

Experiential resources. Experiential resources were defined as any ex-
perience that the participant identified as shaping or influencing his 
or her learning to teach process, especially those experiences relating 
to working with youth in in- and out-of-school contexts, volunteering, 
and community activism. For example, Sarah talked about the ways in 
which her previous experience of brokering relationships between the 
administration of a city landscaping company and its Spanish-speak-
ing employees helped her relate to her almost entirely Latino student 
population in her student teaching placement. Similarly, Sam talked 
frequently about the ways that her City Year experience working with 
teens who had been kicked out of public Seattle high schools helped 
her relate to her high school students. Linda shared her experience 
working in theater and explicitly credited this experience with help-
ing her think about how to teach Shakespeare. Jackie talked about her 
experience teaching English as a second language (ESL) in Taiwan, as 
well as her experiences teaching ESL to adults in a local community 
college in the city.
Relational resources. Relational resources were defined as the articulated efforts the novice teacher made to develop relationships with coworkers, students, and students’ parents, guardians, and community members. Genesis, for example, consistently accessed relational resources in her learning to teach process. Having grown up in the center city neighborhood where she was teaching, she not only knew many of her students’ parents, relatives, and guardians but also had many connections to other Black faculty at Orion through historically Black fraternities and sororities, a system she was a part of in college and whose membership was lifetime. She accessed these resources regularly to create the consistency of expectations that she felt was lacking in her residency placement. Sam deliberately set out to cultivate relational resources with her students when she realized she and her students did not really know each other, something Sam understood to be a central aspect of being able to teach them. She did this by sharing stories about herself and her family and by structuring reflective activities connected to their work in English class that would allow her to get to know them.

Disciplinary resources. Disciplinary resources were defined as a participant’s English content knowledge, participation in undergraduate and graduate English courses, conceptualization and enactment of classroom discussion, and the larger, articulated “to what end?” or vision for teaching high school English. For example, when Judith started LEE she was also a doctoral candidate in English (all but dissertation completed) at a prestigious, private university. She came to her residency year with years of disciplinary knowledge, specifically around the history of Black theater in the United States. In addition, because she had worked as a teaching assistant in undergraduate- and graduate-level English courses, she not only had many opportunities to teach English before her residency year, but also benefited from different supervisors’ and mentors’ feedback around her teaching practices. Genesis came into her residency year with two master’s degrees—one in educational administration and one in creative writing and African American literature. When it came to the disciplinary resource of vision, Sarah, Sam, and Genesis, for example, leveraged their beliefs around meaning-making, citizenship, and “each one teach one” to alchemize fragmented curriculum and test-based foci in their respective classrooms. These were coded as disciplinary resources.
Findings and Analysis

Both Sam and Jackie drew on a constellation of resources in their learning to teach experience. However, the way that Jackie and Sam appropriated the programmatic resources made available to them—especially Lemov’s required classroom management text *Teach Like a Champion* and LEE’s programmatic practice of continuous observation, feedback, coaching, and evaluation—shaped their learning to teach processes differentially and in powerful ways. In this section, I share the findings from Jackie’s residency year at Orion Academy first, showing how programmatic resources morphed into obstacles to learning. I then share findings from Sam’s residency year at TAHS, LEE’s flagship training school, illustrating how programmatic resources were leveraged in her particular residency classroom.

Jackie’s Residency Experience: “I Am the Complete Outsider”

While all of the residents were required to use the teacher moves prescribed in Lemov, Jackie’s use of these strategies generated the greatest amount of “push back” from the students. While the push back stems in part from what Jackie conceded was a logistically complicated lesson on the day I was observing, the field notes below reflect deeper and more complicated tensions at play.

I am sitting in the back of the classroom as students trickle in. It is loud in the hallway and people are screaming and laughing. One student sees me and calls to another, “Light skin alert! Light skin alert!” A security guard in the hallway is screaming, “Get to class! Get to class!”

Jackie has written the “Do Now” on the board: “Make a text-to-self connection or text-to-world connection to anything related to *Jane Eyre* or *Wide Sargasso Sea* [schizophrenia].”

Jackie narrates: “I see Precious getting ready to do her ‘Do Now.’”

Precious: “No I’m not.”

