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CULTIVATING MOBILITY:

SOCIAL PATHWAYS TO EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

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for me personally and for those still underrepresented in higher education more broadly.

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TITLE: Cultivating Mobility: Social Pathways to Educational Attainment

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the social mechanisms undergirding the pathways of

working class, predominantly Latino adolescents pursuing post-secondary educational

aspirations. In so doing, this study contributes to the study of how social capital operates

within organizations toward educational outcomes. Between 2005 and 2008, I collected

multi-method case study data in a Chicago charter school, using ethnographic fieldwork,

interviews, and two waves of survey data collection. This unique dataset was designed to

enable comparisons between these students and their local and national peers, using

matched measures from Chicago Public School data and the NCES Educational

Longitudinal Survey of Youth, including important psychometric measures, such as a

modified Rosenberg self-esteem scale, Phinney's Multiethnic Identity Measure, and

measures of self-esteem and well-being. This research responds to the dominant

theoretical explanations for the ethno-racial gap in educational attainment: educational

and socioeconomic resource shortages, cultural resistance and oppositional culture,

stereotype threat and self-schemas, social capital and social networks, and ethnic identity

development.

Employing these longitudinal and multiple methods, this study presents a

framework for understanding the students' post-secondary pathways through a social

lens. The results demonstrate the means by which institutional expectations promote high educational aspirations. The data explains how social ties within the school population might provide protective effects that further both the youths' aspirations and actual attainment. For those students who change their ambitions or fail to realize their expectations, the longitudinal data enables an explanation of the mechanisms behind the reasons why their dreams "just don't work out."

The study does not demonstrate any evidence for experience of stereotype threat while the students are in high school; it does however find explanations at the school culture level to anticipate such problems, which have varying effects at the individual level. Later waves of survey, interview, and school enrollment data demonstrate that matriculation and retention in these and other four-year colleges present more complicated and less linear trajectories.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

High school sophomores hold high expectations for their educational attainment, across

racial and ethnic groups, , begging the question: why do racial and ethnic differences

persist in *actual* educational attainment? Latinos are more segregated than any students

in the country and are less likely to graduate from high school or college than any other

group; they graduate from college at a rate 60% smaller than that of non-Hispanic whites

and half that of all other non-Hispanic groups (Tables 1 and 2). This disparity suggests

that something happens to youth during their secondary school education which

effectually discourages minority youth from pursuing higher education at the previous

expected levels. The widening of the attainment gap between blacks and whites in the

1990s suggests the need for theories that connect this sociological problem to the

psychological experience of the youth that are being left out of the occupational and

economic opportunities afforded to them by higher education. This dissertation speaks to

these larger social processes within a focused study of how Puerto Rican, Mexican-

American, and other ethnic minority youth navigate through their pathways toward post-

secondary educational attainment.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study investigates how social capital the nature of the role of social connections and

resources that might assist youth throughout their schooling affects their educational

futures, in particular, their matriculation to four-year colleges and selective colleges. If

school, family, and peers position youth to imagine and pursue their potential academic and socioeconomic futures, how does the social capital gained from this social support facilitate youth's educational attainment? If the educational goals that home networks promote present potential transitions away from their communities, how do youth negotiate these choices? The majority of these youth complete high school with the academic, social and cultural competencies needed for college. Why then, for so many of them, do their academic plans "not work out"? In the following chapters, I present the mechanisms by which youth's social and cultural resources interact along their pathways through high school and beyond.

This dissertation employs fieldwork, interviews, and socio-metric survey techniques to study the social and cultural contexts of the development of educational and career aspirations among Puerto Rican, Mexican, and other ethnic minority adolescents who attend a unique, majority-Latino college preparatory charter high school in Chicago. Conducted between 2005 and 2008, this case study focuses on a predominantly Latino high school which markets itself to its first-generation college student population as an academic training vehicle to socioeconomic opportunity. The school systematically structures its training program to counteract the resource gap faced by underrepresented youth at otherwise similar schools, particularly focusing on the youths' academic, social, and cultural resource gaps.

Table 1.1: Percentage of high school sophomores who expected to reach various highest levels of education, by selected student and school characteristics, sex, and SES: 2002

Selected student and school characteristics		High school, GED or less	Some college	Graduate from college	Graduate or professional degree	Don't know
Racial/ethnic group						
Native		10.3	10.3	30.9	34.1	14.4
Asian or Pacific Islander		4.5	7.4	33.4	44.7	10.1
Black		9.6	11.6	37.3	33.1	8.5
Hispanic or Latino		11.7	12.1	35.0	28.2	13.0
More than one race		8.2	8.7	35.0	39.8	8.2
White		7.2	10.0	35.9	37.6	9.4
*Racial/ethnic group * Gender * Socioeconomic status*						
Black male	All SES	12.7	12.7	41.0	25.1	8.5
	Low SES	14.8	17.2	39.7	21.1	7.1
	Mid SES	12.9	10.2	42.8	23.4	10.7
	High SES	7.1	10.7	38.0	39.6	4.6
Black female	All SES	6.3	10.3	33.5	41.4	8.5
	Low SES	9.1	12.1	34.1	34.2	10.6
	Mid SES	5.4	9.9	36.1	41.1	7.5
	High SES	1.8	5.8	18.0	67.6	6.8
Latino male	All SES	14.6	14.4	35.6	22.7	12.7
	Low SES	18.8	16.2	32.2	17.0	15.9
	Mid SES	10.6	14.4	38.2	27.0	9.9
	High SES	10.5	6.2	41.5	32.9	8.9
Latino female	All SES	9.0	9.8	34.4	33.6	13.2
	Low SES	11.3	10.7	35.8	28.9	13.4
	Mid SES	7.4	9.5	33.3	35.2	14.6
	High SES	2.9	6.0	32.0	53.0	6.1
White male	All SES	10.3	11.5	37.0	30.8	10.5
	Low SES	23.6	18.4	30.7	15.2	12.2
	Mid SES	11.0	13.4	37.8	25.5	12.3
	High SES	2.9	5.1	38.5	46.8	6.6
White female	All SES	4.2	8.3	34.8	44.4	8.2
	Low SES	11.3	15.3	31.1	29.7	12.6
	Mid SES	4.1	9.7	36.5	41.1	8.6
	High SES	2.9	2.5	34.1	57.4	5.4

NOTE: Details may not sum to totals because of rounding. The interaction analysis excludes "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian or Pacific Islander," and "More than one race." All race categories exclude Hispanic.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS: 2002)

Table 1.2: Percentage of high school sophomores who expected a bachelor's degree, by selected student and school characteristics, sex, and SES: 2002

Selected student and school characteristics		Less than a B.A.	B.A. degree or higher	Don't know
Racial/ethnic group				
American Indian or Alaska Native		20.6	65.0	14.4
Asian or Pacific Islander		11.9	78.1	10.1
Black		21.2	70.4	8.5
Hispanic or Latino		*23.8*	*63.2*	*13*
More than one race		16.9	74.8	8.2
White		17.2	73.5	9.4
*Racial/ethnic group * Gender * Socioeconomic status*				
Black male	*All SES*	*25.4*	*66.1*	*8.5*
	Low SES	32	60.8	7.1
	Mid SES	23.1	66.2	10.7
	High SES	17.8	77.6	4.6
Black female	*All SES*	*16.6*	*74.9*	*8.5*
	Low SES	21.2	68.3	10.6
	Mid SES	15.3	77.2	7.5
	High SES	7.6	85.6	6.8
Hispanic or Latino male	All SES	29	58.3	12.7
	Low SES	*35*	*49.2*	*15.9*
	Mid SES	25	65.2	9.9
	High SES	*16.7*	*74.4*	*8.9*
Hispanic or Latino female	All SES	18.8	68	13.2
	Low SES	*22*	*64.7*	*13.4*
	Mid SES	16.9	68.5	14.6
	High SES	*8.9*	*85*	*6.1*
White male	All SES	21.8	67.8	10.5
	Low SES	*42*	*45.9*	*12.2*
	Mid SES	24.4	63.3	12.3
	High SES	8	85.3	6.6
White female	All SES	12.5	79.2	8.2
	Low SES	*26.6*	*60.8*	*12.6*
	Mid SES	13.8	77.6	8.6
	High SES	5.4	91.5	5.4

NOTE: Details may not sum to totals because of rounding. The interaction analysis excludes "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian or Pacific Islander," and "More than one race." All race categories exclude Hispanic.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS: 2002).

LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXTS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Chicago Public Schools have been widely regarded as the worst in the nation for decades on indicators ranging from overcrowding to dropout to academic quality to school violence to educational attainment. It remains one of the most segregated school systems in the country, even while the city gains attention in its emergence as a global city. Chicago has risen in stature during the 1990s and 2000s as it has successfully passed international competitions for the 2016 Olympic bid, as housing prices and residential moves to the city increased exponentially, as housing projects were torn town to make room for new investment, and as Chicago became the center of national political attention with the election campaign of now President Barack Obama, who chose the pro-charter movement Chancellor of Chicago Public Schools to serve as his new Secretary of Education.

One of many cities leading national reform efforts in education at the turn of the century, Chicago Public School District made dramatic changes to its organization during this period.[1] Charter schools were a particular feature of the reform, under the mandate of Renaissance 2010, a program hallmarking the creation of one hundred new schools before 2010. Grand Charter High School *(pseudonym)*, the site of my study, is one of the schools created under this directive. It is one of numerous new charter schools in the city, but is also one of the most successful in sending its graduates to prestigious four-year colleges and universities.

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[1] Mayor Richard J. Daley took control of the school system in 1997, a practice replicated by mayors of other major cities. Mayor Michael Bloomberg took over New York City Public Schools in 2002, similarly breaking large schools into smaller schools and allowing controversial changes, including allowing more charter schools and non-union teachers.

Racial-ethnic minority youth graduate from high school and college at rates that are persistently low and are not substantially increasing Their aspirations are consistently high, across U.S. racial categories. Similar proportions of Black (37.3%), Latino (35.0%), White (35.9%), Asian (33.4%), and Multiracial youth (35.0%) aspire to graduate from college (Table 1). Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate race, gender, and social class differences in the expectations of the youth. Only 19.2% of Latinos are enrolled in a four-year college institution two years after high school however, making Latinos the ethno-racial group with the lowest four-year matriculation levels: lower than Native Americans (23.4%), African Americans (32.7%), Whites (46.4%), Asians and Pacific Islanders (54.1%), and those reporting more than one race (39.8%).[2] More than twice that proportion of Latinos (41.5%) are either still enrolled in high school or not enrolled in college and 35.8% are enrolled in a two-year institution or lower. 85.2% of those Latinos surveyed have completed high school or equivalency.[3] Why do so few of these graduates go on to four-year colleges? Using a case study of a college-bound predominantly Latino school population, this dissertation probes the reasons why academically-talented Latinos do and do not pursue particular college and career pathways.

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[2] SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), "Second Follow-up, 2006."

[3] 80.9% receive a high school diploma; 4.3% receive a GED. Source above.

CASE STUDY: GRAND

Grand Charter High School has successfully marketed itself as a vehicle to college and professional careers. Through high school and increasingly after graduation, Grand actively coaches its students for these transitions. This study explains the mechanisms behind the school's attempt to transform the social and cultural capital of working class, ethnic minority youth from highly segregated Chicago neighborhoods into successful college preparatory students. Of particular concern are the social mechanisms for realizing upwardly mobile aspirations: the aspirations of both a school and its inhabitants and the aspirations of a city and its school system.

School Choice in a Changing Neighborhood Context

Taking up half a city block, the school building sits on the border of residential and commercial neighborhood districts. Introduced as a college preparatory charter school alternative, Grand Charter High School opened as a public non-selective enrollment charter school in the late 1990s. Situated in what had been a predominantly Latino neighborhood, and connected via public transportation lines to most Latino neighborhoods in the city, Grand emerged as a viable alternative during a period of dramatic socioeconomic and demographic change. During the early to mid-2000s, Chicago's economic boom resulted in gentrification (the influx of young professionals from higher social classes into areas of lower social class status), raising rent and tax payments for the previous residents. These changes particularly affected Chicago's

Latino neighborhoods (including the neighborhood in which Grand was situated), which were proximate to desirable areas of the city.[4]

Latino residents, especially the more economically vulnerable, were being priced out of their neighborhoods and moved farther away from the city center to less expensive neighborhoods and their corresponding schools.[5] These phenomena shifted the family populations of neighborhoods, disrupting the kin and neighbor networks of Chicago's Latino community which have functioned to facilitate social support and cohesion . Rooted in the city's Near North and Northwest Sides, Chicago's Puerto Rican community has moved primarily farther north and west. Chicago's Mexican community, rooted in the city's Southwest Side, has primarily moved farther north, west, and to the less expensive neighboring suburbs. Students' residential locations, mapped in Figure 1, make evident these patterns of residential dispersion. These changes created more ethnically, socioeconomically, and culturally heterogeneous neighborhoods, with limited interaction between the old-timers and the new-timers. These resulting declines in residential social cohesion opened the door for Grand School to become the primary locus of non-family social interaction for its student population.

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[4] Figure 2, a photograph of a main street adjacent to Grand School.
[5] In the late 2000s, Chicago was recognized one of the cities hardest hit by the sub-prime loan market, with some of the highest foreclosure rates in the country.

Figure 1.1: Students' Residence in May 2006, from GELS Wave I study
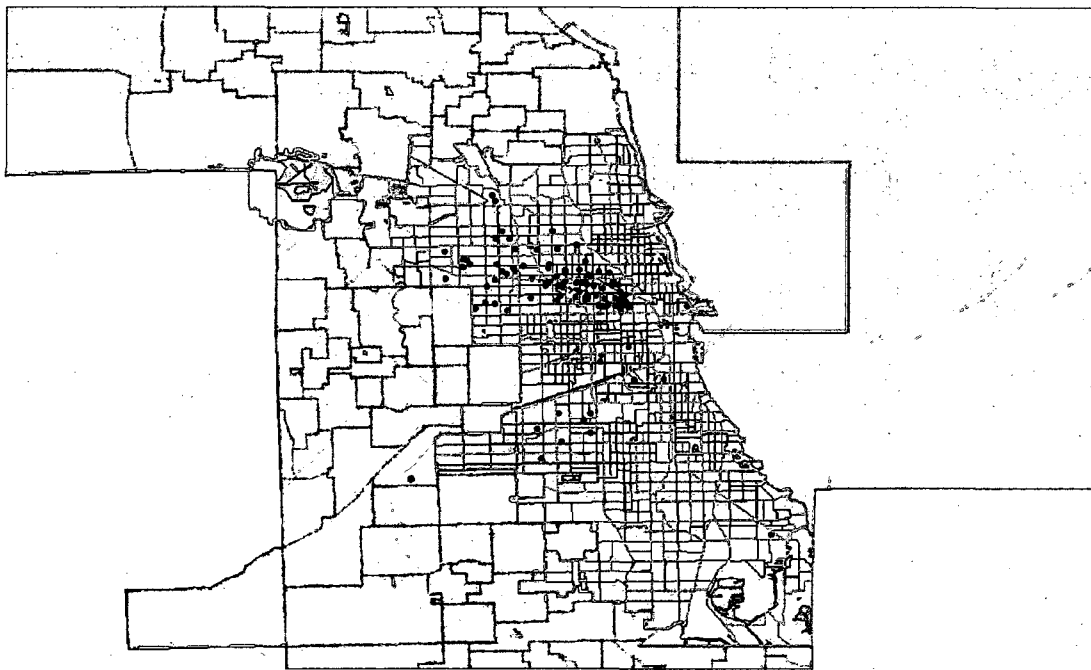
SOURCE: Figure 1 shows the dispersion of students' residential locations, as recorded in the study's survey data collection in May 2006.

Changing Lives, by Lottery

Given the residentially-based nature of American public schooling, these demographic changes are intrinsically linked to changes within the Chicago Public School District. Beleaguered for years over its poor educational outcomes, the city has heavily invested in school reform in recent years in order to improve the reputation of its city's public schools, and in turn, recruit higher-income residents from the suburbs to the city. The city's increased support of charter school initiatives increased school choice options in

Chicago, heralded by the Renaissance 2010 program. The charter for Grand High School was approved under these school reforms.

Recruitment for this new charter school began in the late 1990s, with flyers and pamphlets being distributed to local elementary and middle schools inviting parents and students to recruitment "Town Hall" meetings to learn more about Grand and its mechanism for admission. To be admitted into Chicago's magnet high schools, eighth graders must achieve a particular high score on a competitive academic exam. These schools then select students on the basis of both these test results and students' ranked magnet school preferences. To be admitted into Chicago's private high schools, eighth grade applicants must meet varying admissions criteria and either pay full tuition and fees (about $20,000 annually) or receive considerable financial aid. To be admitted into Chicago's parochial schools, students must meet similar admissions criteria and pay tuition and fees, which tend to be considerably lower than those of private schools. To be admitted into Grand Charter School, eighth graders neither take a test nor interview with the admissions office, nor need they pay tuition and fees. Rather, a lottery is held to determine which applicants will be admitted to fill the next year's incoming cohort.

Grand aims its recruitment efforts at the elementary and middle schools in an area in which prospective high school students are predominantly of Mexican and/or Puerto Rican descent. The only preference given to any applicants in this lottery is to siblings of enrolled students, who are granted automatic admission. This study focuses on the graduating classes of 2006-2008 (the entering cohorts of 2002-2004). Aggregate lottery data for these study years are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 1.3: Number of Applicants by Sender Schools, by School Type and by Application Year

School Type*	Application Year		
	2002	2003	2004
Public, Chicago Public Schools			
Attendance Area Schools, Standard			
All Schools	118	92	70
Feeder Schools (2)	59	37	24
Siblings of Current Students	1	8	4
Charter Schools			
All Schools	71	22	15
Heavy Feeder Schools (1)	69	21	6
Siblings of Current Students	0	0	0
Magnet Clusters, Regional			
All Schools	252	225	219
Feeder Schools (6)	88	76	79
Heavy Feeder Schools (3)	90	75	79
Siblings of Current Students	8	13	8
Magnet and/or Regional Gifted			
All Schools	157	98	90
Feeder Schools (5)	96	59	48
Siblings of Current Students	9	10	4
Parochial / Catholic			
All Schools	59	44	25
Siblings of Current Students	0	3	0
Private			
All Schools	13	25	14
Siblings of Current Students	0	1	0
Other (home school, special education, suburban public, or unidentifiable)			
All Schools	6	3	3
Siblings of Current Students	0	0	0
Total	676	509	436

* Schools are elementary or middle schools, unless otherwise noted.
Notes: Feeder schools are those that send over 10 students per year, for two or more years.
Heavy Feeder schools are those that send over 20 students per year, for two or more years.

Table 1.4: Lottery Recruitment and Matriculation Data, for Study Cohorts

School Type*	Application Year		
	2002	2003	2004
Applications Distributed			
All Applicants	661	511	445
Applications Submitted			
All Applicants	309	363	324
Accepted by Lottery			
All Applicants		162	176
Total Enrollees			
All Applicants		150	153
Non-Sibling Accepted Students		103	111
Siblings of Current Students*		32	37
Waitlist Enrollees		15	5

* Siblings of accepted students are automatically accepted for admission. They are included in the overall lottery acceptance figure.

Source: Internal school data, Grand Charter High School. Note: Grand administrators provided their internal lottery spreadsheet and made themselves available for follow-up questions regarding the data. Full data was not available for 2002 although data collection and retention have increased over recent years.

Table 3 categorizes the number of applications received, by school type and application year. Grand receives the greatest number of applications (62.0%)[6] from public magnet cluster schools, local standard admission public schools which have a magnet program within the school.[7] Students at these schools are not necessarily a part of the magnet program. Twenty-seven percent of the applicants come from magnet

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[6] These calculations are derived from the 2003 lottery data, which is the most representative.
[7] Magnet cluster schools are local standard admission public schools which have a magnet program within the school.

and/or regional gifted program schools, which are a higher tier of school with selective admission, similar to the magnet high schools. Students from standard neighborhood public schools make up the third highest category of applicants, contributing 32.5% of the applicant pool, close in number to the magnet and gifted schools. Catholic schools make up the fourth highest category in 2003 and 2004, contributing 12.1% of applicants. Private schools, including Protestant schools, contribute 6.9% of the applicants. Charter schools contributed 23.0% in 2002 but that figure decreased to 6.1% in 2003 after one particular charter school's applications to Grand decreased. Less than one percent of applicants come from other, miscellaneous school types. Although Grand's applicant base does not represent a random distribution of Chicago eighth graders, it does include students from a variety of academic training programs, with enrollees from both magnet and weak academic programs. First year students range from being ready for Algebra 2 to remedial math and reading.

Entry cohorts average 150 students, for which between three hundred nine and three hundred sixty-three applications were submitted (Table 4). The overall acceptance rates for the classes of 2003 and 2004 were 44.6% and 54.3%, respectively. Siblings of enrolled students, offered automatic admission, comprised between 21.3% and 24.1% of each incoming class. The proportions of lottery-admitted students who matriculated into Grand in 2003 and 2004 were 83.3% and 84.1%, respectively.

Applicants who are not initially admitted through the lottery may elect to be placed on a waiting list, from which they can be called up after the original admitted students submit their enrollment decisions. Two interview respondents from the 2002

cohort described being admitted from the waitlist, explaining that the school principal

called their house to congratulate them. One of these students, who had already been

accepted to a magnet high school but preferred Grand, explains:

> "I didn't think I would get accepted because I was seventh on the
> waiting list and I was *so* sad. I was so depressed because I didn't think
> that I was going to get in, but, I mean, I was only seventh. Then Mr.
> Schurski called my house and he talked to me and my mom. So I
> thought that was really nice, that he already knew our names and he
> was willing to extend that greeting, to come back and give us another
> chance, or give Grand another chance. So -- and then the size also --
> they were displaying how all their sophomores could go to college in
> the summer, and I wanted to be a part of that, and how Grand was
> getting a good reputation and I wanted to be a part of that." [Michelle
> Villanueva, 17 year old senior]

Through its lottery, Grand generates an incoming class of students (who like many of

their parents) are motivated to partake in the mission of the school. Grand purports to

grant its diversely academically-prepared population of students a means to attain a

college preparatory education at a public school cost. In turn, Grand can proclaim its

mission to "change lives" and make college dreams possible for those who could

otherwise not afford this targeted, thorough transformation program to mold low-income,

first generation college students into future college graduates.

The Social Origins of the Post-Secondary Educational Gap

To better understand the process by which first generation college students interpret their

agency around college, we benefit by investigating the social context in which they are

learning about these options and developing their sense of identity. Massey, et al.

published a comprehensive study proposing multi-theoretical approach to investigating

the "source" of racial and ethnic disparities in higher education. To do this, their study

uses retrospective data to investigate the by examining the "social origins" of their sample of underrepresented elite college students. This dissertation study of social origins uses a stronger design, employing prospective and longitudinal data to follow underrepresented students as they prepare for and matriculate into college. By following a school institution and its population over time, we learn what motivates youth to get on and off the college express train.

This research site presents a lens into a particularly successful archetype of a wave of culture and character-driven charter schools which target youth who are traditionally underrepresented in colleges. Catholic and magnet schools have been available alternatives to urban public schools for decades; choices in schooling for urban youth are not a novel phenomenon. The question laid open, however, is how low-income minority youth respond to intentionally integrated academic and cultural training in a preparatory school format, a question given particular salience by the popularity of such school programs. This school employs disciplinary and moral codes as one of its means to align students to the ambitious educational aims of the school; however the operation of discipline here is less straightforward than at hierarchical parochial schools. Rather, discipline operates explicitly in conjunction with academic rigor and pride, both in the day-to-day of school life and on the Latin emblem of its motto.

Part of a citywide charter school reform program, this school is a case of a broader system of public and private sector investments in urban schools, which stand to benefit not only the student attendees of urban schools but also the financial and political stakeholders in the areas around these schools. These benefactors model the academic

culture of the school after private preparatory school culture, a culture whose members tend to be of the privileged classes of society. Given the classed nature of the preparatory school culture, translating the model to low-income, urban, ethnic and racial minority youth presents potential challenges. Strong social ties between the students and teachers and the students and students are keys to the reform; the site of the school is a central location for this reform culture project. If it works, and particularly if it works well, in inducting the youth into the norms, behaviors, and ambitions of their upper-class peers while preparing them academically to meet these ambitions, how does this strong school culture form, if it does? How do youth interpret the school's training in relation to their ambitions and their home culture? These cultural questions and concerns about race, class, and academic potential are imbued in not only the research site but also in the minds of the students, teachers, and families who form the cultural makeup of the school.

The site of this research, Grand Charter High School, admits local students on an ability-blind lottery system. Over eighty-seven percent of those who entered in the fall, four years earlier, graduate from the high school in four years.[8] Given the research findings on underrepresented youths' avoidance of situations in which they would be a visible and stereotyped minority, that so many are encouraged to and do apply to colleges with highly majority and advantaged populations predicates questions about the students preparedness for these environments. This first data chapter focuses on the four-year preparation process for this transition from tightly-knit and fairly homogenous high

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[8] "**4 Year Graduation Rate** – Graduation rate for a particular class is calculated by dividing the number of students who graduated from a school in June by the number of students who entered that school in the fall, four years earlier." Source:
http://research.cps.k12.il.us/cps/accountweb/Reports/Documentation/progress.html

school student body to the academic and professional world beyond. One less salient dimension of traditional preparatory school culture is its focus on competition, athletics, and toughness. This training begins quietly, from the beginning of the freshman year, and plays an integral role in students' academic performance, self-worth, cultural pride, and post-secondary transition.