Edward: “I ain’t got no connections.”
Jackie circulates, using Narration and Positive Framing [from Lemov], repeating “level 0.”

Jackie asks students to share their “Do Now.” One student asks, “You know John Nash?” Jackie nods. He says dismissively, “You don’t know John Nash.” Jackie nods and asks “An actor?” Student literally waves her off and says, “She don’t know. You don’t know. I’m not saying anything.” Then Jackie makes the connection, “A Beautiful Mind?” But the student ignores her.

Jackie wraps up the “Do Now” then narrates: “I see groups 1 and 2 ready to go. I see three groups who are still talking.”

“Jamal, zip it. Robert, stop talking”

Jamal: “Say please.”

Jackie hands out a sheet with five main ideas: Feminism, Colonialism, Patriarchy, Madness, and Classism, along with packets from the reading. Each group has one of the five ideas and Jackie sets a timer. Students have three minutes to put their definition of their word in their own words. Timer goes off. Jackie arranges them into jigsawed groups but only two students move. Students are supposed to be sharing their definitions verbally, but instead students are simply copying stuff down. One student stands up and just walks out of the room. A security guard comes in and gets the student’s bag. It is totally chaotic despite all of Jackie’s really solid attempts to stay focused and organize students. Jackie is using the signature strategies as much as she possibly can—she is narrating and asking for levels of voice—but it is not doing the trick. The end of class nears.

Jackie: “You should have everything but Colonialism filled in, so if you don’t . . . Everybody have a seat. I’m going to collect your sheets. You should be finishing.”

Ruby: “This class is bunk.”

Bernice: “What is she talking about? Her voice is irritating, it’s like nee nee nee nee nee nee [in a high-pitched voice].”

(Field notes, January 19, 2011)
That evening in my interview with Jackie, we talk about the racial dynamics in her room in the context of her authority:

Jackie: So getting back to 5th and 6th period when I think of typical urban school challenge I think 5th and 6th period are the epitome of that challenge . . . Big classes. We have almost 30 in both classes. Upper-class men who . . . know what's going on. They’re friends, they’re loud, they’re rowdy, they are maybe suffering from senioritis a little bit, and they have no reason to respect me. Like for me it’s really hard to go in and teach them. They don’t feel like I’m an authority figure I don’t think.

Lauren: Why do you think that is?

Jackie: I don’t know. I don’t know why. Emily put it to me this way, she’s like, “Well I’m the real teacher, well I’m the teacher and Genesis is a Black woman and you’re the other one.” And that’s kind of how she put it to me.

Lauren: When did she say that?

Jackie: I think it was probably around Christmas time, like before my lead teach started just because I’m the one who’s, it could be my skills, it could be anything, but I’m the one who’s receiving the most push back from the kids. And so for me it’s the hard, I have the hardest time in our room. (Interview, January 19, 2011)

Jackie is aware race factors into the relational challenges she has with her students, and while her mentor teacher acknowledged that race is likely a part of Jackie’s struggles in the classroom, it is her close relationship with Genesis that enables her to think through these challenges. Jackie consistently refers to Genesis as her “rock,” the person who both witnesses and verifies to Jackie that the tension in the classroom—the “push back” that Jackie is experiencing—has a large racial and cultural component. Jackie explained,

Genesis has been so insightful for me. She told me if she were me she would have quit by now because the kids are so mean to me . . . And so she is very aware of it and we talk about it all the time, and sometimes I even wonder what am I doing here, and the kids must wonder what am I doing.
here, and I’m not the only White teacher at the school, of course, but it is something I’ve kind of had to question and what are my reasons for being here and how do I convey to the students that I’m genuine and that I’m not going to, I’m not there for bad reasons. I’m there to help and I’m there because I want to be there. And so that has been really tough and she’s like, “Just wait till the end of the year. You’ll have so much street cred with the students because you stuck it out all year.” Maybe that will be true, probably not, we’ll see. But it isn’t something I expected to be so explicit, but it’s quite explicit. (January 19, 2011)

Genesis mediates Jackie’s learning in significant ways. She both acknowledges the racial tension and supports Jackie in trying to understand it. She illuminates the social, historic, and cultural underpinnings of the “push back” Jackie experiences daily. Most importantly, Genesis models for Jackie what culturally responsive teaching looks like. Genesis has rapport with her students, asking the young parents in her classroom about their children, telling them that their “baby would be proud” when they have done well. Jackie observed, “She’s just really good with teenagers. And so I feel like I’m learning a lot from her about just dealing, not necessarily teaching, but just being around teenagers and connecting with teenagers.” Genesis “offers suggestions . . . like things I could do to try to get them to not act like they hate me or something” (Interview, January 19, 2011).