The induction process at Grand functions on a gradual scale, beginning before admission and continuing through the first weeks of high school. There are ways of being, acting, and interacting which mete out advantages to those students who respond, in particular, graduation and college placement. The inner-city KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) schools around the nation explicitly advertise that they will be creating a powerful environment for their students, with long school days and strong emphasis on discipline. The East Cost boarding schools which I worked prior to graduate school make known that they are aiming to graduate particular models of youth. Education has always been connected to creating particular personhoods, for example in the creation of young citizens with shared values and ethics. Grand, in a considerably more subtle manner, involves similar teaching of particular selfhoods in order to engender the academic outcomes.

From this population of predominantly first-generation college youth, mostly members of underrepresented groups, a consistent proportion of graduating seniors matriculates into the nation's highly selective colleges and universities.[9] On average, about 25% percent of each year's class attends a four-year postsecondary institution

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[9] For cohorts after the inaugural class (2003), the college matriculation rates are as follows: 81% (2004), 76% (2005), 91% (2006).

designated as being either "more selective" or "most selective".[10][11] Why do these youth

pursue these colleges, and colleges in general, at these rates? Where might they develop

resilience against the identity threat and lack of college application experience that might

keep their peers from considering these pathways? How might the culture of the

institution develop college-going identities and sensibilities? The following analysis

explains and elucidates these questions

ORGANIZATION AND LAYOUT

Chapter Two deals with the theoretical framework and situates the project within the

context of existing work in the field. In particular, it engages theories of education and

social reproduction, youth and adolescent identity development, social capital and

networks, race and ethnicity, migration and immigration and Latina/o studies.

Chapter Three establishes the methodological development and approach of the

dissertation. This project uses multiple methodological approaches to answer the

research questions established in Chapters One and Two. I employ qualitative methods

to answer the "How" and "Why" questions inherent in the overarching framework, in

particular, ethnographic and interview methods, creating a longitudinal ethnography to

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[10] These numbers are based on the number of students each year matriculating into "most selective" and "more selective" colleges, based on the U.S. News and World Report Annual College Rankings, 2007. By cohort, the proportion is as follows: 20% (2003), 25% (2004), 16% (2005), and 37% (2006). These numbers include those students who did not have definite plans to continue their education beyond high school.

[11] By comparison, of those CPS students who graduated in 2006, only 16.8% enroll in the most competitive or highly competitive four year colleges. Source: Department of Postsecondary Education and Student Development, Office of High Schools and High School Programs, Chicago Public Schools. Report dated Monday April 23, 2007.

accompany the longitudinal picture established in the various datasets that answer the more straightforward questions that quantitative data can answer about what the youth do over time, and how .

Chapter Four analyzes the institutional culture of the research site, setting the ethnography in relation to the social, cultural, financial, and institutional resources that the school offers its students. This chapter lays out the social context of the institution and mechanisms by which these forms of capital are disseminated within the school.

Chapter Five examines the role of ethno-racial identity and culture in the case study, both at the individual and school levels. Previous research has stressed the importance of racial and ethnic identity in youth's psychological development , their resilience against stereotypes that would lower their desire to be in vulnerable settings in which their minority status is heightened , and their models for potential selfhood . This section explains 1) how the racial and ethnic identities of the youth operate within the school context and 2) how these identities interact with their transition to college social contexts.

Chapter Six focuses on what happens during the transition from college for youth in the case study. Using matched data measures to the national study, this chapter examines how youth at this school experience this transition from youth to adulthood, from high school to colleges, from majority to minority status within their school. Unlike ELS and the city data, the case study has interview, ethnographic, and psychometric data to help us build a model for understanding how social capital and identity work in conjunction with institutional contexts to shape educational pathways for this urban, first-

generation college, mostly Latino sample. Given increasing research on social class and ethnic differences in post-secondary pathways , this analysis reflects on the social experiences of racial-ethnic minority youth after high school. This chapter begins with potential conflicts affecting transitions, for example, how families and friends respond to their desire to attend a liberal arts college out-of-state over the more accessible and cheaper city college near their neighborhood. It closes with the challenges and successes that youth face in their initial years at college, leading us from the "source of the river" through its initial journey.

Chapter Seven offers conclusions and implications for the study. The Appendices include extra data tables, survey instruments, and interview schedules.

Figure 1.2: Street adjacent to Grand Charter School.

Source: The photograph was taken by author in April 2005.

CHAPTER TWO:
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The relationship between social capital and the ethno-racial educational attainment gap has particularly engaged researchers in recent decades. The research literature presents three primary explanations for limits in the educational attainment of Latino and underrepresented minority youth: identity-related resilience and persistence challenges, resource shortages (e.g., failing schools, overcrowded classrooms, comparatively limited social capital), and performance of resistance culture . While the latter theory has been increasingly discredited , resources and identity remain primary explanations.

The field has concluded that both social capital and identity significantly affect the educational attainment of underrepresented youth, developing a well-documented relationship of each with educational attainment . Despite the importance which researchers have given to these issues, the operation of social capital and identity on educational attainment has yet to be theorized as an interactive mechanism, blinding us from accurately understanding these processes. This study addresses this problem in our field, presenting a theory of how social capital and identity work together to affect the educational, socioeconomic, and social trajectories of youth. To understand and contextualize this study, we turn now to a broader framework.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND INDIVIDUALS

Numerous foundational texts in the field of sociology have asked the following question: how and by what means does society affect the individual and the nature of social life?

Mead offers her analysis of how cultural systems affect adolescence (1934). With greater theoretical and methodological complexity, we continue to engage this question in contemporary research. Studies of culture, institutions, and social networks enable researchers to increasingly understand how individuals are, and are not, shaped by the social and opportunity structures in which they are embedded. This dissertation contributes to these theories by positioning the research question and the methodology to respond to existing theoretical models for understanding how social institutions (e.g., schools) affect the life course of individuals. This interdisciplinary project integrates theories from sociology to psychology to anthropology to develop this framework.

YOUTH AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Western adolescence has been theorized as a period of storm and stress, and even crisis . As scholars refocus their attention on global and shifting notions of adolescence , high school remains associated with adolescent stress, exclusion, self-doubt, and challenges to identity, in particular for youth occupying ethnic or racial minority status .

Psychological and Anthropological Perspectives

Evidence has found that the identity and role negotiations associated do not cease at sixteen or eighteen, the end of traditional adolescence and also of American secondary schooling. Rather, seminal research across social science disciplines has found support for extensions of this *liminal* period between childhood and adulthood known as "youth" or "emerging adulthood" . High school and college students learn and modify their

cultural values during this period development of adolescence and its extensions into early adulthood. Erikson explains the critical tasks of adolescence as "crisis",[12] whereby the transition from adolescence to adulthood necessarily involves reconciling one's ambitions with those of the cultural community in which he or she has been reared, and that community's expectations of adulthood .

Phinney and colleagues have extended Erikson's work to a theory of *ethnic* identity crisis, contending that resolution of ethnic identity conflict is essential for ethnic and/or racial minority youth to prepare for healthy adulthood . Marcia extends from Erikson's work as well, theorizing four major identity statuses that occur during identity development: 1) Identity diffusion, in which adolescents have not explored alternate potential identity roles; 2) Identity foreclosure during which youth have made some commitment to an identity, but without undergoing moratorium; 3) Identity moratorium, or crisis, in which youth consider their identity choices but have not committed; and 4) Identity achievement, in which youth have emerged from identity moratorium with a committed identity.

Taken together, these theories suggest that the optimal path for minority youth interested in integrating into mainstream society would be to minimize internal disconnect between these two cultures while maximizing their ability to navigate and actively participate in both their community of origin and the broader culture in which

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[12] Erikson defines identity crisis as "that period of the life cycle when each youth must forge for himself some central perspective and direction, some working unity, out of the effective remnants of his childhood and the hopes of his anticipated adulthood; he must detect some meaningful resemblance between what he has come to see in himself and what his sharpened awareness tells him others judge and expect him to be" (Erikson, 1993 [1958]: 14).

they live, study, and work. The relevant literature reveals a consistent finding that for minorities in the U.S. and similar Western societies, having a positive evaluation of one's ethnic-racial group while positioning oneself towards opportunities outside one's community provides an optimal pathway towards well-being and academic and career advancement.

The Sociological Perspective

Youth act as a bridge between one generation's norms and values and that of the next, and are alternately positioned as agents of change in the social structure and participants in its reproduction. In particular, sociological studies of youth have focused on their role in participation in resistance subcultures and how the institutions in which they participate and the behaviors in which they engage tend to reproduce the social structure .

This complex stage of development can be stressful for youth, not simply because of the "*storm and draung*" long associated with Western adolescence, but because of the particular and compounding pressures of ethnicity, race, and social change that youth negotiate. This stress seems particularly relevant for my socioeconomically mobile sample. By better understanding how they resolve this tension between their ambitions, their families, their community allegiances, and their developing identities, we can better understand where and why minority youth get on and get off the college express train.

Although psychology and anthropology have historically been the primary domains of research on the role of identity in adolescent development, sociologists have engaged in adolescent development and identity formation as well . Portes and Rumbaut

present a theory of segmented assimilation, with differential patterns of acculturation along ethnic and racial orientations. Waters presents a complementary framework of assimilation patterns of young West Indian females in Brooklyn, explaining the comparative success of the "ethnic" identifying youth in her study, who resist American racial categories, decidedly not participating in what they view as "downwardly mobile" urban minority culture but also decidedly holding on to their cultural heritage and resisting mainstreaming .

In this vein, Neckerman, Carter, and Lee advocate the theoretical development of more dynamic models of race, ethnicity, and class, in particular, "minority cultures of mobility." The authors argue that theorists must increasingly recognize that although African Americans and other groups have been underrepresented in the middle-class, they are increasingly occupying these spaces and in effect living in upwardly mobile cultures. Relating these theories back to youth, Carter's "cultural straddlers" model is useful in thinking about how upwardly mobile youth might engage in both dominant and racial-ethnic minority cultural capital . This dissertation focuses its lens on "minority" youth attending an institution promoting upwardly mobile educational ambitions and norms which have traditionally belonged to the dominant, majority culture. This study facilitates insights into how the youth do and do not align with the ethnic, racial, and acculturation models presented above.

Social and cultural psychologists have reached similar conclusions as the sociologists, although from different starting points. Horton and Shweder find that "ethnic conservatism," holding on to one's ethnic culture of origin through middle and

later age, facilitates greater well-being (2002). In various papers and books, Ogbu develops a cultural model for academic behavior according to their ethnic and acculturation orientation . His model positions two kinds of minorities. "Involuntary minorities" (e.g., African Americans) became incorporated into Western societies because of violent colonization and have often developed "oppositional" orientations toward the hegemonic dominant cultures, causing them to resist socioeconomically beneficial norms, behaviors, and educational and occupational opportunities; "voluntary minorities" (e.g., black West Indians) achieve greater socioeconomic success because they or their families came to the U.S. by choice and, according to the theory, are therefore more oriented towards values and models of the dominant society . Ogbu's work has since been largely disputed, with many of his claims about "acting white" and "oppositional behavior" found not to be exclusively exhibited in "involuntary minorities," nor consistently found among the involuntary minority population of youth .

Nevertheless, cultural and social psychological models such as Ogbu's have heightened research attention into the ways in which culture, and to an extent, society, affects the behavior of individuals. Oyserman et al argue that racial-ethnic minority youth who imagine themselves and their worlds using both the frameworks of their minority in-group and the culture of the "larger" society are most resilient against identity endangerment such as both stereotype threat and academic disengagement, both of which can result in detrimental outcomes . In psychological terms, such a youth could attain an integrated, holistic sense of self – both ethnic and sophisticated in navigating mainstream society. Higher education has been demonstrated to be valued in many minority cultures,

including not only Asians but also African Americans and Latinos. The Ogbu model of oppositional culture has not been found to fit the data on the educational attainment gap . Cultural psychological work on this problem does however illuminate the merits of integrating psychological and socio-cultural frameworks to get at the problem of persistent class and ethnic stratification in the educational outcomes of youth.

This work has produced theories relating youth identity to their behavioral outcomes, including education. "Self-identities and ethnic loyalties can often influence long-term patterns of behavior and outlook" (Aleinikoff & Rumbaut, 1998: 16), such as the occupational and educational trajectories of youth. High educational attainment becomes easier to pursue when peer networks share such goals, particularly when the social capital shared across these networks bridged by other minority peers . This dissertation employs a longitudinal case study of a high school population to build upon and engage this work.

Education and adolescent identity development are inextricably linked in that youth tend to experience identity crisis (sometimes crises) during secondary, and post-secondary, schooling. The relationship between the norms of the schooling environment and the norms of the non-school community of youth jointly serve as sites in which they evaluate their personal and educational goals in relation to the culture of their childhood. Whether ethnic youth choose to, or are able to, engage both their ethnic community and the larger society during their adolescence significantly influences their paths to adulthood: both for their personal cultural trajectory and their educational schooling trajectories.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, STEREOTYPE THREAT AND SELF-SCHEMAS

Social psychological models have demonstrated the means by which self and social

structure affect youth in educational settings . Building on this work, I believe that my

findings will support the theory that the social psychological context of youth's

development acts as an important factor in their matriculation and retention into college.

College graduation is not presently a social norm for many Puerto Rican, Mexican, and

other minority youth, in particular for the predominantly first-generation college

population of the high school in this study. Given this, it is necessary to ask the following

questions: How does the school transmit change in the expectations of youth and their

families? How early did this expectation emerge? How do youth interpret the norms and

values transmitted from their social relationships?

Having an insecure ethnic identity can foster avoidance of situations in which one's

identity could be threatened, thus connecting social phenomena to psychological

responses. Steele maintains:

> "Having a social identity that can elicit devaluation in a setting that one wants to
> belong to causes conflicting motivations of the sort that W.E.B. Du Bois may
> have had in mind when he described the 'double consciousness' inherent in the
> African-American experience.... The resulting ruminative conflict coupled with
> the threat of devaluation in the setting stand as ongoing pressures against, at the
> very least, a full engagement in the setting, and at the most, the ability to endure
> it at all" .

Concern about others' social evaluation of one's abilities can therefore lead to avoidance

of situations in which one is a devalued minority who might meet their lowered

expectations.

Racial-ethnic self schema theory maintains that youth follow a script for behavior based on their beliefs about how a member of that group tends to act, akin to following to a self-fulfilling stereotype for their racial-ethnic group. Oyserman et al explain racial-ethnic self-schemas as "organized generalizations about the self" (2003) which range from aschematic (*not* viewing oneself in terms of one's racial-ethnic in-group), in-group schematic (primarily viewing oneself in terms of one's race-ethnicity), dual schematic (viewing oneself in terms of both the in-group and society at-large), and minority schematic (viewing oneself in terms of both but also actively fight against racism directed towards minorities). They find that minority youth employing either of the latter two self-schemas (dual and minority) tend to be less vulnerable to threats against their ethnic identity, in particular, stereotype threat (to which they theorize that aschematics might be most vulnerable) and academic disengagement (to which in-group schematics might be most vulnerable) . These theorizations about the most vulnerable groups have yet to be supported.

This study may find support for such arguments by examining their behavior in relation to their ethnic identity scores[13] and their academic attainment. The skills facilitating minorities' upward mobility could potentially isolate them from members of their own group and lower their sense of well-being. "Racial-ethnic minority" cultural capital gained within minority communities has been established as being valuable to minority group members, allowing them to code-switch and reside effectively in both communities . Although this capital does not *in isolation* better one's educational and

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[13] Ethnic identity scores refer to Phinney's Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), which will be detailed later in the chapter.

occupational trajectories, it can affect these outcomes indirectly. In my study, racial-ethnic minority cultural capital is most powerful among youth who exhibit cognitive dissonance between their aspirations towards professional careers and their discomfort in situations in which they are minorities.

Code-switching between one's minority culture and the social norms of the academic culture (effectively employed by one of my respondents, Grand School's Puerto Rican valedictorian) allows youth to be successful socially and academically, maintaining a high academic trajectory while also establishing psychological well-being through their identity development. In the formation of these "minority cultures of mobility", both dominant and racial-ethnic minority cultural capital can be assets to youths' ability to excel while protecting their developing sense of self.

These related theories suggest explanations for why black and Latino youth might avoid both advanced-level high school courses – which prepare them for college – and applying to universities in which they would be the minority. In both of these situations, according to the above theories, youth would feel vulnerable to both their own and others' expectations that they would not succeed in areas (such as complex mathematics) in which members of their group do not traditionally do well. Further, the theories of code-switching and informal cultural capital explain in part how youth do the double social, cultural, and linguistic work necessitated by these dual ethnicities (minority and majority), putting new meaning to Du Bois's concept of double consciousness . Youth who successfully navigate these worlds are burdened not only by the gaze of the Other but also by trying to excel in two cultures, each of which may distrust the other. This

double work is not the focus of this dissertation, however repeated moments in both my respondents' secondary schooling experience and their college decisions reflect these conflicted burdens, which are painfully absent from analysis in much of the literature.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital has received significant research attention, so much so that the concept approaches theoretical unwieldiness, its popularity hampering its utility in research and theory . This study situates itself among recent inquiries into the more precise operation of social capital, in particular, the process by which these social resources affect the opportunities of traditionally educationally disadvantaged youth. The relationship between social capital and the ethno-racial educational attainment gap has particularly engaged researchers in recent decades.

Research has shown that the interrelationships among social groups convey and maintain social norms, expectations, and sanctions for behavior that deviates from these norms, performing these social functions through complementary social interactions between group members and their relationships outside the network . These norms, expectations, and sanctions comprise social capital, the resources available within social groups that can enable individual actors to attain their goals and interests . This study operationalizes social capital as resources gained through social relationships, shared through social networks, and mobilized to promote social norms and expectations. The predominantly Latino high school in this study facilitates capital-rich social networks and enables analysis of their operation in relation to academic mobility.

Social capital has received significant research attention however the concept has become theoretically unwieldy, endangering its utility in research and theory . This dissertation situates itself among more recent studies of its operation, examining how social resources affect the opportunities and behavior of individuals. Social capital has been found to be neither beneficial by necessity nor necessarily positive. Sandefur and Laumann maintain that social capital operates by "functionally specific" means, such that resources originate in social structures and provide particular benefits for individuals, if beneficial at all, in relation to the *particular* capital being shared. Although closely-knit communities such as immigrant enclaves and Catholic schools tend to have high degrees of social network closure which can promote neighborhood stability and collective efficacy, the social capital that promotes upward mobility tends to circulate across higher-income networks and is less readily transferred within isolated networks and communities . Bourdieu argues that education inherently yields social reproduction because success in schooling correlates highly with cultural capital, the skills and knowledges associated with middle- and upper-class culture, a form of social stratification that is compounded by generations of class status and race .

Socio-economically segregated communities have limited social relationships with middle class social networks and gain limited access to information about better schools and how to pursue professional careers, information less readily transferred to lower income youth. The connections that children and their families have to educational resources greatly determine their opportunity to enter better schools, educational and social programs, and later career paths. Intergenerational closure and reciprocal

exchange of social capital between families, adults, and organizations in a community are associated with the degree to which surrounding neighborhoods generate collective efficacy for children, the expectation that their collective efforts can produce effective outcomes . Residents' ability to access and activate social capital from loose ties to external networks (such as relationships with teachers within schools) can surmount social capital limitations within one's primary networks. Such research points to the collective psychological benefits of social capital on youth.

The relationship between social capital and well-being comprises the central focus of this paper. This study examines how an institution promotes and disseminates social capital amongst its constituents to promote high educational outcomes, by activating this capital to align the ambitions of the student, the network, the family, and the institution towards higher education . The social and social psychological contexts of schooling serve as instrumental factors in the effects of social capital on the educational trajectories of these ethnic minority youth.

LATINOS AND IMMIGRATION: NATIONAL AND LOCAL UNDERSTANDINGS

This dissertation addresses two persistent problems in the demographic study of Latinos, particularly in regards to how Latinos compare to other ethno-racial groups in their educational attainment. First, analyses of Latinos in the U.S. are insufficiently rigorous without attention to the national origin group's particular economic, social, racial, and colonial histories in relation to the U.S. population of Latinos. Second, my study carefully controls for and measures the effects of generational status, which is too often

conflated in the study of Latino education. My survey instrument accounts for the specific generational status of each respondent's parent and four grandparents, making explicit the circular migration patterns and age of entry which have been demonstrated to be meaningful to educational outcomes .

Recent Latino immigrants to the U.S. have considerably different challenges in accommodating to the educational and socioeconomic cultures of the mainland United States, as opposed to Chicanos[14] and even later-generation Latino migrants to the U.S. Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in my study tend to be within a couple of generations of migration to the mainland U.S. My research site, situated within the city of Chicago, facilitates an analysis of how Latino youths' positions with regards to race, citizenship, and minority culture speak to their unique challenges in the U.S. environment , disentangling the effects of culture of origin and generational status.

Puerto Ricans are a people without an independent nation-state who nonetheless have a strong sense of national identity. Although Ogbu and Simons classify Puerto Ricans as "involuntary minorities" because of their involuntary colonization by the United States, Puerto Ricans voluntarily migrated for work and opportunity. This migration was often circular, made easier by citizenship; however most migrants made the mainland their home. Collectively, Puerto Ricans' residential segregation from whites persists , even after language barriers fell, and even though their American citizenship did not keep them out of jobs and schools. The study of attainment differences in Latino education too often focuses on linguistic differences. Although language legitimately

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[14] Chicanos are Mexican-Americans who became incorporated into the U.S. because of annexation, rather than immigration (cite).

poses an educational problem for many Latino youth, the majority of Latino youth speak English fluently. Although we must acknowledge the importance of language for migrant youth, and do account for language acculturation in the study[15], this study focuses on the social and psychological parameters of educational attainment.

Mexican[16] and other recent Latino immigrant populations appear to closer fit the model of ethnic mobility established last century. The economic and political climate may be wary of increased immigration through Mexico; however the predominant posited threat to American society is their competitiveness for jobs because of their work ethic and illegal immigrants' lowered brokering power for fair wages . This threat is quite contrary to the stereotype of laziness ascribed to Puerto Ricans and African Americans . Given this difference in perceived willingness to work, their concerns when faced with identity threat and racial-ethnic self-schemas (see above) should be meaningfully different.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

This dissertation utilizes a charter school population with high access to cultural capital, quality teaching, high educational expectations, social trust , and strong peer networks with shared expectations . This design enables us to examine how racial-ethnic minority

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[15] I account for language acculturation and use in the survey instrument.
[16] By Mexican, I am only referring to immigrants from Mexico and their recent descendants. I am not referring to *Chicanos* nor Mexican-Americans from the Southwest, whose history with the U.S. is more complicated and more closely resembles that of Native Americans than of migrants and immigrants.

cultural capital[17] and social capital in ethnic, urban communities relates to educational

attainment and ethnic identity, with good schooling and high expectations as a mediating

condition. Ogbu and the oppositional culture theories using low motivation and value on

schooling have been largely discredited .

High school sophomores hold high expectations for their educational attainment,

across racial and ethnic groups, (Appendix II, Table 1; Schneider & Stevenson, 2000),

begging the question: why do racial and ethnic differences persist in *actual* educational

attainment? Latinos are more segregated than any students in the country and are less

likely to graduate from high school or college than any other group; they graduate from

college at a rate 60% smaller than that of non-Hispanic whites and half that of all other

non-Hispanic groups (Appendix II, Table II). This disparity suggests that something

happens to youth during their secondary school education that effectually discourages

minority youth from pursuing higher education at the previous expected levels. The

widening of the attainment gap between blacks and whites in the 1990s suggests the

need for theories that connect this sociological problem to the psychological experience

of the youth that are being left out of the occupational and economic opportunities

afforded to them by higher education. This dissertation speaks to these larger social

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[17] Dominant cultural capital and racial-ethnic minority cultural capital are reformulations of Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, taking into account the worth of cultural capital as it exists in local and ethnic communities. Racial-ethnic minority cultural capital is the skills, norms, knowledges, and attitudes shared and transferred among close social groups that do not, at least directly, promote success in the dominant, white culture. For example, these include ways of talking, acting, and communicating ideas that enable participation and success in that racial-ethnic minority culture. Dominant cultural capital is the skills, knowledges, norms, and attitudes that promote success in the dominant culture, such as familiarity with classical music, participation in the arts, rich vocabulary in the dominant language, and participation in learning outside of the classroom.

processes within a focused study of how Puerto Rican and Mexican-American youth evaluate their educational options.

CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

This dissertation contributes not only to theoretical concerns about research puzzles but also theoretical concerns about how to address these puzzles. Research methodology in the social sciences has risen beyond how-to-manuals to theoretical work on interpretation , hierarchical modeling , and causal inferences, from qualitative as well as quantitative data . With these advances emerging simultaneously with a research and policy climate increasingly oriented toward quantitative, large-scale research, there is reason to defend the mixed-methods analytic work that can be done with case studies. Case studies, thorough examinations of a limited number of research sites, are uniquely positioned to explain emerging research in areas poorly or insufficiently understood, or from alternate frameworks. These studies need not be less scientific than larger, quantitative studies, but rather have this distinct aim .