Genesis also sheds light on the historic relationship between Blacks and Whites in the community in which Orion is situated, and in doing so both offer important context for Jackie as she struggles as a White teacher in this classroom:

Genesis told me, she’s like, “there’s just a lot of mistrust of White people in this community. And they are probably questioning why are you here and they don’t know you very well. And it’s just generational,” this is what she said to me. It’s just something that happens that goes on at home, just general mistrust. And I don’t know if she’s talk about poor Black communities or who she’s talking about. I’m not surprised. But I’m hoping that as the students get older and they go to
college they kind of grow out of that and they just realize that not everybody is bad and there are people that don’t, I don’t want to say are post-race, but I just want to say it’s not all about race and for the teachers like we wouldn’t be here if we didn’t want to be here and we don’t have plans to hurt them, we don’t have plans to exploit them. We’re just here to be teachers. I guess I’m going to figure, I’m going to have to figure out how to deal with that in the future. But it’s there. It’s definitely underlying all of our tension in the classroom. (Interview, January 19, 2011)

The Obstacle of Surveillance

One of the most unusual aspects of LEE’s residency program is that the people who are selected to be a part of it are not just program participants: they are employees. Each of the five residents in my study spoke about this reality, whether it was the hiring process that took place by LEE principals in the spring, or anxiety related to being fired from the program, or frustration about technically being an employee but not having health insurance. However, it was Jackie who most consistently talked about the realities and stresses of hiring and firing. Increasingly throughout her residency year, Jackie talked about her employee status in ways that reflected her profound sense of vulnerability in the program, especially as it was she who was receiving the most “push back” in the classroom. Her capacity to deal with this push back in ways that were programmatically recognized—that is, through her effective use of the behavior management cycle and Lemov’s teacher moves—would ultimately dictate whether or not she was hired into an LEE school in the spring. Jackie’s relationship to her employee status is clearly reflected in her response to the interview question, “How are you and how did your lead teach go?”:

Jackie: I was nervous about this lead teach because it’s kind of a make or break time. We have three lead teaches and the first two are, they’re not assessment, they’re just learning tools so there’s not really a penalty if you’re not doing a good job. They just use it as, “Ok this is your weakness, this is where
you need to work.” But the next lead teach is really serious. That’s when future principals will be coming to observe us, that kind of thing. So there’s just a little bit more pressure on this one than the last one and of course the last one will have more pressure than that. I just really felt like getting control of the class and getting everything in order and showing that I can do a good job for this lead teach would be crucial for having confidence for the next lead teach which really, really matters.

Lauren: That does sound stressful, because it sounds like where in a traditional student teaching seminar an official evaluation is riding on it or a letter of recommendation, but it’s a position [that is riding on these observations] as far as I understand.

Jackie: Yeah. And they walk in for probably 20 minutes, and it could be a good day or it could be a bad day . . . I mean we go through an interview process and we submit our résumé but, but the observation I’m sure is what really plays a big part. That’s when they actually get to see us. And I just feel like I want to make a good impression at that time, so all of this is kind of leading up to that moment. (Interview, January 19, 2011)

Jackie’s response to my question about her lead teach is illuminating. Not only does she cite the mounting pressure she feels around the impending principal observations, but she also equates “getting control of the class” with “showing I can do a good job.” This construction indexes the way that Jackie’s participation in this classroom setting is shaping the ways that she conceives of teaching effectively: If she can control the class, she is doing a good job. As if the pressure of being hired were not enough, Jackie also shared that on her first day of her lead teach she was observed by four people at once: her resident mentor coach, Jennifer; a fellow LEE resident, John; her mentor teacher, Emily; and her coresident, Genesis. When I asked about the nature of the feedback she was given in these observations, she explained, “it’s almost all classroom management feedback” (Interview, January 19, 2011). Jackie’s university supervisor, Fran, confirmed this point about feedback when I asked her about the differences in her supervisory roles for the university’s MAT program versus LEE’s residency:
Fran: Well for one thing in my role as university supervisor for a traditional MAT I am concerned with content area. For LEE, my main concern is classroom management. And in those are two major differences. The other major difference is that the rigor of the LEE program with having to, they have all kinds of good teaching behaviors broken down into tiny bits, and the LEE residents usually have two weeks to master each little technique and have that as part of their repertoire and move on to some other things. (Interview, December 16, 2010)