This mixed-method dissertation examines issues which have been studied extensively – frameworks around the ethno-racial educational achievement gap. There are three primary reasons for using case study methodology for this dissertation's research question. First, the aspirations, identities, and social networks of youth have been demonstrated to change so readily that even multi-wave survey data points suffer from significant gaps in their potential for gaining understandings of the operation of these factors in the pathways of youth. Second, ethnographic and interview data allow

for richer understandings of youth's perceptions of these processes and for understandings of the particular contexts in which youth are embedded, contexts which extensive work has demonstrated to be highly significant in this regard. Such qualitative data cannot however provide objective, comparable measures of youth's actual enrollment, grades, social class, and other important demographic characteristics; there are shortcomings in the measurement of aspirations, identities, and networks as well. Third, the extreme majority of studies of the educational attainment gap have been on black-white differences, with increasing attention to children of immigrants, in particular, Mexicans. As evidenced in my study, set in Chicago, ethnicity and generational status are more nuanced and mixed than the established theories and major datasets consider. In this examination of a predominantly Latino high school, this study combines the quantitative self-assessments of ethnicity and generational status with ethnographic and interview analyses of the operation of these factors. This integrated, longitudinal mixed-methods study is situated in this case study framework and demonstrates the potential gains from case study methodology, from examining individuals within a full study of their embeddedness in a social structure.

CHAPTER THREE:
METHODOLOGY

This study examines the social mechanisms behind the persistence of the ethno-racial educational attainment gap. Decades of scholarship on these issues notwithstanding, eminent scholars across the social sciences continue to pursue research agendas that address these issues. Using integrated ethnography and survey methodology over a three year period, this dissertation presents systematic analysis of the mechanisms behind this gap. In particular, this study examines the social mechanisms undergirding the secondary and post-secondary educational pathways of working class, first-generation college youth. I employ case study methodology to study this process at multiple levels of analysis. The particular ways in which this capital is generated and transferred sheds light on theoretical and practical puzzles of minority post-secondary educational attainment and expectations for their futures.

This research is situated within local and national reform climates around educational opportunities for youth. Grand Charter High School (*pseudonym*) presents its students, selected by random lottery, with a college preparatory schooling environment and curriculum. Respondents were recruited from the authors' participant observation as a math tutor, academic club facilitator, and observer of multiple classrooms and school events. The desire for four-year degrees and post-baccalaureate degrees runs disproportionately high within the school, beyond both the educational trajectories of their elementary school peers and the level needed for their intended occupations. The data explains how social ties within the school population provide protective effects that

help to sustain the youths' aspirations and actual educational attainment. For those students who fail to realize their expectations, the longitudinal data enables an explanation of the mechanisms behind the reasons why their dreams "just don't work out."

RESEARCH DESIGN

This project grew out of my Masters' research on the relationship between ethnic identity and educational expectations among urban Latino youth in New York City. Using interviews, surveys, and observations, I analyzed identity and educational aspirations among forty-eight Puerto Rican and Dominican high school students participating in a Latino-focused leadership program in New York City, most of who most attended one of three magnet high schools. Of these schools, two were in the highest tier of New York City magnet schools. The third school was a newer high school, with lower college placement rates and lower test scores.

The results of the Masters' study demonstrated the operation of stereotype threat on the youths' sense of well-being and their educational trajectories. A more intriguing and unexpected finding was the positive correlation between majority minority peer culture at one's high school and high academic aspirations. Sampled youth from the premier magnet high schools (with fewer Latino and black schoolmates) reported lower occupational and educational expectations than those of the lesser regarded, newer magnet school. The demographics of the student population of this school and those of

the ethnic community in which it was situated (East Harlem, N.Y.) more closely reflected the students' ethno-racial backgrounds.

From the results of this pilot study, I concluded that the social composition of the school, and potential differences in available social supports at this school, contributed to the marked differences between the students' experiences of stereotype threat. The data suggested that lower levels of social support and higher rates of stereotype threat-inducing encounters at the majority white and Asian magnet schools could be lowering its students' educational aspirations, despite the greater academic and professionalization opportunities available at these top magnet schools. Conversely, the mechanisms behind the higher aspirations at the majority ethnic magnet school could be driving the social supports, and perhaps in part, the comparatively lower experiences of stereotype threat. These hypotheses which emerged from the Masters' study informed the design of this Doctoral study.

I focus the research on a comprehensive study of a school. I selected my research site using publicly available city of Chicago data on racial and socioeconomic composition to match the highly segregated ethno-racial and class makeup of Latinos' school experience. To investigate the dimensions of ethnicity, race, and immigrant generational status required a school site with a high proportion of Latinos of varied generational and ethnic origins. To investigate the central question of the study – the operation of social capital on educational outcomes – required a school site with sufficiently high graduation and postsecondary matriculation rates to study the variance. From this search, the Grand School (*pseudonym*) in Chicago emerged as the best

candidate.[18] This school recruits low-income urban students from the predominantly Latino community in which it is situated.

RESEARCH SITE

This case study of the educational trajectories of ethno-racial minority youth in a public urban preparatory school examines the social experiences of the youth at school, in their communities, and in comparison with their national counterparts. Grand School selects students based on a lottery and serves youth with a range of academic skills, ranging from high to remedial, such as being unable to perform at a seventh-grade level in mathematics. Most students are in the prior category, having attended magnet and Catholic elementary schools and often having applied to other specialized high schools (ethnographic and survey data, 2005-2006). The first four graduating classes have gone on to college at about a 94% rate, including many top tier universities. Nearly all of these students are the first generation in their family to attend college.

This dissertation employs fieldwork, interviews, and sociometric survey techniques to study the social and cultural context of the aspirations of Puerto Rican, Mexican, and other ethnic minority adolescents attending a majority Latino college preparatory charter high school in Chicago. Of those youth who matriculate, nearly all are first-generation college, of recent generation of migration to the mainland U.S., live in working class communities, and have limited social access to one or both parents because of either work or relationship constraints. Many were already on a pathway to

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[18] I mask the name of the school to protect the respondents; the actual school title contains a positive virtue in its name as well.

college, having attended a magnet, parochial, or specialized program prior to Grand School. Nonetheless, upon and after graduation, dramatic differences are made manifest. Despite comprehensive summer school and after school programs designed to catch less academically prepared students up to their higher tier peers, about third to a fifth[19] of the class transfers out of Grand before graduation: to less demanding high school or community college, to a suburban school, or out of the school districts. Even among the top-tier students, many experience difficulties in transitioning for college, difficulties which speak to their social background, resources, and psychological confidence in their abilities.

I hypothesize that this majority minority environment of highly motivated peers aspiring to professional careers and higher education, combined with the academic and social resources that the school provides, will counteract the resource gap faced by underrepresented youth at otherwise similar schools. My ethnographic and school graduation data generally supports this finding; however, attrition rates both within Grand and upon admittance to college suggest a more complex trajectory. The social support facilitates a strong sense of ethnic and overall identity and health (survey data), but this support will not follow students to their destination colleges and occupations. In this study, I measure how social environments such as their school, peer networks, and community bolster students' resilience in environments in which they might feel vulnerable. Later waves of the data reveal the degree of postsecondary persistence of this effect.

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[19] This transfer trend has decreased with younger cohorts at the school.

Although longitudinal datasets such as ELS 2002 and Add Health allow for increasingly sophisticated analyses of how youth's educational ambitions and social networks change over time, the nature of the data does not enable a full analysis of the cultural contexts in which these youth are developing. Previous ethnographic case studies of these contexts rarely follow youth over time, particularly with quantitative measures which provide both precise information about the sample and the larger metropolitan and national sample to which the case study can be compared. This study bridges these methodologies and presents a case study of a predominantly Latino high school which facilitates such social networks and enables clear analysis[20] of their operation in relation to academic mobility. Using a school and city data in addition to a longitudinal survey instrument, this dissertation presents an interdisciplinary analysis of racial-ethnic minority youth in their secondary schooling environment and their transitions to college and/or work.

COMPARISONS: LOCAL AND NATIONAL

This dissertation employs two comparison groups to address selection bias and to situate the work in the context of the metropolitan environment and the national picture of youth. First, the Chicago public school system has granted me limited access to their new postsecondary education dataset, following all CPS students over time through high

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[20] My data set captures students' academic tracks in reference to mathematics courses, whether or not they have taken Advanced Placement Courses, how attached they are to their school by involvement in sports and extracurricular activities, whether or not they are engaged in academically-oriented clubs, how important grades are to them, how important they think grades are to the friends in their networks, and how significant academic and non-academic factors are in their decision-making about where or whether to go to college.

school transfers and college. Using college loan data, they follow incoming cohorts of high school freshmen though college. Comparing Grand School students to their peers with this data, I am able to compare the youth to their peers in the city as well as at high schools with similar ethnic compositions, resources, and college placements. This analysis allows for discussion of both student outcomes and also schooling contexts. By comparing Grand students' longitudinal trajectories to those of these similar types of schools, we can theorize about what aspects of the school culture are more or less beneficial for racial-ethnic minority students.

The second comparison uses nationally representative data from the National Center for Educational Statistics. NCES's ELS 2002 dataset, the questionnaire from which the case study questionnaire is based, allows for an examination of the national picture of educational transitions over time. The national dataset matches parent and teacher questionnaires to those of the students, enabling a richer understanding of how resources are engaged at the level of the youth, the parent, and the teacher. I will use this data in comparison work to explore differences between students in their occupational and educational expectations and college outcomes (National Center for Educational Statistics: ELS 2002 First Wave Report).

SELECTION EFFECTS

Grand students come from varied educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. The Renaissance 2010 and prior school reform initiatives in the city of Chicago have created a number of viable school alternatives to neighborhood schools, from selective magnet

schools to culturally-oriented schools to dropout-prevention alternative school programs to discipline and norm-oriented charter schools. These range of options and array of high school recruitment in elementary and middle schools minimizes the degree to which those students who take the time to apply to and attend high schools other than their neighborhood school differ from those who attend their automatic, application-free neighborhood school. Even with these options, it is necessary for us to consider and control for selection effects, because parental and student differences continue to exist between those who apply out of and those who attend their neighborhood school. I am not able to fully control for these differences however I consider these differences carefully and make cautious claims accordingly.

The random lottery method of entry into the school provides the potential for comparing the educational outcomes of those who were accepted into Grand against those who were not accepted in through the lottery, functioning as a natural control group that would allow me to evaluate the educational effects of attending Grand versus not attending Grand (but rather attending some other high school). Had I had access to the names of students and student account numbers who applied and did not get in, I would have been able to avoid the selection bias problem because both groups would have consisted of the set of students who applied that year to Grand. School officials collect and retain information about sender elementary schools for the years studied and the number of students who matriculated each year from the lottery (see Tables 1.3 and 1.4). Grand *currently* keeps a record of the names of the students who applied to the school

through the lottery but did not matriculate. Unfortunately, this record has only been collected for recent cohorts, not for the students in my study.

I attempt to minimize selection bias by four methods. First, from the lottery data that I do have, I account for the types of schools from which Grand applicants originate. Second, I have gained access to the Chicago Postsecondary Data for Grand in order to track what happens to Grand students who matriculate in the first year but transfer or stop out during the course of high school. At this juncture, I am still negotiating means to fill in missing data and data irregularities from the data which I have been granted, a problem for which I will continue to pursue a resolution in advance of further publication of work from this dissertation. Using hazard modeling techniques, I would evaluate a) how each year of education at Grand increases respondents' educational attainment, b) what kinds of colleges students who leave Grand attend, in comparison to those who finish at Grand, and c) demographic differences between those who stay and those leave Grand before graduating high school. Third, I have collected self-report data on students' previous schooling and their reports of where they would have attended had they not been admitted to Grand School. I have broken these down into three categories: neighborhood school, magnet program, and parochial or private school. Finally, within the survey, I ask students over a series of questions to report how they decided to attend Grand (e.g., whether a sibling attended, whether a friend attended, whether their parent(s) preferred Grand to the neighborhood school, whether a teacher recommended Grand, etc.). This information allows me to present the ways in which social capital prior to entry might have affected selection into the school.

This dissertation does not attempt to make direct claims about the relative academic success of the school itself in comparison to other Chicago high schools. Rather, I only go as far as to compare the student-level outcomes to those of their peers at similar institutions. I do discuss and theorize how the qualities of the school and the success of the students could inform educational reforms in highlighting the effect of social capital through peers and adults at the school and in respondents' social environments beyond Grand. I argue that the interaction of the school's academic, social, and personal development programs, both intentional and otherwise designed, are critical for our understanding of how the social context of the institution operates in relation to student outcomes. This dissertation should not and cannot however be read as an evaluation of the school itself.

SELECTION INTO THE SCHOOL

Students vary in their reasons for attending Grand. Parents are often cited as the reason, with many parents preferring the small school and the expressed care and concern of the administrators who pitched Grand at their students' middle schools and Grand open houses. Grand appeared to them to have the individualized attention that private schools could offer, but that the parents either did not consider or could not afford. Many students preferred Grand and made the decision either on their own or in collaboration with parents. Although some students enrolled in Grand because they did not get into their first choice, one of the prestigious public magnet schools in the Chicago area, many students chose Grand over these schools. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 break down the differences

across class years. The reasons differ slightly by cohort, as the school became more established. Interviews revealed common descriptions of the feeling which they described getting from Grand, as opposed to the feeling that they got at the magnet schools -- i.e., they felt like a number, they got lost, they received attitude at the other schools, etc. Students with such accounts reported feeling more comfortable at Grand, a process which incorporates perceptions of reception by class, race, and ethnicity. This process will be discussed in the next chapter.

When interviewed about how they came to Grand high school, students report variations on similar stories, which fall into one or more of the following explanations. For some, a relative or neighbor recommended the school to the student's parent(s). For others, they encountered the school as one of several which distributed brochures or gave presentations to their eighth grade classes.

MEASUREMENT MODEL

I hypothesize that the social environment of the school contributes to student respondents' high ratings of ethnic identity and physical and emotional health. I examine potential indicators of identity threat in the study at four levels. First, my ethnographic work examines the operation of race and ethnicity within the school. Although the majority of students are Latino, a small minority is a member of another ethnic group. Most of these students are also within a couple of generations of migration to the mainland U.S., from nations including Jamaica, Poland, Russia, and China. The ethnic and racially specific ways in which Puerto Rican and Mexican youth interact with these

other ethnic youth illuminate their sense of affiliation with an particular national origin group a pan-ethnic group (such as Latino or Hispanic), a racial group (such as "white" or "*morena*" [brown]), or an assimilated identity (American). My interviews capture identity at a second level of analysis. As explained above, how youth interpret their position in society significantly affects their educational and occupational trajectories and potential for socioeconomic mobility.

Finally, two sections of my survey instrument look for identity threat. The first is Phinney's Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) which quantifies the stability and resilience of ethnic and racialized ethnic identity within individual respondents, targeted towards adolescents such as those in my study . Extending this analysis of ethno-racial identity, I test for student respondents' self-evaluation of physical and emotional health, their academic and overall worth, and their teachers' opinions of their academic worth. The final test also comes in the survey, in a series of questions about their decision-making with regards to college applications, including specific items asking students to rate the importance of racial diversity in their college application decisions. This comprehensive study of youths' development of their sense of identity, well-being, and assessment of academic worth could illuminate the process by which racial and ethnic identity development intersect with the development of one's overall sense of self, and further, evaluate the effects of these developmental trajectories on youth's expected and actual educational attainment.

To distinguish social capital effects from other factors contributing to student outcomes, I examine the following secondary questions. How do ethnic identity strength,

resilience, and commitment affect where youth attend college? How do generational effects and ethnic history affect a) ethnic identity resilience and b) educational outcomes, in particular for the Puerto Rican and Mexican youth which comprise the majority of this sample ? What are the effects of family structure, gender, and their interaction on the respondents' decisions about attending college away from home, using distance from home city and parental marital status as indicators? Similarly, how does social network closure affect youths' willingness to leave that social group for college? How well do social networks explain youths' college choices? How do the respondents' sense of academic worth and their academic and occupational ambition affect their educational pathways: no college, 2 year college, 4 year college, or selective 4 year college? Do students have a clear and informed sense of what kind of education they need to achieve their occupational goals? Does their ambition align with their educational plans?

ETHNOGRAPHY

Months of requests and struggle to get their attention and permission to do research ended favorably, in part, it seemed because of my social position. Although Grand opens itself up to stories from the press (e.g., The New York Times) and enables reporters to interview students, the principal was reluctant to have a researcher present. After receiving phone and in-person meetings with school officials, including a prestigious committee member, I gained entry. I was asked to introduce myself to students and staff at a town hall assembly meeting early on, and specifically to pitch my research position in terms of my personhood, that I would be observing classes and interviewing some of

them to learn about how they make decisions about college and work. It is worth noting that the principal asked me to couch this research in a presentation of my biography, as a Puerto Rican female from New York with a prestigious educational pedigree.

Although I have not been explicitly employed as a role model for students these past years, the principal was and continues conscious of my potential as a resource. As late as the fall of 2007, the third academic year of my study, he asked me about my future as a professor and the possibility that I might be the professor of Grand students in college. He smiled at his suggestion of their college graduations from universities where I might teach. Like Grand teachers, I play a dual role in the school with both my primary position (researcher) and a secondary, implicit role as a social and academic resource for students.

My ethnographic data collection consisted of participant observation in various roles over time, to best leverage my time to gain deep understandings of the school culture. Over three years, I collected sixty-five distinct classroom and event observations over hundreds of hours (2005-2006) and participant observation as an algebra tutor (2005) and mock trial team facilitator (2006). I supplemented these observations with sixty interviews of students, alumni, and teachers (2005-2007). I engaged in participant observation amongst a range of courses and levels throughout the school, however half of my fieldwork focused on mathematics courses, which both teachers and students reported to be the source of the greatest academic struggle for the youth. This context allows me to examine the operation of identity in relation to particularly challenging learning situations in which youth would be more vulnerable to identity threat.

LONGITUDINAL SURVEY ANALYSIS

To connect these social and psychological hypotheses for youth behavior, I designed a survey instrument that would capture the relevant variables to test these explanations on youth over time, over two waves of analysis. The author constructed the primary survey instrument in the study, the Grand Education Longitudinal Survey (GELS 2006), to offer comparable data to its national counterpart, the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002. The National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) implemented the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS 2002 hereafter), with the intent to provide national trend data about the "critical transitions experienced by students as they proceed through high school and into postsecondary education or their careers" (NCES: http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ELS2002/).

This multi-method study analyzes ethnographic and interview data in combination with the first two waves of a longitudinal study of 15-20 year olds, The Grand Educational Longitudinal Study. The GELS instrument enables an analysis of students' reported ethnic and racial identities in relation to their post-secondary plans and their responses about the degree to which race will be a factor in their college applications. This instrument maps on closely to the National Center for Education Statistics' Educational Longitudinal Survey (ELS), first administered in 2002 . Following the ELS format, I will assess students' longitudinal development in relation to their occupational goals, work habits, attachment and participation in their school, and their expected and actual educational attainment.

This longitudinal assessment will provide a much richer and more accurate understanding of *how* students' trajectories change over time. I will also continue to collect the social network data (built into both GELS and ELS survey instruments) and the items particular to GELS: the MEIM measure, the health and well-being measures, and other items relevant to the school population. Using ELS further allows me to compare GELS students and their controls (students who applied to Grand through the lottery but went elsewhere) to the national populations for Mexican, Puerto Rican, and other youth, as well as current and future studies that will employ secondary analysis of the ELS dataset.

This multi-method study will collect and analyze the first two waves of a longitudinal study of 10th-12th graders, The Grand Educational Longitudinal Study of 2006 (GELS: 2006). This analysis relates students' ethnic identity to their post-secondary plans and their responses about the degree to which race will be a factor in their college applications, employing the Multiethnic Identity Measure as our primary measure of identity. The author further considers student respondents' self-evaluation of physical and emotional health and their academic and overall worth, and how they believe teachers' to regard their worth.

VARIABLES

This multi-method study collects and analyzes the first two waves of a longitudinal study of 10th-12th graders, The Grand Educational Longitudinal Study of 2006 (GELS: 2006). This analysis relates students' ethnic identity to their post-secondary plans and their

responses about the degree to which race will be a factor in their college applications, employing the Multiethnic Identity Measure as our primary measure of identity. I further consider student respondents' self-evaluation of physical and emotional health and their academic and overall worth, and how they believe teachers' to regard their worth.

Social class, as defined by three measures. First, using a homeownership variable with three possible responses signifying whether or not the family owns or rents their home (*Own, Rent, or Don't know*). This variable has high variability in the population (predominantly Latino families in the Northwest and Western communities of Chicago) and the sample. Second, the ELS survey offers a scale determining social class, as designated by significant possessions in the home. Binary response items regarding owning a DVD player, dishwasher, and having one's own room designate social class. The qualitative data allows for more nuanced measurements of social class for individual students

Cultural capital. The ELS and GELS surveys provide a cultural capital scale using binary response items regarding owning 50 or more books in the home, subscribing to a magazine, and subscribing to a newspaper to designate cultural capital in the home. As with social class, ethnographic observation and interview data capture richer measures of cultural capital, as observed in the school and as described by students.

Reasons for attending charter school. Students are admitted to Grand School based on a lottery system, with recruitment focused most heavily at elementary schools and communities on the Northwest Side of Chicago. We recognize that the study sample

presents selection bias issues and account for the particularities of the parent and student population that signed the youth up for the charter school lottery. A seven-item series in the GELS questionnaire probes for students' reasons for attending Grand School, including whether the decision was self-motivated or from a parent, teacher, or other outside source. Following this series are two open-ended questions capturing another piece of the selection bias problem: 1) where they attended school prior to Grand (PRIOR) and 2) where they would have attended had they not been admitted to the Grand School (HSOTHER). These variables are further useful to the Grand School. PRIOR and HSOTHER can also be incorporated into the network analysis, illustrating the social networks that existed before students entered Grand.

Ethnic identity, as measured using two scales. First, Phinney's widely-used Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) tests for search, affirmation, belonging, and commitment in a fourteen-item question series, matching the respondents' responses about their search, affirmation, belonging, and commitment to their ethnic group to their open-ended response about their ethnicity. Second, the author probes for ethnic identity descriptions and meaningfulness in the interviews and in her ethnographic observations of dress, speech, and use of ethnic symbols during celebrations such as Puerto Rican pride week. Additionally, the social network analysis offers insight into their ethnic identity by detailing the network structure of their social groups, including their change over time, along with their ethnic identity's change over time, as they are positioned for new changes.

Race is defined by three measures. First, respondents' self-identification in the survey, mirroring the Census race question. The overwhelming majority of Latino respondents have answered "Other," claiming neither white nor black nor mixed ancestry. Caucasian, Black, and Asian respondents tend to answer this question using existing race categories. Census data demonstrates that adult Latinos form a different distribution, with about 40% (check) selecting Other, 50% selecting white, 7% selecting two or more races, and 2% selecting black . Second, the interviews probe for respondents' experience of racialization as it relates to their life experience and their future plans. Third, the social network data measures race as defined by one's peer group. Preliminary analysis of the eleventh and twelfth grade data shows that 1) respondents avoid classifying themselves and their peers by race if they are Latino, generally leaving the race questions blank, making the most common race category in the survey: "Other: Latino, recoded from blank;" 2) when the race category is used for Latinos, it is sometimes used incorrectly, such as several selected responses for Hawaiian or Pacific Islander for a Latino friend (Latino-ness known by experience and also flagged by a Spanish surname); and 3) race is accurately and readily described for respondents and peers who are Asian, black or African American, and/or Caucasian, as seen most powerfully in the racial categorization of a biracial (black and white) senior male, described as such by all peers who classified him in their peer group.

SUMMARY

This dissertation uses three primary methods to answer the question: how does social capital within a school institution interact with individual attributes to affect post-secondary educational outcomes? This question engages the broader research on how social structures affect individual behavior. To study these complex processes which happen over time, I use longitudinal ethnography of a school, a longitudinal survey, and complementary quantitative analyses of city and national data.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIAL CAPITAL MECHANISMS: MOLDING URBAN MINORITY YOUTH INTO COLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

Grand's school charter professes a bold mission: "changing lives."[21] Marketing their

school as this life-changing institution, teachers and administrators frame their endeavor

as one that social scientists could interpret as an attempt to intervene in the process of

social reproduction. This chapter argues explains the social interactions which operate in

the school's purported effort to achieve this idealistic goal of upward mobility through

higher education. Although American schooling has historically been associated with

social mobility, schooling has been demonstrated to serve as a mechanism for

reproducing the social structure, for perpetuating class hierarchies and the means by

which "working class kids get working class jobs." In explaining the perpetuation of

social and racial inequalities in the educational system,[22] theorists have argued,

convincingly, that youth analyze what they view to be a system closed to mobility

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[21] This narrative emerges in extended conversations with faculty and is made visible in the school's printed materials and website.

[22] Although the educational system's tendency to reproduce social inequality has long been documented and recognized, it remains purported to produce upward mobility and equal opportunity for all. It's the best chance for low-income kids, including the new U.S. President and First Lady, and it remains a source of hope. Numerous scholars have explained the cultural and even nationalist socialization purposes of schooling, in particular, public schooling. For example, Bourdieu argues that success in schooling correlates highly with cultural capital, the skills and knowledges associated with middle- and upper-class culture, a form of social stratification that is compounded by generations of class status and race. Pierre Bourdieu, "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction," in *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*, ed. Richard Arum and Irenee R. Beattie (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing, 2000).

options for members of their groups and thereby resist, forming an "oppositional culture"

of resistance to the power structure which effectively and intentionally takes them out of

contention for upward mobility, thereby contributing to the very perpetuation of

inequality against which their resistance was targeted.[23]

Such resistance culture could find fertile ground at Grand. In the endeavor of

delivering a college preparatory education, Grand intentionally resembles these elite

college preparatory schools, employing the following tools to replicate prestige aspects of

their school culture: a Latin-language school motto and emblem prominently displayed

the hallways (Figure 4.1) and on official school materials and merchandise, dress code

consisting of school logo-bearing shirts and khaki pants and shirts, prep school sports

offerings such as rugby, disciplinary honor code oriented around earning merits and

demerits, heavy coaching (here by teachers rather than private coaches) towards

performance on college placement examinations such as the ACT, a school day organized

around long class periods and a rotating course schedules (A and B days) more akin to

prep schools and colleges than that of even high-achieving public high schools,

cultivation of dominant culture styles for communicating with adults,[24] and, finally,

whenever possible, the school incorporates "College Prep" into its name. To accomplish

the goal of training working class youth to become college preparatory graduates, the

school attempts to bridge the cultural and social advantage gap between the Grand

student population and their advantaged prep school peers. Grand thus engages in

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[23] Create and insert table of students' connections to school – sibling, friend who went there, teacher recommendation, compared to school type that they say that they previously attended and would have attended. But this discussion should be had in introduction?
[24] This will receive greater treatment later in the chapter.

systemic socialization to train its low-income,[25] urban, under-resourced,

underrepresented ethnic and racial minority students to develop the cultural skills of their

considerably higher social class would-be future college peers.