LEE’s programmatic emphasis on classroom management, defined largely as the enactment of Lemov’s “teacher moves,” was most problematic for Jackie. As the field notes above illustrated, the moves that Jackie was dutifully employing—the “do now,” narration, and positive framing—were not only not working but were actually preventing her from developing the important relational foundation, a foundation predicated on her being able to let the students get to know her. Jackie talked about this in March of her residency year:

Jackie: In the beginning I was so nervous and I was so, I didn’t want to make mistakes and I wasn’t sure what I should do and I just feel like I really wasn’t letting myself, like my personality show through and I wasn’t being myself because I was so, “Ok, I need to do the ‘Do Now.’” There’s so much [going on]. You go in front of the class and there’s four people watching you [from] the back, you know four teachers watching you to see if you’re doing it right and they’re going to write down everything you do and there’s no time to crack a joke and there’s no time to tell a story about your life and there’s really . . . no opportunity for me to relax because I was like I got to do this and I got to do it right. I talked to Genesis about this and she’s like, “You’re really funny, I think you’re really funny, but I don’t think you’ve ever told a joke to the kids.” At that point I realized I’m not really my personality isn’t showing through here and no wonder I’m having a hard time connecting to the students because I haven’t been myself. I think I’ve really tried to move past that or open up a little bit more
to the kids. And that has helped. I think that has really helped me connect with a number of students.

Lauren: Can you summarize the things that prevent you or at least prevented you in the past from being yourself in the classroom?

Jackie: Sure. Constant critique and feedback. Very specific and structured ways I was supposed to deliver a lesson, almost to the point of scripting lessons at times.

Lauren: Like what?

Jackie: Like in the beginning Emily would have us write down everything we were going to do and how many minutes we were going to do it for and what we were going to say even. And you can’t be spontaneous when you’re doing that. And videotaping and having Jennifer come in and trying to remember everything and not wanting to make a mistake. (Interview, March 30, 2011)

Jackie’s description of being observed exposes the double bind in which she finds herself. She can either perform the moves her program requires of her to be hired into an LEE school, or she can break script and “crack a joke” with her students as a way to connect with them interpersonally. In the end, however, if Jackie wants a job within LEE’s residency, she must perform rather than teach, remember rather than improvise, and order students rather than connect with them.

**Sam’s Residency Experience: “What Do I Share With Students?”**

Sam came into her residency year with the understanding that valuing her students was a prerequisite to making their work feel meaningful; this is an understanding that evolved in important ways throughout the year, in ways that profoundly shaped her learning to teach process. In our March interview, when I asked Sam to describe her relationship with her students, she explained that while her relationship with her ninth graders was always “warm,” her relationship with her sophomores had been more difficult but that it was improving. When I asked what prompted this improvement, Sam explained that the reduction in class size (29 students in the beginning of the year to 23
when we spoke in March) and the emotional development of the students had both helped (the students were closer to being juniors than sophomores, a shift that I had also noted when I taught high school sophomores). But then Sam added, “And I realized that I was a bitch to them for half the year” (Interview, March 17, 2011).

**Sam:** I was like do I need to plan a lesson around, because like I was like my relationship with the 10th graders sucks, so do I need to design a whole lesson about me, it was really that, I was thinking about it that seriously. How can I incorporate myself into the curriculum more, and when I stopped thinking about it so hard I found opportunities all over the place.

**Lauren:** What prompted you to know that that mattered? That them knowing you mattered?

**Sam:** Looking at some video with Laurie and Laurie had been saying all year, “I’ve had time to establish a relationship with these students. I know many of them and if I don’t know them they’ve seen me in the hall. They know me as a teacher here. Their friends have had me. I’m going to have an easier time. It’s going to suck for you and Rachael.” [That felt] shitty. Also because she didn’t, she didn’t seem she was giving us a chance to establish a relationship with our students. We didn’t get to do the team building stuff at the beginning of the year that we did with our 9th graders. That screwed us over.