Figure 4.1. Empty hallway on first floor, featuring school seal and partial view of college map.

Employing its constructed community to do this work,[26] the school's institutional

culture thus replicates the cultural norms, values, codes, teaching resources, and

appearance of private college preparatory schools.[27] The primary difference: their

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[25] Chicago Public School data records about 78% of the school as low-income by their definitions, which I delineate in footnotes in Chapter 1. Examining parents' job titles and students' descriptions of their home life however, the population seems to at least equally fit a working class description. Students' parents are mechanics, sales representatives, factory workers, secretaries, seamstresses, substitute teachers, security guards, babysitters, repair technicians, and similar jobs of this type. While there are outliers – a very small proportion of students whose parents are store managers or

[26] For lengthier discussion of constructed communities, see: Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 1985), Peter Kuriloff and Michael C. Reichert, "Boys of Class, Boys of Color: Negotiating the Academic and Social Geography of an Elite Independent School," *Journal of Social Issues* 59, no. 4 (2003).

[27] Between 2001 and 2003, I worked for the Prep for Prep college preparatory program as a counselor for underrepresented middle and high school students attending several magnet and private college

student populations. By and large, preparatory schools educate the privileged class. Most preparatory students enter high school with high-quality academic training, high levels of parental and family educational attainment, high socioeconomic status, high levels of dominant cultural capital (embodied education in and ability to perform in the dominant culture), and social networks that include useful information and mentoring linkages.

Sociological models have demonstrated the importance of examining how negotiations of social structures and social identities interact in educational settings. Situated within this subfield and within an urban charter high school, this chapter examines the operational mechanisms by which social capital might enable disseminated instruction of both academic and cultural college preparatory training intended to prepare working-class urban youth for imagined college and professional futures. Socially-exchanged norms, expectations, and sanctions for deviating behavior comprise social capital . Both primary forms of social capital – social closure and bridging social capital – operate in Grand's efforts to attain its mission.

To do so, Grand leverages the social trust formed with its students and their families by utilizing mechanisms for creating a highly ordered social world. This social order functions as a mechanism to enable college preparatory academic and cultural instruction to be thoroughly disseminated, not just to the academically strongest students at Grand, but to all of its students. This process begins inside the school and extends

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preparatory day and boarding schools in New York and Massachusetts. While spending 25-30 hours per week at these prep schools and meeting with 60-65 students per year, I developed considerable knowledge about preparatory school culture.

from the walls of the institution to its faculty, staff, and students. To understand this process, we must turn to a discussion of the concept of social capital.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social capital serves two distinct and complementary functions.[28] First, it can bridge across structural holes in a social network , a function of demonstrated value whereby weak social ties serve as a means of sharing resources . For example, for high-aspiring, low-income youth who have grown up in segregated schools and communities, considerable assistance could be gained from social connections to educated and professionally successful individuals in their social networks, even if youth share only limited interaction(s) with such hole-fillers in their social structure.

Second, social capital can relate to relationships within dense social networks whose members' strong social ties and social support linkages generate social closure, or heavily reciprocated ties within the network. Resources shared within such bonded networks facilitate both goal-attainment by institutions and individuals and the alignment of individuals to the goals of the institutions in which they are embedded.[29] For example, social capital within a dense, socially enclosed social network could be used to facilitate mechanisms for social controls and normalizing educational expectations and behaviors.

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[28] For a more extensive review of the literature on social capital and its forms, see Chapter Two.

[29] Social capital has been found to be most powerful when it is functionally specific, in other words, when the content of the shared capital matches its desired outcomes. See Rebecca L. Sandefur and Edward O. Laumann, "A Paradigm for Social Capital," *Rationality and Society* 10, no. 4 (1998). The importance of aligned [educational and occupational] ambitions has been developed by Schneider and colleagues. Sources: D. H. Kim and B. Schneider, "Social Capital in Action," *Social Forces* 84 (2005). Barbara Schneider and David Stevenson, *The Ambitious Generation: America's Teenagers, Motivated but Directionless* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

Grand School employs social capital – in particular, social closure – to induct into, instruct in, and wield the power of a decidedly college preparatory institutional culture intended to grant a college preparatory education to a population of youth that have historically not realized their high educational aspirations.

METHODS

This chapter primarily employs ethnographic and interview data, collected over a three year period. Classroom observations were conducted during two time frames: between May and August of 2005 and between April and May of 2008. Between December 2005 and May 2006, I served as a facilitator for an academic team, including travel with the team, further informing my ethnography. Interviews with school officials, teachers and students were conducted over the three year period of the study, with most interviews conducted in the summer of 2005, spring of 2006, and spring of 2008. Additionally, this chapter makes use of special event participant observations: the June graduation of 2005 and an alumni reunion party in the December of 2007.

RESULTS

It would be reasonable to conclude that first-year students at Grand know what they are getting themselves into when they start their first week of school, based on their entry procedures prior to their first day as a Grand student. Before enrolling in the fall, certain requisite steps are taken. In eighth grade, young people at least scan a brochure about the school and attend an open house at the school, apply to the admissions lottery, and

engage in at least one interaction with the principal to learn of and accept an admission offer. Early cohorts were mandated to participate in a remedial "boot camp" academic summer school program, to get those with low placement test scores up to speed with their future peers. Those whom I interviewed all had thoughtful answers about both why they enrolled in Grand and how it has measured up to their expectations, whether or not it was initially their decision.

Although some students enrolled in Grand Charter School because they did not successfully gain admission into one of the magnet schools in the Chicago area, many Grand students were admitted to those schools but chose Grand instead. The following excerpt from an interview with Evelyn Santiago, a senior, explains her reasons for selecting Grand School over more prestigious and equally tuition-free alternatives:

> I: How did you find out about Grand?
>
> Evelyn: (Pause) Well, actually, I found out about Grand through the pamphlet (pause), through the paper that I was reading about colleges.
>
> I: How did you get the pamphlet? Do you remember?
>
> Evelyn: All I remember is having a stack of papers of high schools and that one just stuck out to me. I don't know; I just liked it. I had the grades and I had the scores to get into [Magnet School B] but -- I actually got accepted and went to take the tests and stuff -- but I, I just, I went to an open house and I didn't like it because it, um, I went to [Magnet School C] too, and in [Magnet School B] *and* in [Magnet School C], the people there, the *kids* there, and even the teachers were kind of snotty and they were kind of like, yeah, we're the best, and I wanted a school I could just chill and be relaxed in.[30] And when I came to Grand, I already knew the majority of the people here since I didn't even know they were going to Grand. I was kind of like, whoa, you go to Grand? And even the teachers -- they weren't like snotty. They weren't like, yeah, Grand's number one. It was just like, this is what we offer.

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[30] Magnet High School B is one of the most prestigious academically selective enrollment public high schools in the city of Chicago. 99% of graduates go on to college. The student population is racially diverse. Admission is based on entrance exam performance and elementary school grades. They accept 20% of their applicants to open spots in their freshman class. Grand admits about 50% of its applicants however it does so by lottery, not taking grades or academics into account. Magnet High School C has a similar profile to Magnet School B; it also enrolls students on a highly selective academic basis.

Interviews suggest that the feeling which students got from Grand, as opposed to the feeling that they got at the magnet schools (i.e., they felt like a number, they got lost, they received "attitude" at the other schools, etc) made those with such accounts feel more comfortable at Grand than at the magnet schools which she interpreted as expressing superiority over her and, implicitly, her background. Such students might select Grand in order to access the college preparatory curriculum without the "snotty" culture of the magnet schools.

Table 4.1: Reasons for Enrolling at Grand, by proportion of respondents

Reasons	Yes	No
Sibling went to Grand	24.8	75.2
Friend went to Grand	25.8	74.2
Rejected from other schools to which applied	29.7	70.3
Elementary school teacher recommended Grand	34.5	65.5
Small school	38.1	61.9
R didn't think neighborhood school good enough	48.0	52.0
College chances would be better at Grand	48.6	51.4
Parents didn't think neighborhood school good enough	55.5	44.5

Notes: The totals do not add up to the complete list of students asked to respond the 2006 Wave I (baseline) survey, due to missing data in Wave I both at the respondent and item levels. N(Class of 2006) = . N (Class of 2007) = . N(Class of 2008) = 130.

Table 4.2: School which respondents report that they would have attended if had not gotten into Grand, by school type and class year

	Class of 2006	Class of 2007	Class of 2008
School Type			
Catholic School	4	7	4
Charter School	0	0	1
Selective Enrollment High Schools	5	11	20
Selective Enrollment or Neighborhood School	3	1	1
Neighborhood High School	39	49	73
Private	0	1	1
Don't know / Not sure	8	6	7
Other	4	1	2

Notes: The totals do not add up to the complete list of students asked to respond the 2006 Wave I (baseline) survey, due to missing data in Wave I both at the respondent and item levels. Examples of other were: home school, anywhere but here, no where (2), drop out, suburban high school, my mom wouldn't let me apply anywhere else).

Students enrolled in Grand for various reasons, ranging from prior social connections to Grand – through teachers, siblings, or friends – to their own assessments that their neighborhood high school was "not good enough" (Table 4.1). When prompted about which school she would have attended if she had not been admitted via lottery into Grand (Table 4.2), a sophomore high-achiever wrote the name of her neighborhood high school followed by a sketch of a sad face. Despite such expressions of ambivalence and preference away from their neighborhood high school, the overwhelming majority of students report that they would have attended their default neighborhood public high school had they not been admitted to Grand (Table 4.2). The highest ranking reasons for

enrolling at Grand were (1) their parents deciding that their neighborhood high school was not "good enough" (55% of respondents) and (2) their assessment that their "college chances would be better at Grand" than at another high school, with a popular magnet high school listed as an alternative example (48.6% of respondents cited this as a reason for their enrollment).

Evelyn did not regard her choice to enroll in Grand as an educational status sacrifice: selecting away from an established, high status school to a local charter school which had not yet graduated a senior class. Rather, she chose between schools with strong curricular offerings (AP courses, good teachers) which either posed imagined challenges to her identity or did not pose such challenges to her identity. This relationship between school culture and potential identity threat merits deeper levels of analysis.

In preferring a school in which she could "just chill and be relaxed," Evelyn is not referring to academic demands. She took the most challenging classes the school offered and was consistently in the "top" academic track of the school. Her teachers praised her academic talents. Over the course of a series of conversations and a formal interview, her only academic complaint about Grand was that her math classes were too slow and were not hard enough. It stands to reason then that Evelyn would be up to the academic challenges of the prestigious magnet schools. She even attended a magnet program during the last years of her elementary program.

Why then would Evelyn be concerned about any imagined threat to her academic identity as a high-achieving student, remembering her discomfort vividly, four years after

these incidents? Perhaps because her concern did not emerge from doubts about whether

or not she had the academic skills to handle the academic challenges of the magnet

schools, but rather whether the culture of the schools would foster an environment in

which she could be herself and go to school, without the distractions of the "snotty"

superiority of a school culture, a school culture which did not demonstrate a safe cultural

environment in which low-income, ethnic-identified, first generation college youth could

be themselves while training for college.

Table 4.3: Previous school attended by respondents, by school type and class year

	Class of 2006	Class of 2007	Class of 2008
School Type			
Catholic School	6	11	4
Charter School	2	1	2
Regional Gifted*	6	1	7
Magnet	13	14	21
Magnet Cluster	28	32	53
Neighborhood Elementary or Middle School (Standard)	0	2	1
Neighborhood High School	0	3	1
Neighborhood Elementary School (Designated "Open Enrollment")	4	8	14
Private	2	2	4

*The primary regional gifted school attended has both a regional gifted program (specialized for English language learners) and a standard neighborhood school program. The data does not enable disentanglement of which program students attended. All students who noted prior attendance at that school are coded under the "regional gifted" category.

Notes: The totals do not add up to the complete list of students asked to respond the 2006 Wave I (baseline) survey, due to missing data in Wave I both at the respondent and item levels.

Table 4.4: Students' Self-Report of Importance of Grades to Self and Closest Friends

Reference Point	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
To Self	0.8	24.2	75.1
To Friend 1	2.5	24.6	73.0
To Friend 2	4.6	29.0	66.4
To Friend 3	4.9	28.7	66.4

Notes: The totals do not add up to the complete list of students asked to respond the 2006 Wave I (baseline) survey, due to missing data in Wave I both at the respondent and item levels.

As noted in Chapter 1, Grand School recruits from a range of schools, from magnets to low-performing public schools.[31] However, responses from the sophomores through seniors at Grand surveyed in this study reveal that by the spring of tenth grade, a heavy majority of enrolled Grand students come from either magnet or magnet cluster elementary schools (Table 4.3). This underscores the degree to which Grand's lottery application-based student body is comprised of many students who have already been involved in intensive, above-average urban educational instruction geared toward higher education. On the whole, Grand's students are less-educationally disadvantaged than the administration would make them out to be. Grand is "changing lives" of a student population which has a high proportion – two-thirds of respondents – who by evidence of their previous educational enrollment were already on a path to beating their

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[31] Source: publicly available Illinois State Report card information on sender schools.

demographic odds of dropout, low achievement, and low rates of college matriculation and graduation.

Comparing these figures to the lottery application figures presented in Chapter 1 yields two conclusions. First, that early on, prior to the spring of sophomore year, students who are less oriented toward the goals of Grand fall out of the system, most often through transfer to another high school or residential moves out of or within the city, based on discussions with teachers. Second, that Grand's student body has been so primed – both from their previous educational setting and from the selection process into the school – means that students who remain at Grand attend a schooling environment that, while majority minority, is heavily oriented toward high educational attainment. 75.1% of student respondents in tenth through twelfth grades report that grades are "very important" to them, and report nearly as high importance for their three closest friends, in particular their closest friend (Table 4.4).

The remainder of this chapter will describe the social structure of the school and argue that its highly normative, achievement-oriented environment produces strong affiliation to the school and its goals which could explain what subsequent chapters reveal to be potential protective effects on students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, ethnic and racial identities, and both educational expectations and attainment. Although most – and certainly not all – students might have had the educational tools and drive to presumably do well with Grand's rigorous academic program, prior schooling within application-based school programs need not prepare students for the non-academic developmental and social challenges to educational aspirations that emerge during high school.

Evidence discussed in Chapters Five and Six of the academic, personal, and socioeconomic struggles which restrain Grand students' educational and career ambitions demonstrate a need to carefully consider the social supports which become so critical to the students' educational pathways.

Social capital generation

> "To you graduates, you are the best. At meetings and conferences, people will say to me: Grand has the best scores because you get the most money. Actually, I tell them, 'that's not true; we get less money than other schools.' (*In other man's voice*): 'Well, okay then, they say, you have the best schools because you have the kids with money.' (*The audience laughs, as does Mr. Schurski*). (*Schurski as self*): 'Well, no, not at all. You can come to the school and meet our families. We definitely do not have a lot of kids with money.' (*More laughter*). (*As other man*): 'Well, you have the kids with the best training.' (*Schurski as self*): 'No, no, we take kids from everywhere, just like a regular public school, and a lot of people don't make it and some have to leave (*some laughter*) but those who stay do really well.' (*Other man*): 'Fine, then you have the best scores because you have the best kids.' (*Schurski as self*): Well, there I can't really argue with him. 'Yeah,' I say, 'we DO have the best kids.' (*To audience*): You have come so far and done so much. I am – and we all are – SO proud of you."
>
> -- Principal Schurski, June 2005 graduation

This study does not evaluate the reasons why students do well at Grand, or even whether they do as well as the above quote would suggest. Rather, in this section, I posit social capital as a mechanism by which students participate in a normative environment, and how the relationships formed within this normative school culture engage students in the mission of the school. The area of greatest student consensus about their school was a conclusion that they were cared about, whether they focused this discussion of care on the teachers, their teacher-advisors, or the principal. The line between familial support

and social support in the school gets blurred not only by the kind of language evidenced above by Principal Schurski, but by the students about their teachers, and, to a degree, about their student peers.

During that same graduation, valedictorian Graciela Muros spoke extensively and with tears about how over their years at Grand, they had become like a family which, together with her mom and younger brother, a sophomore at Grand, had sustained her through difficult times. We in the audience turned and looked at her mother in the audience, nodding and holding her rosary in her hand, with tears streaming down her face as well. That fall, Graciela enrolled at [Top 10 Local Research University A], where she was a junior.

The majority of Grand's college preparatory student population enrolls with low levels of parental and family educational attainment, low socioeconomic status, low levels of dominant cultural capital, and social networks with limited access to the college graduates and professionals who mentor and coach middle-class and higher social class youth and their families through the high school to college transition. For all students however, someone is motivated to get them into Grand, whether that person is a parent, sibling, aunt, uncle, a teacher in their elementary school, or the student themselves. Some initial commitment forms at the outset, through the lottery process, creating enrolling cohorts of students for whom at least someone has "bought into" the project of the school. For students who are less convinced, teachers or principals tend to bridge the gap, serving as students' first conduits to the school, attachments which build into greater social connectedness and trust.

Steven Smith, an African American student, was another initially reluctant enrollee who preferred South Side magnet and neighborhood schools over Grand but was convinced to attend by his mother. Asked to reflect on his initial thoughts about Grand, he told me matter-of-factly: "The first couple of days I was here – first, I thought it was gonna suck. I didn't know anyone here. But then I met other teachers and they were really nice. The first day of school, they told us everything that we needed to do, and that was everything that you needed to succeed." At the time, Steven was fifteen and a rising sophomore. When we next spoke, in May of his senior year at Grand, he was ranked in the top third of his class and was deciding between several selective four-year college offers. Social trust – primarily established through teacher-student relationships – could align students to adapt to the disciplinary regime and normative social order of the school, and to allow the school to mold them, to varying degrees, into college prep students.

Building trust

Building trust occurs at the architectural level. To see this, let's turn to these spaces. Recruitment open houses are held in spaces that communicate prestige. The elegance of the Grand cafeteria and the impressive adjacent theater space demonstrate both status and disciplined care to the prospective families that encounter the school for the first time. The cafeteria's chandelier and large fifteen-foot high bay windows beckon in an air of grandeur. Sunlight streams in through tall windows which allow only moderate amounts

of urban noise into the room. Lunchroom chatter builds only to a manageable din.

Freshman Robert Suarez explains his first impressions of Grand as follows:

> "It was clean. I liked that. And there was nothing chipping off the walls. I
> really liked that. It was organized and, for a small school, it looked like it was
> so advanced. It had technology labs and it had vending machines which seemed
> to me -- it appealed to me. And what I really liked was the lunch room because
> there was a chandelier there that made it feel classy. That's what I liked about
> it."

The prestige written onto these halls, combined with the intimacy of their first

interactions with school officials, breed in youth and their families a sense of trust in the

institution.

For the cohorts of students in the study, Mr. Schurski was the initial face of the

school to potential families.[32] For students who were initially waitlisted for Grand but

were later accepted, Mr. Schurski delivered the congratulatory call. For example:

> "I didn't think I would get accepted because I was seventh on the waiting list
> and I was *so* sad. I was so depressed because I didn't think that I was going to
> get in, but, I mean, I was only seventh. Then Mr. Schurski called my house and
> he talked to me and my mom. So I thought that was really nice, that he already
> knew our names and he was willing to extend that greeting, to come back and
> give us another chance, or give Grand another chance. So, and then the size
> also. They were displaying how all their sophomores could go to college in the
> summer, and I wanted to be a part of that, and how Grand was getting a good
> reputation and um, I wanted to be a part of that." [Michelle, 17 year old senior]

Relaying stories about the circumstances around their high school matriculation, students

explain that their mother's trust in Mr. Schurski and in the small staff of the new school

gave them confidence that their children would do well if they enrolled at Grand.

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[32] Following the expansion of the school into a network of schools midway through this study, Mr.
Schurski became president of the network, positioning him into a more removed but stronger supervisory
role. Mr. Schurski retained office space at Grand, and shares his administrative office with, among others,
the current principal of Grand. Principal Sam Preston, fluent in Spanish, was promoted from teacher to
principal during my study, a role in which he continues to serve.

Another mode by which Grand fosters trust is through the parent-school relationship. Grand promotes itself as a small college-preparatory school that will take good care of its pupils, which sells many parents on the school. Students particularly cite their mothers as being impressed by the small school environment and enrolling them into Grand because of the safety, discipline, and care that they expected that the school would provide to their child. Families seem to trust the institution with their children and support its goals, which involve nurturing particular ways of being to promote this end.

Even students who enter the school with ambivalence tend to acquiesce as well. Jonny Martinez, a senior at Grand, explained that he "kind of didn't want to" attend Grand "because of the dress code and the rules." He preferred his local public school or a large magnet school that his older siblings attended and to which he was also accepted. He finally enrolled in Grand "really more for [his] mom." Once he arrived however, the teachers influenced him more positively toward the school. "My first day here was good. I met a lot of the teachers, fun teachers. Well, Mr. Thomas was one of the fun teachers that I had. So I really liked all of it." For students who had trouble adjusting, teachers were cited as making their adjustment better. Seventeen year-old Iris, a senior, describes her difficult adjustment to Grand as follows:

> "Well, I never wanted to really come here, just 'cause I knew it was strict. [She had just explained wanting to attend [Magnet High School A], like her older brother.] But I mean, freshman year, I hated it just because you know, I mean, kids can make high school, any high school bad. I had problems with a lot of the students because a lot of them didn't like me, even though I wasn't mean or anything. But Grand, in general, is not a bad school. They try, in general, they try really hard to - to make you feel like you fit in. You know, emphasize that it's a small school and that ... teachers are there to help you, which they are, if you want to be helped."

By her senior year, Iris had developed a close network of friends and had become

one of the academic stars, receiving a major scholarship to an elite liberal arts

college. For her as well, social support helped to sustain her persistence through

Grand.

Figure 4.2: Math teacher with students during in-class problem solving session

Figure 4.3: Humanities classroom

Buffering against vulnerability

A rising senior at the time of our first interview (2005), Vanessa Santana did not get in

off of the lottery the first time around. Although she could have applied to other potential

charter and magnet schools, she only applied to Grand and made the waitlist. She

therefore enrolled at her neighborhood school for her first year, a school with high rates

of school violence and academic problems, which she discussed in the interview. Over

the three-week period during which I observed and tutored in Vanessa's Algebra 2 class,

she presented herself as an industrious and self-confident student with a small group of

close friends.

Vanessa Corral was the first in her multi-generational Puerto Rican family to

attend college. She enrolled at a highly selective state university a few hours' drive from

Chicago in her first year after high school, after which she transferred to local area

colleges to enable her to work and support her family, as she explained to me two years

later (2007) and anticipated in her 2005 interview. In the following excerpt (2005), she

explains her first experiences at Grand:

> Vanessa: It was different. .... HERE, it was very different because we had to –
> I had to adjust to the different type of work that they gave. It was more
> complicated; it was more challenging. The teachers were more aware of their
> surroundings and what was going on. Like, if you were slacking off, then they
> got on top of you. Like, 'You know what - I'm here at school. Come see me.
> I'm here to help you.'
>
> And that was the difference from here to there, because over THERE [at her first
> high school], it was like, if you're failing, that's your fault. You've got to pick
> yourself back up. So, you know, that's the, that's the, that's the changes that I
> like, a lot. The rules, I didn't like so much, because ... I was used to just
> wearing whatever I wanted to, you know, DOING whatever I wanted to,
> basically, and then over here, I had to get used to the rules that they had set. I
> had to get used to the school uniform, I had to get used to, you know,
> remembering to wear my belt, you know, having my shoes tied and stuff, so,
> you know. [...]
>
> I: So you've been here a total of two full years... at Grand School. How has it
> been in general for you?
>
> Vanessa: I, ugh, it's been a long journey. Umm, I just, I like it better here, you
> know, even though don't like the rules. I mean, it helps me a lot, academically.
> I've seen a big improvement, in my grades. Like, I used to have just Cs and Ds
> and then I shot up to As and Bs and Cs and my GPA went up. I'm not failing
> any classes, I'm keeping up with my schedule, keeping up with my homework
> and I even stay after school in the [peer tutoring program] to (pause) actually get
> help on my homework and I like the fact that they DO have that program,

> because it's, you know, it's people here helping you trying to – other students
> helping you, trying to help you do your work. And I like the fact that, you
> know, teachers are always available, you know, and they're -- if they're not
> available after school, then you could talk to them in the morning the next day.
> So that's – that's what I like about it."

Although the work, rules, and "long journey" are noted to be difficult and are not

embraced on their own, students repeatedly positively evaluate the social supports around

them – being watched and noticed, being offered assistance from teachers and peer tutors,

and other means to, in the words of Evelyn pick oneself back up. These analyses

reinforced each other again and again in interviews and survey items. When a severe

illness affected the academic and basketball high school career of Peyton Williams in his

junior year at Grand, pulling him out of school for three weeks, he credits his ability to

get back on track to his teachers.[33]

Of all of the students that I interviewed, he was one of the strongest advocates of

the values of his Grand education, to the degree that I told him during the interview that

he sounded like an advertisement for the school. In response, Peyton restated his

appreciation for his teachers and his peers who had helped sustain him during his

academic and health struggles at the school. In an actual advertisement of sorts for the

school, its 2005 Annual Report, a tagline featured the words of Evelyn Rodriguez, a

junior, stating: "I can honestly say that if it weren't for my friends and the teachers here

at Grand, I would have been a dropout. These people give me a sense of security that

guides me throughout my life. When I am falling, I think of Grand and I rise back up."

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[33] By May of his senior year, his grades were ranked around the senior class median, a 2.3 GPA.

Evelyn and Peyton demonstrate the critical role of social capital in the lives and educational pathways of these motivated students. Evelyn, who I first met in the summer of 2005 when I was observing classes, attached herself to me more than did any other student, in particular during her participation in the academic club that I co-facilitated during the 2005-2006 academic year; I witnessed her similarly attaching herself emotionally to two of her teachers. Students ranged in their degrees of vulnerability, from those who were buffered from upheavals to those who faced regular challenges – including financial instability, changes in their family structure, and residential moves, and even repeated homelessness in Evelyn's case. Peers and teachers play critical roles in buffering students from the potential impacts of these stresses, creating buoyancy to prevent students from sinking through the dense waters of academic, social, and identity negotiations of their Grand school years. The salience of teachers in this role generates potential tensions which largely do not emerge.

Bonding through teachers

Although one of Grand's major initiatives is its training of students in the cultural norms of college-educated society while in the company of their fellow working class ethnic minority peers, those who are doing the training, at least initially, are predominantly white middle class, college-educated adults. Two-thirds of the teachers are female. Seventy-one percent of the teachers are white and ten percent are Latino, whereas only *four* percent of the students are white and *83%* are Latino (Illinois State Report Card, 2006 for the 2004-2005 school year). I argue that tensions do not emerge because of

students' strong ties to their teachers, ties that allow cultural capital to be transferred from the teachers to the students.

Teachers, therefore, are important members of the Grand community. Teacher respondents expressed strong beliefs in Grand's mission, appreciation of the opportunity to give back to the community through their labor, and appreciation of the pedagogical freedoms offered them as teachers at Grand. Not tied by similarities in previous work experience, teachers form strong ties to the mission of the school and its leadership. These motivated teachers translate the abstract goals of the school to its students, through both their instruction and their personal interactions with them. Teacher's pedagogical backgrounds differ, with some coming straight out of college through Americorps programs, some transferring from several years of union teaching in traditional public schools, and some transferring in from other job sectors such as business management and accounting.[34]

Teachers' college alumni status marks their classroom doors. Just to the right of the doorknob, and below the small signs demarcating the room number and teacher name, college pennants announce the teachers' undergraduate institutions. These alma maters tend to be local selective universities, with both less highly selective and more highly selective universities dotting the remaining entryways. Students take note. Evelyn, a seventeen-year-old student at the time, remarked about her social studies teacher, Mr.

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[34] As a charter school, Grand does not need to hire union teachers nor conform to state and city curriculum conventions. I do not intend to advocate for the use of non-union teachers. Rather, these statements explain the diversity of experience that teachers bring to their teaching at Grand, much of which comes from outside of the public school system. [I came to know Grand faculty in my classroom observations, two all-staff meetings that I attended, and extended interactions with teachers and administrators between classes and after school.] – put in Methods chapter

Renstraum, "He went to Harvard, I mean, wow." Perhaps in part because of this high

visibility of college-related prestige, students across classroom levels and even

disciplinary conduct levels treat teachers, and peers, with respect.

This form of respect allows teachers to build strong, enduring relationships with

students. Each teacher acts as an advisor to a cohort of same-sex students whom they

follow throughout the students' four years.[35] Students meet daily in Advisory, a more

intensive version of a daily homeroom class. Advisory groups serve three purposes.

First, they create a four-year social group of peers matched by the alphabetical order of

their surname. This functions to generate a peer network within which peers exchange

aspirations, behavioral norms, and social support across members of varying academic

tracks. Second, this period functions as instructional time for advisors to teach lessons

about time management, using computers, and utilizing the available college preparatory

resources such as the omnipresent ACT workbooks. Third, this advisory group provides

consistent, four-year-long, same-gender mentoring for the students.

This mentoring often engages non-academic mechanisms to achieve educational

gains. Advisory groups go on retreats together. They serve as moral supports for one

another, as numerous students cited. These bonds border on the familial, creating school-

based family support systems. This can happen with non-advisory teachers at the school,

as in the case of one female student who referred to her favorite male teacher – the white,

Harvard-educated social studies teacher – as "the father I never had." Bonds between

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[35] This advisory system has been employed at private college preparatory schools and successful local college prep-oriented public schools such as New Trier Township School in the Chicago suburbs. – I don't know if this is a footnote

advisors and advisees develop most readily, as for example, with the advisees who hoisted their advisor into the air during an emotional moment in his graduation address, the advisor being one of only two black male teachers in the school, the English teacher who serves as the academic facilitator of the hip hop dance team.

Advisors become emotionally engaged as well, with several teachers explaining that their perceived four-year responsibility for their advisory group would keep them at Grand even if other motivations would lead them to consider moving or changing jobs. The advisory system furthers the commitment of both students and advisors to the goals of Grand. These relationships between advisors and advisees serve as primary facilitators of the exchange of social capital from the teachers to their students and from the students to their peers.[36]

Bridging knowledge networks

Because nearly all students will be first-generation college enrollees and are growing up without parents or guardians in white-collar industries, there are information "holes" in their social networks . Whenever possible, the school employs external social resources

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[36] Advisory group students pick up the motivational energies, interests, and talents of their advisors, bearing fruit to differential educational gains. One could theorize that students with advisors of their same ethnic, racial, or socioeconomic background would do better academically than those with advisors from backgrounds different than theirs. Based on observations however, this outcome does not emerge. [Rather, by graduation, personality and athletics emerge as predictors of higher educational outcomes for their advisory groups. Advisory groups with high concentrations of high achievers – student leaders, honor roll students, and students matriculating into four-year colleges – tend to be led by the more dynamic advisors, whose high-energy personas were manifested by their status as athletic coaches, periodic chants from their students (e.g., "Women!"), - what? explain sponsorship of outdoor retreats and activities, and impassioned speeches about meeting high expectations. These inter-advisory group comparisons will receive greater treatment in Chapter Six. Students with advisors that... (Micere) – make a teacher effects section!]

to model careers and futures for Grand students. Weekly Town Hall assembly meetings might feature performances from student groups, as they did during some of my visits. They are as likely however to feature speakers from the professional workforce, speakers with some relationship to the school, often times members or prospective members of the school's board of trustees. Lawyers, management consultants, investment bankers, and other such professionals have come in to talk about their career experiences and answer students' questions. At times, these professionals offer assistance as additional advisors in students' extracurricular activities, such as mock trial and the drama club. Further providing social connections to professional industries, students are encouraged to take in-school interviews with journalists interested in documenting the school's progress. Through these interview meetings, they learn more about the field of journalism, a field in which many seniors report interest.

Grand complements its social capital architecture introducing these professional resources to students, thereby filling in their "structural holes" which serve as social capital bridges to social resources outside of students' home networks. By building these resources into this strongly bonded, dense school network, students' social capital expands beyond the enclosed network of the school. This function complements the primary social capital mechanisms of the school, building up strong social closure through the strong bonds forming between students, teachers, families, and engagement with the college preparatory mission of the school. These embedded social ties should bond the school's actors into a shared enterprise, enabling the realization of the school's college preparatory cultural training mission.

Discipline and Instruct: The Birth of College-Going Culture

Held high above the bright front doors, a flag bears the school emblem. Inside Grand, disciplined order and prestige interweave to present spaces that resemble the interior of private preparatory schools. Unlike the overwhelming majority of Chicago public schools, and even the most selective magnet high schools in the city, Grand School has neither police officers nor metal detectors managing security.[37] Rather, the gatekeepers are two mild-mannered men in their 50s and 60s who alternate security duties just inside the front entrance, monitoring the frequent visitors more so than the students.

In the morning, we are greeted by a tall African American man, Mr. Johnson, in a dark blue security uniform. Looking as relaxed as possible in his small, wooden student desk chair, he wears a serious but warm expression. Students smile to him as they walk past to go to their lockers. In the afternoons, Señor Martínez, a quiet Latino man in his sixties, sits bent over the same desk, facing the stairs and front entrance. Both men function as a figure to reinforce a culture of order rather than as a force to manage security. Señor Martínez has frequent visits from Spanish-speaking male and female staff members who clean the facilities in the afternoons. They sit with him in student-sized plastic chairs, also placed facing the front entrance and any potential visitors.[38] These visitors – journalists, trustees and supporters, and potential parents and teachers – walk the halls and observe the classrooms, noting the well-managed but informally enforced academic order of the school.

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[37] Over three years of fieldwork and numerous formal and informal interviews, I have not heard of even the threat of disorder from a student fight nor any incursion from the gangs which reside in students' neighborhoods and a half-mile away. Grand is regarded as a safe space.

[38] As dismissal nears, some parents join this social group of Spanish speakers near the main door.

Constructing the College Prep Profile

Students wear cotton polo shirts and beige khaki pants and skirts, emulating the upper-middle class college preparatory style. The dress code allows parents and students to purchase student's clothing at stores of their choosing and which meet their budget. This freedom initially allowed room for stylistic interpretation of the code.[39] Over time however, there have been amendments. The administration has curtailed the use of baggy pants for males, large earrings for females, and other markers of urban and hip hop youth culture in favor of loafer-style shoes, pants and skirts fitted to the idealized prep school standard, and branded tops that promote the academic school culture of Grand. One female student, who had been the salutatorian of her class and an admitted student to the most prestigious small Ivy League colleges, explains the process:[40]

> Michelle: Freshman year, we all came in really dorky-looking with our polos buttoned and I just looked really bad and (pause) I hated it. [She laughs.] ... But then after a while, you find the little loops that they don't put in the manual, and you learn to get away with it. Yeah, I don't think I had any real problems with Grand itself, just with the uniform.
>
> I: What are the little loops that you got away with, with the uniform?
>
> M: Well, every time we would find a um, a loop, or um, a loophole, they would change the manual and we would get a new one. ....We didn't know that we could unbutton our shirts so we had our collar tied tight around our neck, and we let that go. .... And then we had, we had big earrings at Grand, but they cancelled that out. Like, shoes or pants, like, you could get nicer styles of pants, some that kind of resemble jeans but aren't: a little tighter, a little baggier. But we didn't know that, so we had like plain, like adult pants on .... [She laughs]

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[39] The dress code is significantly relaxed during the summer. Rather than wearing polo shirts and khakis, students are allowed to wear street clothes, provided that the clothes are appropriate, meaning: no tank tops, no bare midriffs, no pants that sit too low on the waist, no sandals (only shoes that cover at least one half of the foot), and no vulgar or suggestive language on clothing. Students regularly wore jeans, t-shirts, and summer blouses to school, most often with tennis shoes.

[40] Michelle Villanueva, a Puerto Rican first generation college student raised by her divorced mother and grandfather, along with two much younger siblings, enrolled the fall of that year in one of these extremely academically rigorous, competitive schools, in which she is currently a junior. We will learn more about Michelle's pathway in Chapter Five.

Michelle did not speak of this process in racial terms, even though codes of racial and

ethnic dress could presumably underlie these targeted substitutions. Rather, she and other

students coded these shifts by age, coolness, and academic professionalism.

Figure 4.4. Sports in action: girls' basketball team during a game against another school

Cultural instruction through propaganda

American and British college preparatory schools have long emphasized involvement and

participation in athletics, in part because of skills that these sports are purported to

promote: determination, cooperative teamwork, confidence, and drive for excellence.

These attributes are blanketed in print throughout the school through 16" x 20"

motivational color posters in the hallways and the classrooms: bold block letters flash

"PERSERVERANCE" under the impressive figure of an ice climber throwing his axe

into the side of a glacier, in what looks to be bitter arctic conditions. Other posters read

"MOTIVATION" and "TEAMWORK," with matching dramatically inspirational

images.[41] Such salient messages are both too omnipresent and too explicit to be called subliminal. Rather, this passive instruction evokes the feeling of an elementary school classroom, reinforcing the remedial nature of the intended instruction in the performance of being a good college prep student.

Inside classrooms, additional messages surround the space, functioning both to encourage the development of stronger academic skills and to keep students, and teachers, on task. Some messages are simply rules. For example, in the computer rooms, rules for email use are posted, instructing students that email can be used only if the teacher has first been notified, and then for the sole purposes of working on homework, asking teachers questions about homework, or working on college applications. The most common messages however are instructional and serve one of two functions. One type of message delivers general academic behavioral instruction. Often displayed by small mobile-like posters hung from the ceiling, positioned about where students' eyes would go if their minds were to wander during class, these behavioral messages deliver shorthand notes on how to pay better attention in class, take notes, or how to talk to teachers. For example, the following handwritten poster hung from the ceiling of an English classroom:

> "Instead of 'I'm bored,' try...
> - I lost interest when..."
> - I found the text confused me when..."
> - I found the character / narrator hard to empathize with when..."
> - I found it difficult to relate to the topic because..."
> - The argument is hard to follow here..."

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[41] These posters are often seen in corporate and other office settings however I have not encountered them in any other schools.

These messages further the development of students' dominant cultural capital, and their knowledge about how to behave in middle and upper class social worlds, such as the four-year colleges for which they are being trained. The other message type - content-related instruction – delivers clear information related to the subject being taught in that classroom.

Content messages reinforce and maximize the efficiency of the teacher's instructional work during class sessions. For example, the front bulletin board of an English classroom bore an 8"x 11" poster displaying:

> "Introductions are HOT:
> - Hook
> - Overview
> - Thesis"

The same process occurs in all classrooms. In Mathematics classrooms, posters explain common functions or equations. Although such messages might be common in elementary schools, for a high school, particularly a college preparatory high school, suggests the remedial work being done in these passive instruction mechanisms to make time for the higher academic level of discussion in the active, spoken lessons.

For example, task messages are similarly institutionalized, clearly visible on the back wall of every classroom. Every day, in every class, the following categories are presented on the board: "Do Now," "Big Idea," "Schedule," and "Homework." The "Do Now" promotes the expectation that students will be productive as soon as they walk in. The written "Big Idea" represents the daily goals, sometimes broken down into smaller categories. This message is intended to keep students engaged and focused throughout the class. All together, these reminders, in every hallway and every classroom, are

intended to remind both students and teachers to push harder and subscribe to the

school's ethic: it's not easy surpassing expectations, but work hard and you can do it.

Figure 4.5. One section of the college wall, with banners flanked by lists of alumni attending those schools, and lists of graduates
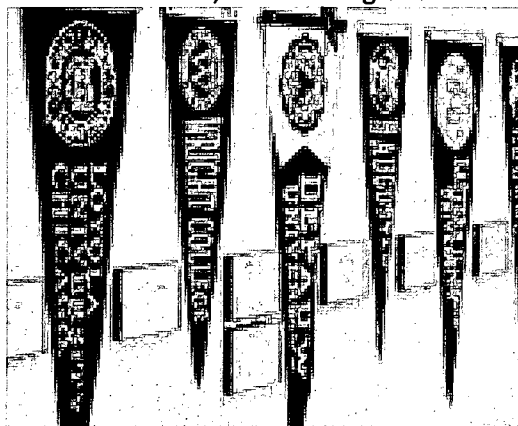
Walls of Pride Meet Walls of Shame

Wall spaces play an important role in the promotion of social order. Tasked with

changing lives, Grand's disciplined college preparatory ethos aims at promoting a culture

of triumph over disadvantage. Grand markets itself as oriented toward seeking triumph

over their respective expected normative outcomes: from the students to the teachers to

the administration to the school itself, the actors at Grand are seeking to triumph over

their expected normative outcomes. Grand seeks to triumph in its attempt to achieve

similar outcomes to a selective admission, private high school. The teachers, with varied

training and experience, work to deliver this type of education to students with varied

academic training, and are in fact tasked with training them culturally and socially to

meet the standard profile of the college preparatory student, as discussed more extensively in the next sections of the chapter. The students, on the whole, seek to rise to these standards by overcoming their comparative lack of social advantages, and working hard in and out of school to prepare for the abstract college world into which their parents and teachers, if not they themselves, aspire for them to be admitted.

Promoting an institutional culture oriented around triumph, the achievements of the school, its teachers, and its students line the walls. Bulletin boards praise the honor roll students. Television screens on each floor display slideshows of smiling students participating in community service events, sporting successes, award news, and upcoming events and activities. The *pièce de résistance* covers the majority of the hallway in the first floor, between the entrance, administrative office, and the cafeteria (Figure 3). This centerpiece features a four by six foot sized map of the United States, titled "Grand Alumni: Where Are They Now?" Cities and towns across the U.S. are demarcated by large pins featuring the names of various colleges and universities, with the largest cluster by far in the Midwest and the next largest in the Northeast and California.

Directly across the hallway, the opposite wall bears a series of plaques, one for each year of graduating seniors. These plaques list the names of the college-attending seniors and their corresponding college choices at the time of fall enrollment. Special commemoration marks those students who have successfully graduated from college, from the classes of 2003 and 2004. Above both the map and the plaques, the walls boast a sea of college pennants, from small elite colleges to Big Ten universities to nearby

Catholic universities to technical institutes and community colleges of varying reputations. The size of the banner does not correspond to the reputation of the school; rather, all banners decorate the wall, bestowing pride and accomplishment on the high school.

Ironically, but significantly, in this same hallway, adjacent to the college map, rests another bulletin board dedicated to discipline. This bulletin board, about three feet by five feet in size, posts students' detention rates, organized by grade level. One day in May, a time when college acceptances are in and seniors' motivation levels dip, a posted notice proclaimed that nearly 80% of the seniors had had detention within the past month, a number revealing both high levels of disobedience and the strictness of the disciplinary code, readily meting out punishment. This wall of shame, situated in the main hallway of pride, serves to remind all actors in the school of the shortcomings in the operation of their social order and the need for them all to work harder to achieve their collective goal.

Athletic Culture

Further training their bodies to conform to prep school and college standards,[42] the disciplining of youths' diet and exercise comprises a major component of Grand's school culture. From opening day forward, Mr. Schurski banned soda pop, candy, and sugared drinks, restrictions which he explained to me in pure health terms, and which he further

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[42] This goal is not an explicit one; rather, health is cited as the reason for this promotion of healthy eating and exercise. Nonetheless, the outcome is the same.

. explains at length in his biography on the school website.[43] Despite having limited facilities within and outside of their small school, Grand actively promotes participation in athletics. Although administrators and faculty attribute this devotion to Mr. Schurski's concern about health, there is an association between preparatory schools and the athletics-oriented culture of private preparatory schools.[44] Grand's website is named for the mascot, a powerful large cat, rather than the school name. For its first six years, prior to the school branding itself with the Latin motto discussed earlier, the school insignia had been surrounded by the name of the *mascot*. That the school first privileged athletics over academics in its marketing speaks to the sports-entrenched preparatory school culture it is trying to emulate.[45]

Grand capitalizes on external resources and networks to grant athletic opportunities to its students that they would not otherwise be able to access because of either lack of facilities or expenses. At this small urban public school, there is limited room for sports. It takes resources to offer students the space and opportunity to participate in these activities. The narrow basement gymnasium that Grand shares with an adjoining elementary school is sufficiently large to house a couple of indoor basketball

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[43] Two-thirds of Schurski's bio paragraph on the website refers to this very issue: "Mr. Schurski is best known for making everyone exercise and eat healthful food. It was his idea – Mario: I don't see evidence of a prep-school orientation -- to have fitness requirements for graduation and the vending machines are stocked with healthful snacks, water and juices. No pop at Grand. The students and teachers think he is a little nuts about health, but realize they will lead more productive lives if they eat well and exercise." It is worth noting that obesity and diet-related health problems plague the Latino community, and a visibly high proportion of female students are overweight. This is less common among male students.

[44] Of even its community service activities, some of the most popular are volunteering to manage road races and other such community athletic events.

[45] To be promoted to the next grade, students must pass gym, including the completion of a fixed number of pushups and crunches per minute. A significant number of students who attend summer school are there because they failed their physical fitness requirement, costing them $125 to make up a failed class instead of the $30 for students attending summer school for academic enrichment credits.

courts which can be converted into volleyball courts, but not much else. Students leave

school for many of their gym classes and sports practices. A block-size park down the

street from Grand provides a space for softball, baseball, football, running, and even a

space to play rugby.

A sport considerably more likely to be played in U.S. boarding schools and

private colleges more than in Chicago public schools, rugby has been one of the most

popular sports at Grand for both males and females, and is further notable for consistently

having some of Grand's academically strongest students among its members. Although

few area schools have rugby teams, Grand students play whenever possible against

suburban schools, a practice by which Grand students are prepared to engage with

predominantly white, upper middle class peers in a competitive nature, training them for

college.[46] For sports that cannot be performed in the park or in the shared indoor

gymnasium, students may elect to attend the high-end Lake Club,[47] a private gym facility

and one of several businesses that donate services and goods to Grand, enabling Grand to

offer this further dimension of college preparatory training at essentially the same cost as

a traditional public education.[48]

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[46] A later section on the mock trial team will engage this type of situation in depth.

[47] Pseudonym. This practice of partnering with a private gym was common at the Manhattan prep schools where I worked, however the schools charged $18-20,000 per year at the time in tuition and fees. That Grand can make these offerings bears note.

[48] The small fees that students can be charged for detentions, summer enrichment courses, and other such areas necessitate this caveat, that the school "essentially" costs the same as a traditional urban public school.

College Preparatory Resources

While serving mostly low-income students in what remains a predominantly working class neighborhood, the school benefits from the support of private donors and collaborations with business and universities. This capital facilitates the heightened opportunity structure that Grand offers to its students and families. As noted earlier, donated ACT workbooks are distributed free of charge to students, and in fact are omnipresent in stacks around most classrooms.[49] For those students interested in the dramatic and musical arts, a state-of-the-art theater is available for plays, concerts, and design. These facilities along with students' ready use of the Internet, graphing calculators, social networking sites, and other technology, underscore the means by which Grand makes itself look like a private, moneyed preparatory school that just happens to educate low-income youth.

Donated computing equipment enables students to use laptop computers and on-campus computer labs. Carts filled with laptops are wheeled to classrooms needing them for particular assignments and serve as additional computers to those desktops already in most classrooms. Classes which involve writing tend to have several desktops available along the wall for students who are finished with their work early to get a head start on their papers; another has a small computer lab within the room itself, complete with semi-private cubicles and printers. Students might develop comfort working with programs that many could not access at home. The orientation to electronic communication in

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[49] Students' ACT scores are about equal with that the state average and considerably higher than the city average, although both students and faculty admit that raising ACT scores, as well as Advanced Placement test scores, remains a goal that Grand should continue to work towards to make its students more competitive on the college market.

school is associated with frequent student-teacher email exchanges after-school about homework and related matters. Grand teachers argue that these resources grant students to access the kind of education and technological privilege that they could not otherwise afford.

Prestige comparisons and competition

Grand faculty and staff pride themselves in their role in the transformation of Grand youth into confident prep school students, instructing them not only in academics but also in inflections of the classed preparatory school culture in which they must develop fluency. The greeter system exemplifies this feature of Grand's educational model. Classroom teachers rotate their students to serve as the greeter, the designate representative of the class to faculty and guests.[50] Upon receiving a knock, the designated greeter opens the door and steps into the hallway, hand extended. Greeters verify the name of the class and teacher, explain the task undertaken in the present class meeting (e.g. solving simultaneous equations), and invite the guest inside.[51] The principal and/or teachers watching the interaction beam pleased, proud smiles. This pride distinguishes Grand from the prep schools upon which it was modeled, where competent performance of this exercise in grooming would similarly be expected but would not need to be taught. Such school-based cultural capital development functions as a critical mechanism in Grand's educational model.

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[50] Before I became involved in more formal roles in the school, I observed classroom interactions and, thereby, was a frequent visitor.

[51] Students' confidence in this interaction appeared to improve with time, comparing the older greeters to the younger greeters.

Cultural capital training

Students tend to be highly motivated to attend college by their desire for protection from the vulnerabilities of their current social class status. Although class mobility is inherent in students' college pursuits, it is not inherent for schools of any category to culturally instruct students in the norms of the social class to which they are aspiring. Nevertheless, in adapting the college preparatory school model for atypical college preparatory school students (low income rather than middle income; brown rather than white), the school couples rigorous academic instruction with this very practice of rigorous *cultural* instruction.

Grand tries to instill dominant cultural capital in its students through the standard mechanisms: music programs, art programs, museum trips, and the like. Merit vouchers for voluntary attendance of the city's cultural and museum programs (demonstrated by submitted ticket receipts) further this traditional cultural training endeavor. The replication of college preparatory culture – presented by the dress code, long academic block schedule of the prep schools, academic and athletic training, and academic behavior training – would be incomplete without this cultural training. This new normative culture, based in the school institution and rife with dominant cultural capital, represents the completion of this purported transformation of working class ethnic minority kids into groomed prep school applicants to colleges and universities.