**Lauren:** So you were watching that video of yourself with Laurie, and what did you see?

**Sam:** Well what happened was that I watched myself teaching the sophomores in December and then I watched myself teaching the same class at the end of January. Same class I was using the same words, but my delivery was much different. I had more buy-in from the students. And it’s because I wasn’t punching my words. They didn’t sound like I was angry.

**Lauren:** Do you think it sounded like that before?

**Sam:** Mm-hmm. Yeah. When somebody’s counting down at you like giving you a countdown, like 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, counting down at you, “Go, go, go, go, now,” it can sound really shitty. Or it can be like ok “Alright we have 5 seconds, let’s get it together,” it can be a motivating thing, but there’s a slightest
difference and it's the teacher's tone. I saw that I was able to change that but then I still didn't quite have all the students with me, so there was an opportunity for me to share a little bit about my family and my family's background. I jumped on it. We were teaching Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and had them interview someone from their grandmother's generation and somebody from their mother's generation about women. And role women play in society. So I called my mom and I interviewed my mom and I interviewed my grandmother and I wrote it out and I projected it using the Elmo. Even like I didn't, I told my mom what it was for, and I wrote down everything, stuff about my parents, my mother has been married and divorced once and separated now, and stuff about that. Or about my great grandparents and the English language, and stuff like that.

Sam's observation about the tone and delivery of her lessons is an important one. The countdown, for example, was a ubiquitous management technique called “Work the clock” taken from Lemov. I saw this used by all of the residents and their mentor teachers to organize students’ movements and behavior in the classroom. But what Sam is articulating here is that standardized, required approaches to classroom management, in this case the countdown, are always cast through an affective and relational lens. In the first enactment of the countdown, which she describes as sounding “shitty,” Sam manages students. They are the objects being acted upon: she counts down “at” them. Her description of that enactment of the countdown, the “Go, go, go, go, now,” is an imperative construction: “[You] go.” It is a command. But the second description of Sam’s approach to classroom management is conveyed with the plural pronoun, “We have five seconds.” The shift from teacher command (“go”) to collective goal (“We have five seconds”) discursively marks the shift in the way that Sam conceives of the link between her words and her relationships with her students. This example illuminates the ways in which language has constitutive power: It literally and rhetorically produces particular kinds of relationships.

The programmatic resources of the video supported Sam’s initial understanding that “valuing [students] as people” matters, and
enabled her to actualize her disciplinary goal of making her students’ work meaningful. But, as with Lemov, it was the sense that the video made to her on a dispositional level that makes it resonate, catalyzing the changes that Sam articulates undergoing in terms of her relationships with her students. Finally, watching the video of herself with Laurie both deepened and shifted the way that Sam saw herself interpersonally. She recognized that her approach and tone might be a contributing factor to the way that her students related not only to her but also to her enactment of the curriculum, as evidenced by Sam’s observation that when her tone changed she “had more buy-in from the students.” Sam’s realization that her tone and delivery are connected to “buy-in” not only underscores the deeply relational and bidirectional nature of “classroom management” but also points to the purposes of classroom management: student learning.

Watching the video of herself teaching was in many ways a transformative moment for Sam. It catalyzed profound shifts in her understanding of the role of relationships in the classroom and illuminated the need for her to make herself known and vulnerable with her students. This change is best illustrated through what I would say is a remarkable act of bravery on Sam’s part. When Sam interviewed for a full-time teaching position at TAHS for the following school year, an incredibly intense process that placed her in direct competition with her close friend and fellow resident, Judith, Sam explained that she asked one of her most difficult students to write a letter of recommendation for her.

Sam: And he was honest. And he gave a sort of like counter argument to it but was just like, his letter began talking about how I was a stranger and he reacted the same way he would react to any stranger, he protected his friends. That’s how he saw his role in class as protecting his friends from this outsider. Even though he’s had residents before, residents come and go, and so but he talked about how I helped him with writing and how, it was a really lovely letter and I didn’t expect that. So then he changed and he was kind of the ring-leader for the class.