With guidance and support from Mr. Schurski's teaching model, most teachers elect to use games in their instruction. The prevalence of games throughout classrooms

"brings out positive energy and encouragement, as in many of the other classrooms that I have seen. Every table has games on it of some kind that are in some way related to math – science store puzzles, chess, etc." (Field notes from Algebra 1 classroom, July 11, 2005). Teamwork, presentations, and classroom competitions have been promulgated in K-12 pedagogy for years. These methods of engaging students comprise an explicit intervention in the Grand model. At Grand, these methods are employed on a daily basis by all members of the teaching staff, across subject areas, for all levels of students. For Language and History classes, there are team games of Jeopardy in which students compete against each other for the highest scores in that week's lesson. For World Religion, students team up into groups of three to most clearly and accurately present on the central tenets of Buddhism. For Math, individuals and pairs compete on a number of domains, but most commonly in solving algebraic problems faster than their classmates and delivering the best solutions for problems on the board.

This process is most evident in the education of boys, particularly in math. Nationwide, and at Grand, boys are being outpaced academically by their female peers, primarily because of disengagement (citation). While these games do not work for all students, they provide the clearest observations throughout the study of male student engagement, excitement about achieving, and academic excellence. Individual male students from Grand excel in high school, make honor roll, become leaders at school, graduate, go to college, earn scholarships, and graduate from college. On the whole however, boys at Grand have underperformed in academics and leadership, a problem which school leadership acknowledges and has to increasing degrees ameliorated in most

recent cohorts, as evidenced by the relative gender parity of enrollment and grades in the class of 2008. Within competitive classroom exchanges, boys emerge as classroom leaders, dynamically volunteering answers, vying for attention, laughing, and either congratulating or playfully teasing classmates, depending on the outcome of the games. These classroom competitions are oriented around Grand's unofficial academic mantra of honor, proving oneself by working against unfavorable odds, and working against adversity.

Overcoming disadvantage through resilience training

This theme of overcoming disadvantage is evidenced across varied domains in the school. The administration highlights again and again the known obstacles that all members of the school community – students, teachers, and the school model itself – must overcome. They conscientiously and consistently frame their students as coming from low-advantaged backgrounds and having to work especially hard to get ahead. School administrators speak about this at the graduation ceremonies. It comes up at many of the bi-weekly all-school Town Hall meetings (assemblies). It is on the posters on the walls and inside the classrooms. It is evident in the emphasis on sports training and the attachment of many of the athletes to their team and their school.

There is a cultural identity resilience that operates as well, in a more implicit and perhaps accidental manner on the part of the faculty and administration. As much as youth are being trained in the elite college preparatory model to generate the academically and culturally groomed college applicant, the faculty and administration do

not demonstrate any intention to sublimate the cultural and social strengths of their

student body. Rather, students are instilled with the notion that they are different and

removed from white, privileged schools, even as they themselves are groomed to acquire

higher status and cultural capital.

CONCLUSIONS

Through this development of social capital, students become tied to the academic goals of

the school and the teachers who deliver this training. In doing so, they are positioned to

align to the goals of the behavioral and cultural components of the Grand college

preparatory program. The previous description of the constructed social order might,

appropriately, evoke associations with Foucault's disciplinary framework, by which

docile bodies respond to hegemonic shifts in normative behavior, for which they are

either rewarded or punished . In the case of this school, these norms would be those of

the micro-social behaviors, tastes, preferences, and skills of the higher social classes;

these class-oriented cultural codes have been termed "cultural capital" . Indeed, at

Grand, instruction of elite cultural codes are disseminated and regulated through heavy

disciplinary practices, including training of students' bodies into particular ways of dress,

social interaction, and athletic participation.

While students adopt this training however, they do so strategically, recognizing

the benefits of cultural performance in school at the same time, not being taken over by

this training. Rather, as discussed in the next chapter, by acting as cultural straddlers,

many students learn and acculturate to these behaviors while also engaging in, searching

for, and acculturating to their ethnic identities. Interpreted through this analytic framework, these processes of adaptation occur in the context of broader – and potentially competing – negotiations of identities and cultural codes. To interpret students' educational pathways (not only divergent from those of their peers but often times divergent from their earlier estimations), it is critical to understand the interaction between the norms, expectations, and behaviors trained in a social capital-rich schooling environment and the social identities and competing norms and expectations that youth are developing both in and outside of the school.

Grand's school culture actively cultivates social capital processes, fostering the development of the adolescents' social bonds with peers and adults who have been both successful in the academic educational model and engaged in their ethnic culture and community. Although the school's supportive culture fosters and nurtures high educational aspirations, it achieves more moderate success translating these aspirations into post-secondary degree attainment. Later waves of survey, interview, and school enrollment data demonstrate that matriculation and retention in these and other four-year colleges present more complicated, less linear trajectories.

CHAPTER FIVE
IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS AND TALK AROUND RACE

INTRODUCTION

There is great potential for conflict inherent in this cultural training of savvy teenagers

from ethnic minority backgrounds in the norms of preparatory school culture.[52] Like the

youth in Willis and Ogbu's depictions, Grand's youth keenly recognize systemic

inequalities and how comparative disadvantages have affected them and their families.

Unlike these youth however, students at Grand subscribe, to varying degrees, to the

model of upward mobility through hard work and discipline, demonstrating both (1) the

increasing evidence for youth's high educational ambitions across racial, class, and ethnic

subgroups and (2) the mounting counter-evidence to Ogbu's claims of black and

involuntary minority academic disengagement, framed as oppositional culture .

Although the school prescribes cultural adaptation to the norms of the dominant

culture, against which youth might resist, most students choose to persist, often motivated

by an economically-oriented drive toward upward mobility to protect themselves against

the vulnerabilities and inequalities of their class and minority status.[53] These youth are

further different from Willis's and Ogbu's youth by nature of their selection into a

lottery-based school which requires motivation on their or their family's part to at least

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[52] Students stem from first, second, third, and significantly later generations of immigration to the U.S. Survey data breaks down generation in detail, from place of birth for respondents to the place of birth for each parent and grandparent, allowing a nuanced examination of the contributions of generational status and acculturation. The modal generational status is clearly second generation, what have been termed "children of immigrants," however there are considerable proportions of first, third, and later generations in this population.

[53] Examples of this motivation are discussed later in this and the next chapters.

partially buy into this prestige-laden, college preparatory model and trust this school, against the alternatives.[54]   How do kids respond to this imposed culture?

The school attempts to motivate academic performance through Ivy League dreams while minimizing identity-related conflict between school culture and culture of origin. Although theories of ethnic minority youth in minority and college bound school settings have long pointed to cultural conflicts and concerns about "acting white," over three years of participant observation and interviews, I found no evidence of students experiencing explicit conflicts around either perceived needs to "act" their race or conflicts between their developing identity and the culture of the school.   Race, ethnicity, and social class do operate in this environment however and generate identity tensions. On the whole however, students' social locations as underrepresented by their race, ethnicity, and social class tend often to act as incentive forces rather than as inhibitors of aspirations, with students exhibiting cultural pride in their dress, speech, interviews, and survey responses. These identities are shared and generated across the institutional culture of the school, engendering particular ways of being both in terms of their ethno-racial identities and their potential socio-economic and educational futures.

This college-preparatory institution trains youth to pursue futures which are not the norm in their community, including extensive cultural capital training toward this end.[55] An inherent tension lies between training them in the dominant cultural norms of

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[54] Most students do hold explanations for their high school choice in relation to their other options, whether that option be a magnet school (one magnet school in particular was quite popular) or a neighborhood high school. I have been inside both of the primary neighborhood high schools that Grand students would not have attended, and can speak to their differences.
[55] This process is discussed in detail in a later section.

their white, upper-middle class future college mates and the non-dominant values, norms, and cultural styles that they brought with them to high school. Located in a core Latino neighborhood in Chicago, the student population embodies the families and neighborhoods that they grew up with (see Table), bridging in part the gap between the social origins of the student population and destination colleges and professions for which they are training in this college-prep school.[56] Then eighteen-year old Michelle Villanueva explains:

> "You have all of your peers around you who are working just as hard but come from similar backgrounds. I mean, we all live in urban Chicago. None of us are wealthy or we're either middle class or *below* middle class.[57] The funny thing about Grand and I guess my friends or I guess how I've always grown up: it's like the kinda un-cool or the kinda whoa, I mean, you still have – you still live with your *dad*, I mean what? Like, that's *weird*. (*Laughs*). Like, you're not very cool, you don't know how it is, you know, to be with just a single mom. Or I don't know, wow, you have *money*, or you know, shut up, you know, don't talk about problems. You have money. You know? Like, it's kind of like that, like we kind of make fun of each other, but I guess it's just to lighten the mood. But it's all in fun 'cause you know, it's all, we're all kind of in the same area. But um, it is kind of cool because you do have support, kind of like, you know, I'm not doing this alone.

Michelle explains that her peers – before and after Grand – have supported her over the years. This social support from peers, who similarly bear the weight of family and financial stress, helped her bear her own weight, she argues. Being able to talk with them

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[56] Earlier in the interview, Evelyn described Grand as her "neighborhood" school, which in Chicago Public Schools terms denotes that it would be the default public high school in her neighborhood, which she could have attended without any application process. This error seemed meaningful, suggesting that she does not regard Grand as separate or above the normative public school pathway[56]. When probed further about the status of Grand, she relented, "Well, Grand is the neighborhood school, like, like public wise because Grand's charter, but, like, it's in my neighborhood, so I call it my neighborhood school."

[57] This may be an issue of perception. Few Grand families qualify as middle class. What Michelle seems to be referring to however is the relative stability of some families in comparison with others: residential tenure, homeownership, parents' job stability, and two parents in the home. These factors do range within the population, however; the social class background of Grand families is consistently in the lower social classes, particularly when cost of living in their gentrifying neighborhoods is taken into account. In 2005, 85.5% of Grand families qualified as low-income, according to Illinois state guidelines.

about these difficulties helps "lighten the mood," revealing that beneath her sunny demeanor at school lay the burden that she references both in the interview and in her further discussions of stress and the academic demands of school.[58]

Her explanation suggests imagined potential peers who would label her as "un-cool" or potentially less valid because of her socioeconomic and family status: not having professional or college-educated parents, being aware of family financial struggles, and growing up without two parents in the home. She immediately follows this discussion with an acknowledgement that she is aware, and her teachers have repeatedly "warned," that it won't be like that after leaving Grand, that they will be in the minority. Despite having the experiences of participated in a summer Ivy League study program the previous summer, winning awards at mock trial competitions against privileged and polished teams, and having visited and been admitted to elite colleges where she would be the minority, Michelle admits that the idea of not having peers with similar backgrounds feels "kinda scary."[59]

The institutional culture of the school generates social support that both promotes attainment of dominant culture aspirations and addresses the vulnerabilities of its underrepresented population. The administration and faculty consciously cultivate a culture of strength and resilience, through promotion of academic competition in and out of the classroom, a strong emphasis on sports, and frequent reminders of how much the students and school don't have in comparison to others, and how much they must

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[58] Despite the concern about family means, Michelle is one of the least concerned with leaving her family of those youth that I interviewed. She is considering study abroad in Africa, the Peace Corps, and a career that might take her outside of Chicago. This paper will revisit these issues in a later section, to theorize

[59] Michelle went on to one of the top "small Ivy" colleges in the Northeast, and continues to study there.

(successfully) overcome. Students do not all keep up with the program; some transfer out early or along the way if they resist the high standards and discipline of the school. For those who do stay, this combination of positive identity culture and social capital – both dominant and non-dominant – could contribute positively to the students' potential educational transitions to four-year colleges and professional careers

BACKGROUND

This highly regulated, dominant culture-derived social order could sublimate students' identities. Rather, I argue, Grand youth overwhelmingly retain their language, style, and identities. In effect, students act as cultural straddlers who code-switch to employ advantageous cultural behavior at school and different advantageous cultural behavior at home, thereby buffering against changing their identities at any fundamental level to become the college prep school ideal . How students respond to the disciplinary code – feeling challenged[60] or unthreatened – could affect their academic engagement and educational pathway.

This analysis theorizes a mechanism whereby imagined identity threat is mediated by dominant and non-dominant social capital. These youth did not regularly encounter threats to their identity based on race, ethnicity and class, with the exceptions of the transition out of school and encounters with peers from the dominant classes.

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[60] Students and faculty have theorized to me that detentions, and the corresponding fees, contribute considerably to the decrease in male enrollment as youth move from their ninth through twelfth grade year, a problem which has been ameliorating. Male attrition was a particular problem and frustration for the graduating classes of 2005 and 2006. The class of 2006 lost over a third of its initial male enrollees, resulting in a gender-lopsided class. This problem ameliorated in subsequent cohorts and was not a major issue for the class of 2008.

Nonetheless, the youth bore a double consciousness, an awareness of the discomfort that could result from being viewed negatively by the dominant society. [61] It is in these situations in which race emerges as a salient force in their lives, even though most of the predominantly Latino youth at Grand are unfamiliar with and unsure about how to characterize themselves on a racial scale. [62]

METHODOLOGY

This chapter primarily employs ethnographic, interview, and survey data. Qualitative data were collected during four periods: (1) during classroom observations in May and August of 2005, (2) while serving as an assistant facilitator for the school's mock trial team, including travel with the team between December 2005 and May 2006, (3) between April and May of 2008, and (4) during two special events: the June graduation of 2005 and an alumni reunion party in the December of 2007. Most interviews were conducted in the summer of 2005, spring of 2006, and spring of 2008. Quantitative data collection was conducted in May of 2006 and 1 ½ to 2 years later: May 2008 for the youngest cohort, high school seniors in 2008 and December 2007 – March 2008 for alumni.

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[61] DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk
[62] Around 93% of juniors and seniors left the Census race question on the survey instrument blank or coded themselves as American Indian or Alaskan/Native Hawaiian native in search of a race term that would fit their self-perception. They had no such trouble with either clearly demarcating their Hispanic ancestry (also from the Census questionnaire) or their ethnicity (from the Phinney Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)).

Table 5.1: Students' Self-Reported Disciplinary Infractions Over the Past Semester, by Gender (Wave I)

Disciplinary Infraction	Never	1-2 times	3-6 times	7-9 times	10 or more
Late for school					
Female	23	46	35	15	29
Male	20	38	26	11	16
Cut or skipped classes*					
Female	132	11	1	2	1
Male	95	10	3	1	2
Absent from School					
Female	27	58	33	12	12
Male	22	47	24	8	10
In trouble for not following school rules					
Female	87	39	11	6	2
Male	41	39	17	7	7
In-School Suspension					
Female	146	0	1	0	0
Male	102	7	1	0	0
Suspension or Put on Probation					
Female	138	7	0	0	1
Male	90	15	3	1	1

* In the margins, one student noted in response to this item, "you can't [cut or skip classes]!"

Notes: The totals do not add up to the complete list of students asked to respond the 2006 Wave I (baseline) survey, due to missing data in Wave I both at the respondent and item levels. Valid N for these items: female = 148; male = 111.

FINDINGS

Discipline and Resistance

Discipline and respect are moral values held high in the esteem of the administration and teaching staff, and disseminated to the students. Although all schools engage in message management and disciplinary culture, the pervasiveness and cultural nature of these methods of dissemination do reach beyond the norm for high schools of any category. Passive instruction of pro-school behavior occurs in classrooms and public spaces, from the hallways to the girls' bathroom stalls, where posted fliers advocate "respect" for school property and one another. The school introduced a motto, increasingly present, which from the Latin translates as: Studies, Discipline, and Respect. This motto puts in formal, classical language the values of the school that had earlier been discernible but not made as explicit. Although informally and at times passively taught, these values are strictly and actively enforced.

Disciplinary infractions tend to involve impersonal behavior rather than interpersonal behavior. These tend to involve dress code infractions, tardiness, and incomplete homework. Demerits are distributed on the spot, for example, when a student enters the classroom wearing non-dress code attire. Merits cancel out demerits and are distributed by the same means as demerits, but work instead to reward pro-school behavior rather than to punish anti-school behavior.[63] Mr. Roberts, the summer school principal / English teacher/ college guidance counselor, informed me that he has

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[63] Pro-school behavior that earns merits includes: strong participation in the classroom, above excellent treatment of a guest, and helping another student with schoolwork. Source: teacher interviews, Grand School Handbook, 2005.

"flexibility" to remove demerits if "kids perform well", and is particularly cognizant of

removing these demerits if students are at risk for more serious disciplinary penalties. He

gave the example of Jennifer, an African American girl who had greeted me the week

earlier during one of my visits. She had received four demerits on her first day, which is

half way to "getting kicked out." Because she behaved well and started doing "really

good work" on the day when I was in class and had been helpful in a group activity, he

"took a demerit away."[64] In effect, by being more focused and restrained in her behavior

in the presence of an observer, she was rewarded for her embodiment of pro-school

behavior.

While Grand students engage in normative teenage behavior (e.g., talking and

laughing with one another while carrying their books through the hallway and gossiping

in-between classes), the disciplinary code effectively restrains their behavior within the

limited bounds of decorum. Over three years and over thirty classroom observation

sessions, the disciplinary code tended to be preserved. One notable incident of defiance

occurred in a summer school class, led by two AmeriCorps student teachers, both of

whom had no prior teaching experience.[65] This class was one of the more remedial

summer school classes, described by the principal as having three "special education

kids" and some with "behavior issues." Further challenging the classroom dynamic was

the subject matter, Russian, which is "always a hard class because the kids don't want to

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[64] Source: Interview with Mr. Roberts, July 11, 2005.
[65] Source: Interview with student teachers on June 25, 2005 and with summer school principal on July 11, 2005.

be there. They don't see the point."[66] Under these conditions, the normative system

demonstrates the potential to wear down:

> During the break, Antonio acts bratty to Miss Rogers while she tries to set up the
> projector screen. "Be careful," he says, "if you break it it's two thousand
> dollars." She ignores him. [*Mocking tone*] Oh no, you're going to break it."
> She continues to ignore him. A minute later, he says (to himself and group,
> mostly all back from break): "Man, I don't even have a cell phone anymore.
> They took it away[67] because you (pointing to the two teachers who stand
> together) gave me a demerit." (Field notes, July 5, 2005).

Miss Rogers subsequently stared angrily at Antonio but said nothing. In the months that

followed, I encountered few further acts of disrespect, most likely because of my

subsequent primary ethnographic location in academic clubs and in classrooms with more

experienced and respected teachers. Although I did not witness many more incidences of

disciplinary sanctions and breaking of rules, ethnographic, interview, and survey

evidence indicated that such incidents of resistance did occur, with regularity.

Rules and regulations clearly delineate behavior standards, which are regulated

not only by standard detention / suspension methods but also by financial penalties. The

accrual of three demerits equals a detention (and a $5 fee paid to the school). Twenty

detentions within a school year bar promotion to the next grade, unless students elect to

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[66] Source: Interview with summer school principal on July 11, 2005, with notes transcribed 15 minutes after the meeting. Note: In this interview, Mr. Roberts also noted that Russian is the only mandatory language in the school for two reasons: first, the founder is from a Russian background and second (an explanation consistent with that of Mr. Schurski earlier in the year), "it's different and looks interesting on a college application. And some kids really do seem to like it. They complain about it but a lot of kids, more often than expected, go on to take and even minor in Russian in college, so it's doing something." Interviews and observations with students revealed similar mixed evaluations of the Russian program.

[67] Although I did not ascertain whether "they" refers to the school or his family, the Grand student and parent handbook does state disciplinary consequences of using electronic devices such as cell phones in class, ranging from confiscation for "parent release only" accompanied by detention to a 1-3 day suspension (Grand Student and Parent Handbook 08-09). Additionally, I witnessed several incidents where teachers reminded students at the beginning of class to put their phones away and where students complained about not being able to use their phone.

participate in a "detention removal class," costing between $30 and $5000.[68] Detentions

take place at the end of the school day in a classroom outside of the offices of the college

guidance counselor and the assistant dean, who manages disciplinary issues.

Stemming the tide of male attrition

These incentives, oriented more toward punishing resistance to pro-school behavior than

promoting it, generate inconsistent results. Looking into the detention room, one

observes baggy pants, sneakers instead of shoes, and a general sense of passive resistance

to the institutional social order , both on their bodies and their absent stares. Males

outnumber females in detention, about three to one based on my observations.

Discussing declines in male enrollment at Grand within the class of 2006 with college

guidance counselor and summer principal Mr. Bob Roberts, I was informed that students

and their families do not elect to take classes in the higher bracket of fees, the threat of

these financial penalties can result in students facing such fines electing to transfer out of

the school. Such fees, he posited, made transferring an attractive option for these

students, most of whom were male. When I asked Mr. Roberts where– in front of two

female students, both seniors and members of the class of 2006 – these students transfer

to, he responded that depending on their academic standing, they will either complete

coursework at a neighboring community college, go for a GED, or transfer to another

high school with fewer restrictions, in some cases, a magnet high school. Both he and the

female students, with whom I later revisited the issue, concurred that male attrition from

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[68] Grand School Handbook, 2005.

Grand could be heavily explained by the uneven distribution of disciplinary sanctions.

Although gender imbalance was heavily notable, with a 60-40 ratio of females to males

in the graduating classes of 2005 and 2006, these differences declined in the younger

cohorts.

Figure 5.1: Mock trial team, state championship competition 2006 (photo taken by author)

Race as Social Inequality: Cases from Mock Trial

Race operates as a dynamic process in the school. Race functionally indexes ethnicity but consistently refers back to the standard black-white paradigm when students and staff compare themselves with the social world beyond its door, a practice that both engage in with regularity. Over three months of participant observation as a volunteer co-facilitator of Grand's mock trial club, I found that these Ivy-league hopeful students are aware of and notice potential racism both to me and to each other. Race was rarely raised during normal school contexts with students who did not regularly encounter peers outside of school and neighborhood contexts, which were predominantly Latino and working class, in particular in regards to the youth populations of these neighborhoods.

Because of their frequent competitive interaction with predominantly white suburban school students, through the mock trial meets, race and privilege emerged as salient issues of thought and concern in these situations of encounter. For example, while waiting to go through security at the DuPage County Courthouse, the site of that day's interschool competition, a Russian-born half-Latina student named Marina informed her Puerto Rican male classmate and me in a matter-of-fact manner that last year's team was searched, in front of everyone, and that they were the only school to go through security. She turned to me and explained, "It's 'cause we're not white." In this instance, this interpretation of discrimination on the basis of "non-white"-ness was indexed by a student whose Russian birth and primary identification with a European country would categorize her as "white." On the whole, discrimination and inequalities around race were most explicitly discussed by the students and teachers who were most

white. For varying potential reasons, those whose appearance aligned them closest to

blackness – including students who identified as African American – were least likely to

speak publicly about race.

Whiteness and non-whiteness were invoked throughout this and other mock trial

competitions, by both Mr. Roberts and the students themselves. Marina was the most

vocal of the mock trial students about race, frowning in distaste at "those white schools"

and the better resources with which they come equipped to competitions. These

resources ranged from expensive supplies and supporting materials, such as team folders,

laminated signs, fitted instead of borrowed suits, and generally more expensive-looking

clothing. Further establishing the resource disparity between the Grand team and the

suburban teams, the Grand team had only their English teacher (who majored in pre-law

in undergraduate) and me as their coaching staff, whereas several teams in our local

tournaments had what Grand students called "actual lawyers" advising and mentoring the

group.

> I: What have you thought about when you've been to mock trial competitions
> where you've been competing against or in relationship to suburban schools or
> other types of schools in Chicago?
>
> Michelle: I don't know. ... I guess, I could kind of use that in relation to
> college, because these *are* the kinds of kids who've paid for their education.
> And like, **you can tell by the way they talk and the way they walk that they
> look very educated.** And the teams have like lawyers that they pay to help
> them and we just have Mr. Roberts .... I don't know. It kind of shows, within
> itself, that it doesn't really matter. Because if we're pretty good, I mean we
> weren't the greatest, but considering that our team was mostly rookies, I mean,
> we were pretty good and we made our place known so I mean, that's kinda what
> I mean for school.[69] I mean, if they're *paying* for their education and we don't

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[69] The mock trial team placed in the top 10 at the State competition that year, almost as well as their rankings in previous years, and won numerous individual awards over the course of the season, including Michelle.

but we work just as hard or you know maybe even harder than you know, we're on an equal basis, so... Yup, pretty much. Yeah, that was a nice insight! Hmm.

But yeah, I don't know. That was, that was kinda like when we all just walk in and see all these people and they look all professional, they look like they're so confident, you know, until they started doing what they were supposed to do and then it was kinda like oh well, what happened, you know?

[...] I mean, for us, our biggest problem was getting a suit. I mean, I'm sure they had 10 suits, you know. I mean, we were getting money and looking for sales, much less learning the case and all that, you know.... I mean half of us have never even been in a courtroom like that and they have courtrooms in their schools so... (*laughs*) I guess we actually started competing. All these people who looked cocky and confident and ready for us but then we'd start speaking and we saw that their confidence was dropping, you know? I don't know; I melted. I thought, it was exciting, you know? (*laughs*) I thought it was great. Like, I guess as soon as we saw that, you know, I mean, it gave us hope, you know? I really saw that. So that was pretty cool.

Michelle describes a process which I noticed more broadly – the confidence building through comparison that occurred during mock trial competitions and other competitive events at Grand. She describes her perception of the other team's comparatively higher cultural capital: "you can tell by the way they talk and the way they walk that they look very educated." Her comparison of their relative class differences and school has some potential flaws – i.e., to my knowledge, the comparison school did not have "courtrooms" on site.

Nonetheless, her explanation of the emergent "excitement" and "hope" from their team victory over this polished suburban school – team sentiments which I witnessed as volunteer assistant coach of the team – demonstrate an important psychological process by which youth who are successful in these cross-class competitions gain "confidence" that, as Michelle said, could be "used in relation to college" and the relative resource gaps between Grand students and their college peers. I argue that both in these

competitions and in the overall school culture, these interactions with and comparisons against higher social-class, majority peers work to build confidence which serves to buffer against potential stereotype threat and generate emotional buoyancy and resilience. Grand students involved in other interscholastic academic and sports programs have made similar claims about the effect of their extracurricular participation, and achievements on their persistence at Grand when things got too challenging (e.g., softball player Rosario Guzman) and motivation for future education.

At times, Grand youth lamented about the disparities, focusing on its potential effect on their ability to succeed in the tournaments and place in the championship rounds. They were acutely aware that they were disadvantaged in comparison to many of the teams in the Chicago metro and state tournaments. Even when I spent a long weekend traveling with them for the state tournament, they did not articulate concern about these resource disparities beyond its direct effect on their mock trial performance. What they did not articulate or perhaps not yet understand was how access to these lawyers symbolized their social capital disparities, which would affect them on a larger scale as they prepared to go to college and especially once they left.

Ethnicity and national origin resonate more with them on a daily level, as evidenced by both ethnographic observation and the readiness of their surveyed self-identifications on race vs. ethnicity questions. These situations of threat produce a sense of racialized status however, even if they understand this racialized status most clearly as being one of "non-whiteness." After a competition, one Grand student remarked, shaking her head, that she could not believe that "that team was wearing jeans," in reference to

the sole Latino and African American team, whom we were approaching on our way to the buses. Selena, the half-Puerto Rican, half-Polish star of the team, loudly exclaimed in response, "Yo, when I saw those cornrows [worn by two of their students], I was like, so happy. We're not the only ones!" Although I have not heard students refer to Grand as being, as a school, either "Latino," "Hispanic," "Black," or any other racial category, both they and the adult leaders of the school voice their distinction from white, privileged schools, even as they are groomed with dominant cultural capital in preparation for their shared aspirations for success in the dominant culture. Here again, it was the half-Eastern European student with close family in suburban Indiana who verbalized these distinctions with so little hesitation.

Race as Race: Stereotypes and Expectations around Blackness

College trips and participation in the Summer Start collegiate summer programs (described more extensively in Chapter Six) created more intensive encounters. Michelle's discussion of her summer program experience illustrates this process. In the passage below, she explains the "shock" she encounters at the highly selective private colleges to which she is applying, one of which she ultimately attends. Although she begins to describe this shock in terms of urban versus rural comparisons, the description turns quickly to her surprise and confusion at encountering unfamiliar characters from her prior racial categorizations.

> I: What was it like for you when you went on the college trips? You said that
> you got a little taste of how it was different.

Michelle: Yeah. It is. It's a shock. One of the things is, I'm coming from like this really big city and uh, I could go anywhere by walking or by taking the bus. And the schools that I particularly want to go to, selective schools, are these small liberal-arts colleges in the middle of nowhere, so it's like wow, what do you do out here? You know, where's the buildings (*we laugh*), or like how do you get here, where is this on the map? (*Laughs through next sentence*) ... Yeah, that was a shock."

But yeah, when you just see all these different races, like, a lot of Caucasians and when you see African Americans that _act_ like Caucasians, like, not that there's a certain way but you know, stereotypically they act, (pause) I don't know, I guess a little more professional or educated, and, I guess, I don't want to sound stereotypical but, you know, when you see blacks not _acting_ like... thugs and gangs, like what we're kind of used to around here, it's kind of like whoa, who do they think they are, like (*laughs*) what's _wrong_ with them? It kind of makes us feel like when we come in, we kind of have to act like that. I mean, at least I did. I didn't want to use slang or anything like that but yeah, it was. It was really weird. (Pause) Yeah, it was weird. (Author's boldface).

R: When I went to [Ivy League University B] my sophomore year, **I was ... the ghetto one.** And there was only one other, like most of them were, were white. And I think there was one half-Mexican one half-white girl and me and this one black boy. And, out of all of them, like he wore a Polo, he wore a pocket protector. He was adorable. And I don't think he ever heard like a taste of hip-hop. And so when I would listen to it, he would be like, you know, hey, yo, what is this? You know? And I was like... wo-ow. (*Laughs*). Um, okay. So that took me a while. But um, and then when I did go to some colleges, like Carleton, and there were African Americans who talked to me ... and they were, they were talking, just like normal talk to me. So **that was cool, like they presented themselves one way, not to be fake or anything but just to be, you know professional, educated.** But then, when they were in their dorms, you know, they were just like I'm from the same background as you are, you know?

In this vignette, Michelle describes her interpretation of students at selective schools, and in particular, black students at selective schools, who acted "weird," by acting "professional and educated."

Although she notes that she felt like she had to work to act like that way – avoiding using slang and such – and that she was the "ghetto one," Michelle reveals her (a) internalized expectation for inner city and especially black youth to

perform dominant stereotypes – despite the extreme rarity to which her black

peers at Grand performed these stereotypes – and (b) her internalization of herself

as "ghetto," despite her nearly California "Valley Girl" cadence in her speech,

light skin, and generally demure manner. When I asked Michelle whether she had

heard anyone use these kinds of categorizations like "acting white" about Grand

students, she responded:

> "I don't think anyone has ever talked about Grand like that, like, I don't think
> we walk around like that. Like, maybe in the class, it can get intense and um, I
> don't think we ever talk about, with words like, like we use like big sentences
> for every like, you know, but I mean, um, I don't think we ever act a certain way
> and when it's just, when we're just outside the school we act normal and stuff
> like, you know. But like, there is a weird thing about students at Grand, [other
> kids say] oh, you're from Grand. Just looking at our uniforms, they're like oh,
> you're a Grand kid. Or like, if you're just talking to somebody regular and
> you're like oh, what school do you go to? Grand. You're from Grand? (*She
> imitates them*). Like, I don't know what it is yet. I haven't discovered.
>
> But like I think there is like some kind of, I don't know, some kind of quality
> that Grand students have. I'm not sure what it is but I think it's obvious and
> yeah, I don't know. (Laughs) …. Neighborhood schools that are just
> neighborhood schools not like us or even like Lane people, like they're like, oh
> you're from Grand…. Lane is predominantly I would say the top choice that
> people who leave Grand like want to go to because it is another selective top
> school. And they think that because they couldn't do well here, well, I wouldn't
> say couldn't do well. Maybe they just didn't like the school. But maybe they'd
> be okay at Lane. So I guess Grand students have a reputation at Lane because
> they like have a few of our old students, and maybe those old students didn't
> really like Grand, so they like talk bad about Grand, but I don't know."

In this interview excerpt, Michelle touches on a number of processes: why students might

leave Grand and what kind of magnet schools they might attend instead (couldn't do well

at Grand or just didn't like the school), the her perception of the reputation of Grand and

its students (not acting white, but some form of arrogance is implied), her perceptions of

African Americans in Chicago (thugs), her perceptions of preppy African Americans

from her college summer program (innocently adorable), her response to college environments which expected her, on the basis of her background, to act like a stereotype, a stereotype which she performed (the ghetto one), and her response to African American college students who were "acting professional and educated" without being "fake" (that was "cool").

Students acknowledge familiarity with the concept of "acting white," however they do not report a conflict between academic achievement and their "non-whiteness." Although these students see themselves as being removed from the white power structure, cultivate a non-white identity, and readily point out examples of how whites have treated them badly on the basis of their "race," their apprehension and occasional distrust do not appear to elicit stereotype threat nor resistance to their academic goals.

Latino students overwhelmingly skip ascribing themselves to race categories on the census, most often selecting "other" until their senior spring, at which point they have gained familiarity with such forms . They do not however shy away from indexing whiteness and blackness, as demonstrated above, and either ascribing stereotypes to each category or aligning themselves to some degree to one of these categories, in particular, blackness. A chess game interaction during a class break in a summer Algebra 1 class demonstrates this process.

> *Two sophomores, Ruben and Herman take out chess board during a class break*
> *in their Algebra 1 class.*
> Alyssa (*Puerto Rican and Italian*): What, Hispanics know how to play chess?
> Herman: what do you mean? I'm good.
> Alyssa: Crazy Hispanics.
> Ruben: Just go, go. We only have a few minutes.
> Herman (to Ruben): Just 'cause you're black doesn't mean you're gonna win
> [note: Ruben does not look black, to an outside observer. looks Puerto Rican or

Dominican. Herman's skin is darker than is Ruben's, and Herman is Puerto
Rican.
Ruben moves a piece.
Herman: good stuff, good stuff.
Marisol *(future Grand valedictorian, watching)*: Oh, I'm so good at chess.
Jaime: Crazy racial slurs. *(Pause)* Uh, I'm in retreat.
Ernesto (Guatemalan) and Marisol (Mexican) start laughing again.
Herman: Don't' be fooled by the pawn. Don't be fooled by distance.
(Fieldnotes, July 28, 2005)

Herman continued his constant monologue and his playing of the chess match. The next
day, I hear Herman refer to Ruben as "my Negro." Other than Ruben's recent move from
New York, which distinguishes him from the heavily Chicago-born population of Grand,
I cannot explain an origin for this one-sided racial teasing between otherwise close
friends. Nonetheless, two years later, Herman and Ruben remained good friends, as
noted in observations and in their survey nominations of their three closest friends. By
the spring of their senior year, Herman was in the top third of the class, and Ruben was
doing better, in top fifth of class. Both boys were well-liked and participated actively in
their classes, including the Algebra 1 class in which I was observing and tutoring the
summer before their sophomore year.

These instances of racial talk, from high academic-performing students at Grand,
demonstrate the means by which blackness was articulated as a negative stereotype
category, at times (as in the latter case) in audible reach of the speaker's black peers.
While blackness was being formed as a negative category, so was whiteness, for different
reasons. Blackness was being associated with negative perceptions associated with
violence, ignorance, and inferiority at chess, and not acting professional. Whiteness on
the other hand was associated with the opposite – acting professional, being good at

chess, having power. At the same time, whiteness was Other-ized at Grand, as explained below. Acting white, in Michelle's words, was to not be genuine – unless the behavior spoke to genuine ways of acting, such as in her example of the African American girls at Carleton.

I would argue that the cultural capital training detailed in the previous chapter tries to teach and develop internalization of such ways of acting "professional," such that, by graduation, students could engage in this behavior in a genuine fashion and be a model college prep student. Ironically, although evidence does not support students explicitly associating this behavior training with whiteness, they were very clearly associating the privileges and norms of dominant culture with whiteness, as detailed across this chapter. The following section unpacks this process.

Evoking Disadvantage to Promote Advantages

What purpose does this institutional demarcation from whiteness and privilege serve, in particular, given the tension between who the students are and who they are preparing to be and be with? These comparisons seem to serve a dual function, the first of which is to psychologically prepare youth for the challenges which the faculty expect them to face after Grand. Mr. Roberts exemplifies the operation of this function in his coaching of the mock trial team, expressing surprise and mixed admiration at how well-equipped the suburban schools are, even considering the considerable support that Grand students receive. Preparing the team for competition at the beginning of the season, Mr. Roberts told them that the suburban schools take mock trial "very seriously," that it's "like a

religion," and that their first competition will be like a "burning with acid" if they don't shape up. This toughening-up effectually operates to prepare some of these most confident and gifted students from their predominantly low-capital school to compete against the best of the high-capital schools in the metropolitan area. Their consistent success on the mock trial playing field prepares them for their next challenge: measuring up and excelling in college.

The mock trial students are not representative of the student population as a whole, averaging only ten students each year out of a school with graduating classes of around one hundred students. The mock trial group does however illustrate a process by which students who are susceptible to stereotype threat can build confidence and resilience to succumbing to low expectations. The students excel most in competition against the toughest, most-polished schools, as demonstrated both in my observations and in Mr. Roberts' reports about past years' teams. They place highly and win awards in competitions despite their comparative disadvantage in resources and their visible comparative deficit of cultural capital.

Here, the students are to a degree being taught to "act white" while being reminded that they are not "white" and must therefore work harder to get ahead than do white students in the suburbs. In team practice sessions, Mr. Roberts repeatedly warns some students against acting or "getting ghetto," letting gestures or accents reveal more aggression and manners that the judges might notice. These mock trial students, like many other students at Grand, develop connections to a burgeoning and complicated "minority culture of mobility" in the process of being trained to negotiate their otherness

and their talents in hegemonic mainstream society . This training builds students'
resistance against stereotype threat while illustrating how cultural capital can be
cultivated amongst low-income minority youth while resisting whiteness, both in their
identity and in their desire to out-compete the "white schools," even by playing by the
same rules

Ethnic Identity and Identity Safety

Employing a widely-used and highly reliable psychometric measure, Phinney's
Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) , this section analyzes the climate for youth's
ethnic identity development. This fifteen-item measure asks youth to indicate their
ethnicity, after which they are asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with
twelve items regarding their ethnic group.[70] Following their responses, they are asked to
indicate the ethnicity of their father and their mother. The responses can be broken down
into two categories: ethnic identity search and ethnic identity affirmation, belonging, and
commitment. Table 4 illustrates the breakdown of these items into these two categories.

During adolescence, ethnic identity develops. This often non-linear process has
been found to be highly shaped by youth's social environment. Growing up in
predominantly same-ethnic neighborhoods and attending three or more years of school
with peers who overwhelmingly identify themselves as members of ethnic minority

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[70] This measure uses a four-item Likert scale to code responses: (4) Strongly agree, (3) Agree, (2) Disagree,
(1) Strongly agree. Although later iterations of the MEIM measure include reverse coding, this study used
this older, more commonly used version of the scale.

groups,[71] both native-born and foreign born students score moderately high on ethnic identity search. Native born students, the vast majority of the student population, score higher on ethnic identity search than do their foreign born peers. No major differences exist between any of the groups compared in the table above. Both categories report high levels of ethnic affirmation, belonging, and commitment by the end of their junior or senior year.

These high degrees of affirmation, belonging, and commitment present interesting possibilities relevant for students' postsecondary pathways. Although it has come under fire for overreliance on privileged Western models of psychological development, Marcia's identity status theory proves analytically useful here. This theory presents the question: where do Grand youth go from here? More specifically, what do these high levels of ethnic affirmation, belonging, and commitment tell us about the futures of Grand youth? By May, juniors and seniors either have made their decisions about college or are preparing to make them. If they are at the status of identity achievement, then they might be protected against the potential challenges to their ethnic identity that often arise in college, especially if college is the first setting in which these youth would reside in institutional and local cultures in which their minority status would be more salient, and more susceptible to stereotype threats to their identity . If they are at the status of identity achievement, they would further be less moved to subscribe to racial-ethnic schemas for their behavior, which would limit their aspirations .

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[71] MEIM ethnicity self-identification results, GELS Waves I and II.

On the other hand, Grand youth might not be at a stage of identity achievement. Their identity search scores are moderately high, but leave open the possibility that youth have either not considered alternate identity roles (diffusion) or have considered these roles but with insufficient turbulent examination as to reach a committed conclusion (foreclosure). The looming probability of identity challenges, during or after their transition from Grand, could result in identity moratorium. Any of these identity statuses could erode the stable, protected ethnic identities that this cohort of 11th and 12th grade Grand students exhibited in their survey results.

We know from the work of Steele and colleagues that those who fear stereotype threat avoid situations in which they might be vulnerable . Racial, ethnic, and class diversity are indices on which many students select their colleges. In the GELS survey, students were asked to respond to a three-point rating scale about college decision making factors. On a scale of 1 (not important) to 3 (very important), with 1 being not important, racial diversity scored a mean of 2.009 in juniors' and seniors' evaluation of its importance in their decision making. In practice, especially for students applying to four-year colleges, racial diversity received nuanced and deep consideration on the part of the student and the guidance counselor, as explained in Chapter Five. Grand might be a site of identity safety for its youth, but threat is situated in the world outside Grand. As detailed in earlier sections, the faculty and administration work heartily to prepare these students for these threats.

High achieving, in Relative Isolation

Then an eighteen-year old senior at Grand and star athlete in the academic top third of his

class by the spring of 2008, Nicolas Rivera thoughtfully explained both his own identity

insecurities about being Latino upon arriving at Grand and the difficulties which his non-

Latino peers might face at Grand.

> I: Well, not all of the students at Grand are Latino. What do you think it's like
> for them?
>
> Nick: Well, I feel that the non-Latino students, they kind of tend to sit together.
> Like, most of the African Americans sit together. They're like, really close.
> And I guess that's the easy way for them to not feel *(long pause)* left out I guess,
> because of the majority being Hispanic. That's how I see it. There are little
> cliques of the other people – the, the other ethnic groups at Grand, that stick
> together, so I guess that's how they go with it.

In this small high school, the small proportion of black students results in a bond of

considerable significance, one that does not seem to exist with such intensity amongst

any other group in the school.

About 8% of the student body is black, and fewer are African American, with

many black students identifying as Caribbean. One fifteen year-old Jamaican student

told me in an interview that of his five closest friends, three of those that he named are

the only other black students in the Algebra class with him, most of them two years older

than him. During class breaks, black students would meet in the hall by each others'

lockers or in the bathroom, making sure to pick up the students in classrooms on one of

the other floors. This strong intra-group support network is the strongest out of all groups

that I observed. For the native-born Latinos then, marking themselves as other or non-

white is an important marker for one's identity, whether or not it is intended an act of

opposition. Black students and perhaps immigrant students in general might already perceive themselves as being marked off as different and therefore are less likely to engage in these performances of non-whiteness.

Of student population, African Americans tend to live farther away and have their school decision made by parents. Of those who identify black, ethnic identity scores were comparatively low on core indicators, such as "I feel a lot of pride" in my ethnic group and "I feel good" about my ethnic group. These findings indicate that although the social environment of Grand might foster a positive identity culture for Latino students compared to other schooling environments, it does not have this effect on black students. These more negative ethnic identity orientations do not however necessarily map on to academic outcomes for black students, most of whom commute a longer distance to school than the Latino students and have strong bases of social support for college from their families (on average, of higher social class than the Latino students), churches, and both in-school and out-of school networks.

For example, Steven Smith, whom we met in Chapter Four, was a tennis star, well-liked, diverse circle of friends was frequently complemented by several teachers who told me that he was a good student. His mother picked school because discipline and reputation. Steven had close friends from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, although when we first spoke the summer before his sophomore year, he listed his five closest friends as the five other African American students in the summer school, of whom a few were older than him and shared few classes in common. Before Grand, Steven went to diverse elementary school and chose to attend college at a selective

Historically Black College in the South, as various members of his family had done before him. Although he avoided answering affirmatively my probe about whether race was a motivation for this decision – a desire to be around people from his background after being a minority in a majority minority school for four years – his responses to my probes suggest that this motivation was a significant and conscious factor.

Induction and Imagined Identity Threat

Despite the potentially alienating constructed culture of their school, survey results reveal remarkably high levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, physical and emotional well-being, and positive ethnic identity. Although school regulations constrain their behavior, students do not seem to perceive that their identities, at a fundamental level, are being constrained at the school. If the neighborhood location or the demographics of the student population were to be more alien, then the pro-minority, pro-working class background social culture of the school would not be able to exercise what I am theorizing to be a protective effect against identity or stereotype threat (Steele 2003).

Well-Being

This section explains the psychological climate of the school's student population.[72] Given what could be interpreted as extensive imposition of foreign cultural standards for behavior in efforts to mold the youth into model prep school students, standards enforced by entrenched disciplinary codes, it may surprise that students report such strongly

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[72] Because they have been in the school for over two and a half years, and have therefore been most exposed to the school culture, I use only the junior and senior results for this analysis.

positive ratings of their health, self-concept, self-esteem, and even affirmation of their

ethnic identity (Tables 5.2 and 4). These results suggest that despite the challenges

presented to them at school, the youth feel good about themselves, their abilities, and

their ethnic communities.

On average, students rated their physical and emotional health between very good

and good on a commonly used five-item scale for health self-report.[73] The standard

deviation falls on the high side of moderate, just over 20% of the potential variance.

Nonetheless, these scores are high for a population of working class adolescents in a

school with a heavy homework load and strict discipline, the two core school issues about

which students complain.

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[73] Items were taken from the General Social Survey. Possible ratings are Excellent (5), Very good (4), Good (3), Fair (2), and Poor (1).

Table 5.2: Health and Well-Being, Junior and Senior Subsample

Variables	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Health Self-Report				
Physical Health	3.81	1.04	1	5
Emotional Health	3.59	1.21	1	5
Academic Self-Concept				
Self-Assessment in Reference to Teacher				
Teacher-Oriented Self-Worth	3.29	0.63	1	4
Organized	3.06	0.79	1	4
Important	3.25	0.77	1	4
Successful	3.31	0.73	1	4
Intelligent	3.33	0.75	1	4
Worthy of Respect	3.50	0.72	1	4
Self-Esteem Measures				
Self-worth	3.60	0.61	1	4
Self-efficacy	3.17	0.56	1	4
Self-efficacy_Control	3.12	0.80	1	4
Self-efficacy_Plan	2.99	0.83	1	4
Self-efficacy_Able	3.36	0.63	1	4
Self-efficacy_Use	2.96	0.86	1	4
Life satisfaction	3.18	0.71	1	4
Pride in one's self	3.42	0.71	1	4

Note: Results taken from Wave I of GELS 2006 Survey, classes of 2006 and 2007.

Table 5.3: Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) Ratings, Junior and Senior Subsample

Variables	Grade 11	Grade 12	Female	Male	Foreign-Born	Native Born
Multiethnic Identity Measure Ratings						
Ethnic Identity Search	*2.718*	*2.867*	*2.858*	*2.725*	*2.552*	*2.850*
Spent time trying to learn about ethnic group	2.724	2.940	2.848	2.818	2.692	2.853
Active in ethnic-affiliated groups	2.474	2.343	2.519	2.303	1.923	2.508
Think a lot about how life will be impacted by ethnic group membership	2.575	2.761	2.649	2.692	2.385	2.740
Often talked with ethnic group members to learn more about background	2.893	2.985	2.649	2.862	2.769	2.975
Participate in cultural practices of my group	2.987	3.303	3.288	2.938	3.040	3.164
Affirmation, Belonging, and Commitment	*3.272*	*3.320*	*3.427*	*3.150*	*3.352*	*3.288*
Clear sense of ethnic background and meaning	3.092	3.060	3.165	2.970	3.154	3.066
Happy about membership in ethnic group	3.507	3.478	3.620	3.339	3.539	3.479
Strong sense of belonging to ethnic group	3.147	3.343	3.279	3.200	3.346	3.223
Understand what ethnic group means to me	3.081	3.239	3.308	2.985	3.308	3.133
Have a lot of pride in ethnic group	3.440	3.373	3.582	3.215	3.462	3.413
Strong sense of attachment towards group	3.211	3.299	3.388	3.092	3.269	3.254
Feel good about cultural or ethnic background	3.500	3.448	3.663	3.262	3.385	3.508
Overall Ethnic Identity Score	*3.041*	*3.125*	*3.191*	*2.965*	*3.003*	*3.106*
Valid N (complete data)	73	66	76	64	25	115

Note: Results taken from Wave I of GELS 2006 Survey, classes of 2006 and 2007. The 1992 version of the Phinney Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) was used in this survey.

Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy and student's educational aspirations are highly correlated. One self-efficacy measure that is low compared to the others and stands out – discouragement about planning because "plans [do not] always work out." Surveyed in May of their junior and senior years, Grand youth demonstrate highly positive estimations of their worth and self-efficacy. Students were asked to evaluate how they think that their teachers see them, on a four-point scale, in regards to being a) organized, b) important, c)

successful, d) intelligent, and e) deserving of respect.[74] The average ratings on each of these items ranged from 3.06 out of 4 (Organized) to 3.50 out of 4 (Worthy of Respect). These scores not only verify the efficacy of the teaching and mentoring efforts by the faculty but, further, they underscore the future potential of the college-bound students. Believing that teachers hold them in high esteem and respect, and so readily praising and crediting their teachers with their success at Grand, this social trust between the students and instructors could be transferrable to success in their post-secondary careers.

Similarly positive findings result from the more global measures of Grand youth's self-estimations.[75] For this analysis of self-esteem and self-efficacy, this dissertation employs the modified Rosenberg self-esteem scale used in the National Center for Education Statistics' Educational Longitudinal Survey of 2002 (ELS 2002).[76] This seven-item question asks students the degree to which they agree or disagree (4-item Likert scale) about various items regarding their self-esteem, including probes regarding their self-efficacy.[77] Ranging from 2.96 out of 4 (Feel Useful) to 3.60 (Self-Worth),

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[74] Students were asked to mark one response per item. The rating scale was as follows: Very (4), Somewhat (3), Slightly (2), Not at all (1). For example: How do you think your teachers see you? As organized? After which, students would select one of the four responses.

[75] Note the literature in the oppositional culture responses, where kids in lower ability classes felt better about themselves than those in the higher ability classes – in terms of self-esteem, looks better to be minority below your academic potential than to be pushed (and be in a minority environment). The implications of this are important here – my case is different.

[76] The highly reliable Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) uses a ten-item scale with responses answered on the same four-item Likert scale used in ELS 2002. The ELS scale uses a seven-item scale retaining most of the items but removing others. For more information, see: http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/els2002/.