Lauren: Can you identify why he changed? What was it?
Sam: Because I told him that I respected his opinion. I valued his
contribution. I treated him as an equal. And I don’t think the students are my equals necessarily. I know they’re not my intellectual equals but sometimes it is helpful for me as a teacher, I’ve had the most success establishing relationships with students when I’ve made myself vulnerable.

Lauren: Where did you learn that?

Sam: A little bit in City Year, when I did City Year. And a lot in that 10th-grade class this year. I didn’t have a lot of opportunities to share stuff about myself, and I’m like what do I share with students? How do I incorporate myself into those lessons? And I stopped worrying about it and just let it happen. (Interview, March 17, 2011)

The student’s description of Sam as an “outsider” from whom her student felt he had to protect himself and his friends is a position that Sam works to bridge in two ways: She worked with him on his writing outside of class, and she not only told him that she valued his contribution but also demonstrated it in a deeply authentic way, by asking him to write a letter of recommendation for her, an act which made her “vulnerable.”

It is not simply Sam’s relational and pedagogical decisions that she feels are responsible for improved relationships with her students. Sam also attributes her ability to connect with them—and move from outsider to insider—to her social class and gender presentation. This mediating role of social class and gender presentation came up in relation to the vocabulary curriculum that she was required to enact in her residency, a collection of hip-hop songs called “Flocabulary,” a curriculum for which Sam consistently expressed her disdain. Beyond what Sam saw as the problematic nature of White people teaching hip-hop to “urban” students (Sam used air quotes when using this word), Flocabulary was also disconnected from the texts that they were studying. In our exit interview, Sam distilled her critique, explaining,

I think Flocabulary is ridiculous. I hate it. I’ve been required to teach it. I’ve been required to feign interest in it and I hate it. I hate it. I hate it. I hate it. I think it’s important for students to learn new words. I would love if those words connected to our content. That would be good. (Interview, June 8, 2011)
In discussing the Flocabulary curriculum she was required to teach, Sam explored the ways that she understood her own race and class as shaping the relationships she was ultimately able to build with her students:

Sam: At first they liked it and I think they picked up on the fact that they’re mostly Black and brown students...and we’re two of us White teachers standing up there saying “Let’s do this hip-hop song.” They can tell it’s fake and forced.

Lauren: As a White woman, how do you see it playing out? Obviously you’re suggesting they’re aware [of race and] that race is being constructed a certain way.

Sam: I think it’s less an issue, I don’t know. I think it’s less an issue with me sometimes than it is [for] a more typically feminine teacher, for whatever reason. Students don’t necessarily see me as the nice White lady. I’m a White person, but I just haven’t been able to figure out how to talk about that. Because I don’t know what’s going on there, but I know they treat me differently than they do the teachers with long blonde hair, pony tail. I don’t know. I think, especially with 9th grade I try to talk about my own experiences as a student so it transcends race and my socioeconomic experiences are a lot more like my students... My family was on free and reduced lunch and I mean it [the town] was very White, but it was also very poor.

Lauren: ... So you share some of the socioeconomic stuff with your students.

Sam: Yeah and I mean I think that’s where I’m able to connect to the students more than Rachael [a Black woman] is... She has a different connection with the students and I think a little bit of it is that I don’t, I do, and I’m not saying... I know Rachael has an interesting socioeconomic history, but I don’t know. I just feel like I’m closer to that right now.

Lauren: Explain that a little more. You’re closer to...?

Sam: I really don’t, my parents are still poor. And so even though right now I can pay my bills on time my parents can’t, and if they still had kids they’d still be on free and reduced lunch, and I get that sometimes it’s a struggle to get all your supplies for class. And but I also get that if it’s a struggle to get all your supplies for class then you need to learn how to speak
up for yourself no matter how proud you or your parents are. That’s a lot of, like the relationship building and beyond getting your supplies for class. Speaking up for yourself. I tutored so many students this year in writing specifically, and all that is outside of class, and the students that have come to me for help are becoming great writers just because they’re practicing. I don’t claim to teach writing, but they’re writing. They’re practicing. And so I think it’s, for one reason or another, it’s because of my background, my economic background. (Interview, March 17, 2011)

These moments coalesced into a powerful realization for Sam:

Lauren: If you could tell me one thing you’ve learned in the last two months about learning to teach?
Sam: I have learned that it doesn’t matter if I plan an amazing unit and it sounds really smart. Like if I decide that my students are going to read Crime and Punishment it doesn’t matter if I do that and I have all this planning and nicely scaffolded. If I don’t have a relationship with my students I’m not even going to be able to teach them a short, a Haiku. So that’s one most important thing. (Interview, March 17, 2011)

Conclusions and Implications

Jackie and Sam—like all of the novice teachers I worked with in this study—came to the LEE residency with a wealth of disciplinary, relational, dispositional, and experiential resources (see also Lowenstein, 2009). As White people, they were acutely aware that the cultural, linguistic, and racial differences between them and their students required reflection and raised questions related to interpersonal relationships, race, and identity. In their residency year, however, the most powerful resources related to cultural responsiveness and critical reflection were not officially part of LEE’s programmatic structure, indexing what I see as a larger (and exceptionally problematic) issue of programmatic colorblindness. Genesis was a powerful cultural broker and programmatic resource for Jackie, but her ability to explain and mediate the racial tension that Jackie experienced was a function
of who she was as a person, not a part of the programmatic sequence. For Sam’s part, while the programmatic resource of the videotape catalyzed a profound shift in her relational approach to her students, it was her dispositional capacity for noticing that enabled that pedagogical transformation. There was no formal space for residents to engage in the kind of “relational reflection” (Milner, 2006) that would have invited consideration of the critical questions like “How will my race influence my work as a teacher with students of color?” (Milner, 2006, p. 359; see also Milner & Tenore, 2010).

Residency placement also must be considered. Jackie’s placement at Orion proved to be not just exceptionally difficult but paralyzing. The double bind Jackie experienced could not be resolved through expansion; in fact, Jackie’s learning was regressive in nature. This raises two important questions: “Is it ethical to situate a novice teacher in a turnaround school, a model that is hotly contested?” (i.e., Johnson, 2012; Peck & Reitzug, 2014; Trujillo & Renee, 2015) and “Is it ethical for minoritized, racialized, and underserved students to have teachers who are not attending to issues of race, power, and identity?” As UTRs proliferate and policy faith intensifies, we must consider how residents are learning to teach, in what school setting, and with what kind of programmatic support around issues of race, class, relationships, and power.

Notes

2. LEE stands for Leaders for Equity in Education.
3. Zeichner and Sandoval’s (2015) critique of venture philanthropy addresses Lemov’s role in the education reform movement. Zeichner and Sandoval point out that at Teacher U (now Relay University), Lemov’s work constitutes the “backbone of instruction.”
4. For an in-depth analysis of Rachael’s learning to teach experience, please see Gatti & Catalano, 2015.
5. Cited from city newspaper.
6. ACT stands for American College Testing.
7. This was the first year that graduation rates were calculated by tracking individual students from ninth through 12th grade and by counting graduates as those who earn their diploma—not an equivalent degree—in 4 years. As a result of this
new calculation, graduation rates were much lower in 2011 than they had been in previous years.

8. Leaders for Equity in Education (LEE) chose 16 of Lemov’s techniques to focus on for what they called the “signature strategies.” “Work the clock” was actually not one of those, but it was one of the classroom management approaches I saw being used most consistently throughout the year. This suggests that Lemov’s work was being taken up and enacted in more broad and unofficial ways.

9. As this shows, conceptualizing any teacher education program as a monolithic thing is problematic, for there are many layers, tensions, and resources at work, often working at odds, within any program. The programmatic resource of the videotape, for example, shifts the way that Sam takes up and enacts another programmatic resource, the Lemov strategy “Work the clock.” The novice teacher in the program is therefore always and inevitably mediating the program.

10. Out of respect for Sam’s gender queer identity, I refrain from using the word “women” to describe Sam and Jackie, even though Sam is biologically female. I understand that using the phrase “White people” is awkward to say the least, but lack an alternative phrasing that would honor Sam’s identity.

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Lauren Gatti is an assistant professor in the department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research on how people learn to teach is situated within the larger debates in the areas of teacher preparation, education policy, and democratic education. In 2013, she was awarded the AERA Outstanding Dissertation for Division K (Teaching and Teacher Education).