[77] The four-item Likert rating scale ranges as follows: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). The seven questions to which student respondents are asked to respond are as follows: a) I feel I am a person of worth, an equal with other people, b) I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking, c) My plans hardly ever work out, so planning only makes me unhappy, d) On the whole, I am satisfied with my life, e) I am able to do things as well as most people, f) I feel useless at times, and g) I feel I have a lot to be proud of. Some items were reverse coded to focus respondents' attention to each

these scores indicate youth's positive estimation of their valuation of themselves.[78]

These youth display high degrees of self-worth (3.60) and self-pride (3.42), suggesting

high degrees of self-esteem and overall happiness.

For these youth approaching either graduation or their final year at Grand, self-

efficacy presents a still positive, but muddier picture. Four items on this modified

Rosenberg scale correspond closely with self-efficacy, people's estimation of their

agency or their ability to realize their future plans . Self-efficacy has been associated

with well-being and with mastery, control, and achievement . For juniors and seniors in a

college preparatory high school, self-efficacy would be strongly tied in with youth's

estimation of their post-secondary futures. In fact, in the GELS survey results, self-

efficacy highly predicts youth's educational expectations (see Appendix). Three out of

four of these items had larger standard deviations than the other items on the scale,

indicating wider variation in students' estimations of their ability to control the direction

of their lives, to make their plans work out (so planning only makes [them] unhappy), and

feelings of uselessness at times. These three items also scored the least positive ratings of

the seven items on the scale. These results indicate that although Grand students feel

good about themselves and their abilities, these positive valuations are balanced out by

unrealized expectations and the practical realities they face at home. At least to a degree,

Grand students, especially some Grand students, feel "useless at times" and find

themselves "unhappy" when their "plans hardly ever work out."

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item, by making "Strongly Agree" be attributed to either negative (I feel useless) or positive (I have a lot to
be proud of) attributes. I recoded the variables so that "Strongly Agree" would be associated only with
positive attributes," for clearer interpretation of the results.

[78] Although distinguish self-esteem and self-efficacy in theory chapter, make sure it's clear here, too.

Self-efficacy, the degree to which an individual believes himself to have agentic control over his life, is highly predictive of both how far a youth expects to go in school (less than high school through doctorate degree) and what type of college he expects to attend. His self-worth, or self-esteem, significantly predicts educational expectations as well. As I acquire new waves of college outcome data and integrate class of 2008 data into the analysis, I expect to see the persistence of this effect and to be able to more acutely examine the association between self-efficacy, college tier, and social capital as shared through networks. In this early stage of network analysis, I have found that while popularity alone does not predict educational expectations, racial homogeneity does. Specifically, having a racially homogenous peer group promotes higher educational expectations. This finding, in a predominantly Latino school, requires further unpacking. At the anecdotal level, although their proportion in the school is small, black graduating seniors attend selective and more selective schools at a greater rate than their numbers would suggest. The racial homogeneity of these ego-centric peer networks as a predictor merits further exploration to evaluate how these social relationships might provide special buffers against identity threat, perhaps in interaction with the importance of grades and homogeneity of academic track (based on mathematics courses).

Ethno-Racial Climate within the School

Students demonstrate familiarity with the concept of "acting white," as I noted on numerous occasions, however most students do not see a conflict between academic achievement and their "non-whiteness." Ogbu's conception of oppositional identity does

not operate here. Although these students see themselves as being removed from the white power structure, cultivate a non-white identity and readily point out examples of how whites have treated them badly on the basis of their "race," their apprehension and distrust do not appear to elicit stereotype threat nor resistance to their academic goals.

The faculty and administration have a role in this framing of the students as coming from low-advantaged backgrounds and having to work especially hard to get ahead. This theme emerged at the 2005 graduation ceremony. My observations suggest that the mock trial students and other academic stars of the school are both popular and well-respected by their peers, are not considered sell-outs, and are well-coached against stereotype threat. Although race does weigh on the minds of students, the awareness of being a minority tends to push students to fight against stereotypes, not to avoid them.

These youth experience themselves as non-white and often proudly display their ethnic heritage, but any concerns they have about how their identity will affect their pursuit of success in the mainstream are muted and come to the surface only with probing. On the survey questionnaire, only 27.3% of juniors and seniors responded that colleges' racial and ethnic composition would be an "important factor" in their decision. 45.5% responded that it would be "somewhat important," and 27.3% maintained that it would "not at all" be important in their decision-making. From my interviews with students, teachers, and administrators, I conclude that the socialization experience of Grand strongly minimizes the impact of concerns about identity threat, if not ruling it out altogether, then softening its potential blow to the potential of the self.

Ethnicity and Latinidad

Although students did not commonly refer to their school as belonging to any one ethnic or racial group other than "non-white," and the above section suggests a racial solidarity amongst the students, raced contestations of ethnicity occur on a regular basis at Grand School. These contestations occur in dress, national symbols, evocations of otherness, and social segregation by ethnic group. Students across the academic tracking spectrum readily know and refer to each other's ethnicity. The two most populous ethnic groups in the school are Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. Several independent informal interviews with teachers raised the issue of ethnic divisions within between these groups, that friendships were segregated by ethnicity, ethnic festivals elicited animosity, and that students make derogatory remarks to one another in the hallways. I did not find much evidence for such tension in my fieldwork, nor did I find any evidence thus far to demonstrate correlations between academic performance, tracking, and ethnic membership in one of the two groups.

Ethnicity is often cited and displayed, but does not appear to be a major source of social organization within the school. The teachers may be correct that friendships are somewhat segregated along ethnic lines, however this may be partially explained by preexisting ethnic segregation in their neighborhoods and elementary schools rather than anything more conscious. Still, both nationally-oriented ethnic heritage and pan-*Latinidad* grant meaning and pride to youth. My own experience in the school confirms this. An hour into my first observation of a one of the summer enrichment courses for sophomores and juniors, a female student whom I later learned is of Costa Rican and

Puerto Rican descent leaned over towards me and asked in a low voice, "You're Latina, aren't you?" She spoke authoritatively and told me that she and the other Hispanic girls sitting around us decided it when I came in the room, on the basis of my body type. She and the other girls looked pleased and excitedly invited me to join their conversation. The girls spent the ten-minute class break sharing stories with each other and me about learning to cook different kinds of rice and beans and other recipes. Although most members of the group seemed to be Puerto Rican on the basis of the foods described, others were not but still participated equally in the discussion. The following interview excerpt further illustrates the point.

I: What does being Puerto Rican mean to you?

R: (17 year old female senior at Grand School). To me, it means, it's just being a Latina in general, because it's like, a lot of us, you know, a lot of people say, oh you get pregnant when we're young, we get into this, we get into that, and it's like, you want to prove them wrong, you know, you want to go to school, you want to get educated, you want to go to college, you know, you want to be successful and be like, you know, hey, I'm a Latina and I'm here, you know? And you know, cause statistically we're on the bottom of the food chain when it comes to getting paid and it's like, you know, it's really sad that we're down there, you know, and we really need to start picking ourselves up and start being depende—independent and, you know, doing what we gotta do.

Such cultural pride acts as a galvanizing force to motivate youth to defy stereotypes. Examining 11th and 12th grade responses from this first wave of survey data, ethnic identity search and ethnic identity strength come across as two of the most significant non-academic predictors of educational expectations, demonstrating positively correlated associations with college plans and college types (four-year vs. two-year vs. vocational school). Those youth with high educational expectations are statistically significantly

more likely to be positively active in their ethnic identity search, the degree to which a

youth is actively engaged in cultural events, organizations, or thoughts about his or her

ethnic group.

Race, or in particular, non-whiteness appears to be equally respected a category as

Latinidad however, a surprising finding considering the school's demographics.

Membership in a Latino group is sufficient for acceptance as a fellow non-white person,

which seems more important than membership in a particular ethnic group. Russian-ness

and Polish-ness can sometimes meet that burden as well, if ethnicity is a salient

characteristic. The Latino students on the other hand rarely speak Spanish to one another

during the school day and even less frequently for any length of time. When Spanish is

employed in the classroom, bathrooms, and hallways, it is used more for the purpose of

quick, low-voiced *bochinche*, or personal gossip, rather than for a lengthy discussion.

Few students have a Spanish accent. Rather, half of the sample grew up with English as

their first language. Language acculturation data from the survey further reveals that

most students speak Spanish with their friends about half of the time. Speech comes into

play more frequently with the urban, street accent that some Puerto Rican, African

American, and some other students use in the school, which makes race visible as a

performance of if not blackness, then at least urban non-whiteness.

Residential Heterogeneity

The residential heterogeneity of Grand youth pushes them to socialize outside of the

home. Those students who choose not to do so, to focus their social energies more on

their home and neighborhood community than on their school community, report having

fewer friends at school and at times, less attachment to the institution. In the summer

before her senior year, Rosario Guzman, then seventeen years old, explained:

> "I've only been to one person's house from here and that's it. Um, I don't, like, I'm not real close with a lot of people here. I would say there's a good three, four people here that I'm real close with, that I talk to a <u>lot</u>. And then I go to their house or they come to my house. But like, it's, other than that, I don't. 'Cause the people that I'm close to here, they even live (*pause*) by <u>me</u> so it's convenient for me to just go visit them, so, 'cause like, a lot of people here... they live (*pause*) all the way, I don't even know where they live but they come all the way over here just to go to school and it's like, *is it that important?* (*We laugh*). My *goodness*, wow.
>
> But yeah, everybody's from everywhere and it's like, some people, most people that I know from here live by me. So it's, it's pretty cool, you know, I just go to their house or they come to my house. Like I said, I'm only real cool, like, real close with four people, so.... I just, keep it like that."

Those students who live farther away from school and the highest concentration of Grand

students similarly tend to be less socially connected to Grand.

CONCLUSIONS

The social, cultural, and academic capital engaged to mold the youth could run counter to

the ethnic, socioeconomic, and racial identities of the youth, however this does not appear

to be the case. Rather, to varied degrees, students accommodate the ambitions and

knowledges learned in the school. This complex process occurs at the level of the

students themselves, their peers, their teachers, the administration, and across these

levels. Acceptance of the "Grand" culture seems tightly linked to students' success

within and beyond the school.

CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS:
HOW SOCIAL CAPITAL, IDENTITY, AND FAMILY INTERSECT

INTRODUCTION

I: Have you thought about a career that you would like to have?

Jonny: Well, yeah, I wanted to go for being a paramedic. Basically, because I think it would be fun and I would enjoy it because *[pause]* it has something to do with math and something to do with talking to people, which for me is kind of easy, too. I would like to be that. [...]

I: Are there any other jobs that you've thought about?

Jonny: Yeah, I've thought about game design, basically because I like to draw. I like to play multiplayer games and I thought it would be fun but when it came to it – I actually got accepted to a college that I was going to go to but it was actually too much money and it was going to be a hassle for me so I decided to just try paramedics and go to [less selective private Arts and Design college in downtown Chicago] for two years.

I: What college was it that you were going to go to?

Jonny: It wasn't an academic college. It was [arts and design technical institute]... I really liked it and wanted to go to it.

I: What about it did you like better compared to other schools that you thought about?

Jonny: Maybe because it's like a Grand. It's real small. The classes are small. Computers. Our first freshman year we worked in computers ... still work in computers.

I: So it was small and there was a lot of focus on working with computers?

Jonny: Yeah....Well, I wanted to go to [Chicago Community College C] basically because it has an automotive department which I also wanted to do and I thought if I didn't really want paramedics, I could just switch my classes.

I: Well, given that you still seem to be a bit undecided about what kind of job you want to do, which is really common, have you thought about a four-year college or some other college that was more liberal arts where you weren't being tracked into a major right away?

Jonny: Well, basically no because my grades aren't really where ... I got off-track my sophomore year... but now that I dug a hole for myself it's hard to try to get out. So basically took the choice to go to community college. My options are really limited. Like, I thought about doing two years at Harold and transferring my courses into Dominican, because that's where I would like to go and to study um business but I'm not really sure of that but because I'd really like to do paramedics or anything automotive so (*pause*) so it's kind of like not really one magnet.

I: So it seems like you're interested in a variety of things that are not that related. Paramedics you like because it works with math and you work with people. And computers you like for different reasons, you know, game design and business, but they're all kind of different careers. Automotive ...

Jonny: Well, basically Grand prepares you for a lot of stuff and once you're trying to go for something, it's like there are a variety of things that I would like to do. And automotive technician would be the best for me because it's in the family but it's also kind of something that I would like to do for myself. But paramedics – it could be a job where I don't really relate to my family. Business, well, my sister studied business. I think in the long run, it will be easier for me.

I: You could open up your own automotive business.

Jonny: Well, yeah, Grand prepares you for a lot of different options.

Although it is marketed as a college prep school for future four-year college attendees, the students who persist in Grand Charter School pursue different pathways after Grand. Some of these differences can be explained by differing academic ability and motivation levels, such as in Jonny's interview excerpt above (during April of his senior year), although academic preparation and achievement alone do not explain the differences between individual graduates' post-secondary pathways and their present and future aspirations.[79] Rather, the data reveals nuanced interrelationships between identity development, post-secondary social context, and educational expectations. This chapter

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[79] Jonny was profiled in Chapter Four.

investigates the process by which multifaceted familial, cultural, and self-evaluation pressures elevate youth's ambitions leading up to high school graduation but can later restrain youths' educational ambitions, associated with youth choosing less selective colleges and less prestigious occupational pathways than they had previously intended. Grand teachers are expected to prepare all of its students for college, regardless of academic track. This decision to disseminate college preparatory training to all students is highly unusual and presents significant challenges.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter primarily employs ethnographic, interview, and survey data. The primary ethnographic data used in this chapter were collected during four periods: (1) while tutoring and distributing Wave II surveys in College Writing classrooms between April and May of 2008 and (4) during two special events: the June graduation of 2005 and an alumni reunion party in the December of 2007. Most interviews were conducted in the summer of 2005, spring of 2006, and spring of 2008. Quantitative data collection was conducted in May of 2006 and 1 ½ to 2 years later: May 2008 for the youngest cohort, high school seniors in 2008 and December 2007 – March 2008 for alumni.

Figure 6.1: Student selecting ACT prep books with teacher. Note the extensive number of AP and ACT workbooks.
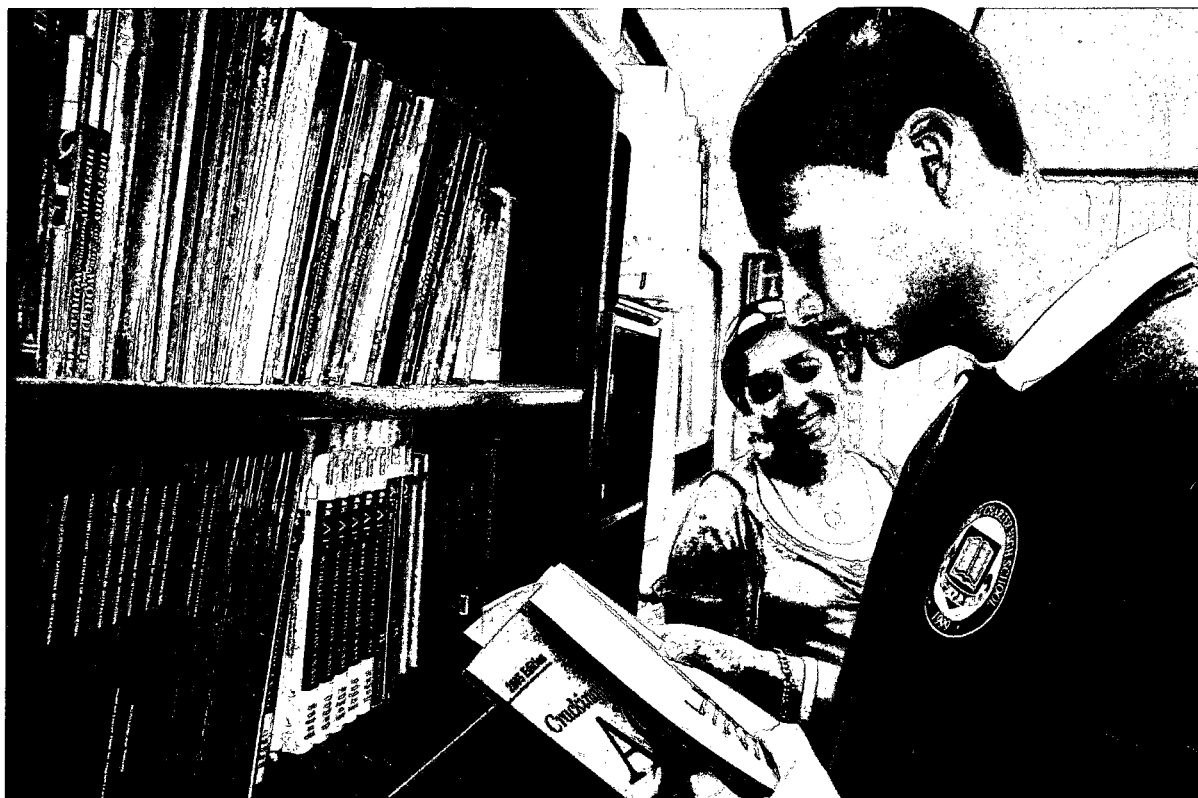
FINDINGS

College Preparatory Training for All

Grand has no full-time guidance counselor. Rather, at this college preparatory high school, so

oriented around college-going, college counseling and preparation are distributed among the staff

and is purported to occur at every step, from August of their freshman year, on and – increasingly

-- beyond graduation. This counseling work is done by teachers, advisors, administrators, and

professional guests.[80] ACT, AP, and other testing workbooks line the walls and bookshelves of

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[80] This including me on occasion when I was on site – I would be asked to give advice to seniors with whom I was interacting.

classrooms (Figure 2). During advisory period, advisors teach listening skills, using National Public Radio while students complete exercises in their workbooks. Alumni and staff lead college trips to city and local colleges in the fall and spring.

The most intensive college guidance work occurs in students' senior year, when a member of the English department offers intensive counseling in a "College Writing" class. Instruction in this mandatory senior year class focuses on hands-on, and at times heavy-handed, coaching through writing resumes, filling out applications, learning about and applying for scholarships, navigating financial aid awards, figuring out when placement tests are held, preparing for interviews, and some college essay writing. Students can get excused from class to take college placement tests and go on college interviews. This kind of college preparatory labor tends to occur in the home of middle-class families and in consultation with professional coaches and tutors for upper-middle class and above families.

This in-school college training is at times hands -on to the point of hand-holding. During observations in April and May of 2008, such intensive guidance was prevalent. Sonia Flores, a quiet Puerto Rican student in the 2nd lowest of six academic tiers, was planning to attend a local two-year college that would allow her to major in fashion design; she draws all the time, she tells me, and had told me that she always planned to be a designer. Plus, she explained, she does not want to consider four-year colleges because her parent contribution will be too high; she does not expect to get enough financial aid. Sonia's mother is a police officer and her father works for a major manufacturing company.[81] Sonia's mother told her that she is only allowed to have two years of college, or at least, that's all that her family will pay for. Although Sonia was one month from completing a time-intensive college preparatory academic program at Grand, her guidance counselor asked me to help her on the computer to determine when her placement examinations

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[81] Sonia's parent employment information is from her survey responses and from an interview with her in the summer of 2005. The remainder of this information is from our April 2008 conversation.

were for Fall 2009 enrollment while she helped walk another student through his "misleading" (her term) financial aid award letter. While Sonia might not have needed help looking for the placement test dates, which we readily found on the college's homepage, Ms. Garcia, the college guidance counselor, communicated a sense of the kids needing help pushing through the rest of the year and bridging the gap to actually get to college.

And pushed they were. Hanging from the ceiling, an acronym proclaimed:

"SMART:
    Sit up straight
    Make eye contact
    Ask questions
    Respond Clearly
    Take Notes"

Teachers across the school voiced support for this kind of training towards being a good student. In the spring of 2008, Mr. Renstraum, the teacher known by students for having a degree from Harvard, who two separate students reported being "like a dad" to them, had been teaching at Grand for several years. He told me then that whether a student went on to a prestigious college or went to work in car repair, in his view, the cultural skills that they gained would help them advance in their field – knowing how to deal with people, how to talk to them professionally – and if students do not go to a good four-year college, that should not be considered a failure because the school is still helping that student in the long run.

This issue of success and how it's evaluated – whether students' decisions to attend a two-year school or a four-year school or no school at all should be counted as a loss – was a site for conflict, confusion, and differences of opinion among teachers and administrators, in a school whose strength is the centrality of its mission: college for all;

"changing lives." This chapter explains the mechanisms for students' and teachers' negotiations of the abstract college goal when, quite late in many students' senior years, the goal becomes more tangible, and often times more challenging.

Table 6.1: Relative Life Importance of Potential Achievements, to Seniors in Class of 2006, by proportion of respondents

| | Application Year | | |
| | Not | Somewhat | Very |
Potential goal	important	Important	important
Getting a good job	0.0%	2.3%	75.6%
Give my kids better opportunities than I had	0.8%	3.1%	74.0%
Career success	0.8%	3.8%	73.3%
Steady work	0.0%	6.1%	71.8%
Getting a good education	0.0%	6.1%	71.0%
Making my family proud of me	1.5%	5.3%	70.2%
Strong friendships	0.0%	19.1%	58.8%
Being able to support parents	1.5%	22.9%	53.4%
Marriage and family life	6.1%	19.8%	51.9%
Helping others in my community	3.8%	36.6%	37.4%
Lots of money	2.3%	39.7%	35.9%
Having children	11.5%	35.1%	31.3%
Living near parents and relatives	7.6%	39.7%	30.5%

Source: GELS Wave II survey. Data collected in late April of senior year, 2008, for the class of 2008. Proportions calculated based on the total possible respondents in that class year, totaling 131, including the 29 students who left the sample before senior spring, most of whom are missing because of school attrition - either moved away, transferred, or stopped out. 102 of 109 enrolled seniors completed this item.

Note: Questionnaire item replicated from ELS 2002: 2004 Follow-Up survey instrument. Question reads as follows: "How important is each of the following to you in your life?   Note: you might not want to achieve these things right NOW. This question is asking how much you value the following things for your life, overall. (For example, if you don't feel that it's very important to have lots of money right NOW, but you do feel that it's very important to have lots of money at SOME point in your life, then you would still rate "having lots of money" as very important.)"

Table 6.2: Occupational aspiration changes, from Sophomore to Senior Spring

Occupation at 30, Time 1	Occupation at 30, T 2	#
Unsure	Teacher	6
Unsure	Unsure	4
Crime fields	Crime fields	3
Unsure	Crime Fields	3
Teacher	Teacher	3
Unsure	Business	2
Doctor	Doctor	2
Unsure	Doctor	2
FBI	FBI	2
Doctor	Nurse	2
Nurse	Nurse	2
Unsure	Nurse	2
Unsure	Programming	2
Police, chef, firefighter	Crime Fields	1
Psychologist	Crime Fields	1
Unsure / military	Crime Fields	3
Athlete	Accountant	1
Architect	Architect	1
Small business	Athlete	1
Unsure	Athletic trainer	1
Business	Automotive	1
Unsure	Broadcasting	1
Doctor	Business	1
Lawyer	Business	1
Marine	Business	1
Psychologist	Business	1
Design	Chef and restaurant	1
Health fields	Doctor	1
Artist	Engineer	1
Unsure	Engineer	1
Architect	Graphic Design	1
Athlete	Journalism or Marines	1
Journalist	Journalist	1

Table 6.2 continued : Occupational aspiration changes, from Sophomore to Senior
Spring

Construction/military	Marines	1
Business	Nurse	1
Unsure	Performer	1
Health fields	Pharmacist	1
Unsure	Physical therapist	1
Unsure	Professional	1
Social work	Real Estate	1
Chef	Restaurant business	1
Lawyer	Social work	1
Business	Social Work or nurse	1
Architect	Surgeon	1
Design	Teacher	1
Doctor	Teacher	1
Nurse	Teacher	1

Source: Survey Waves 1 and 2, both administered in the spring (May 2006 and April
2008).
Note: Valid N: 101 out of 107 in senior class of 2006. Responses with missing values in
Time 1 or 2 are not shown, to focus on changes, and are available from the author by
request. Missing values are from item- or respondent-level non-response. Responses
were re-coded from open-code prompt by author in order to aggregate popular
responses, such as types of doctors as "doctor" and forensic science, police officer, and
medical examiner as "crime fields".

Table 6.3: Relative Life Importance of Various College Attributes for College Enrollment, to Seniors in Class of 2006, by proportion of respondents

Attribute	Not important	Somewhat Important	Very important
Available degree program for chosen field	0.8%	11.5%	61.1%
Availability of financial aid	0.0%	13.0%	59.5%
Availability of specific curriculum	0.0%	16.8%	56.5%
Good record for job placement	1.5%	18.3%	51.9%
Strong academic reputation	1.5%	25.2%	46.6%
Low-crime environment	1.5%	29.8%	42.0%
Good record for graduate school placement	3.1%	31.3%	38.2%
Active social life at the school	3.8%	33.6%	34.4%
Low expenses	5.3%	38.9%	28.2%
Chance to live away from home	18.3%	26.0%	28.2%
School size	8.4%	38.2%	26.7%
Ability to attend school while living at home	30.5%	19.8%	22.9%
Geographic location	11.5%	38.9%	22.1%
Racial or ethnic composition	13.0%	38.9%	21.4%
Easy admission standards	16.0%	36.6%	19.8%
Ability to apply college credits earned in H.S.	24.4%	29.0%	19.1%
Reputation of sports program	28.2%	29.0%	16.0%
Ability to attend parent's alma mater	64.1%	6.1%	3.1%

Source: GELS Wave II survey. Data collected in late April of senior year, 2008, for the class of 2008. Proportions calculated based on the total possible respondents in that class year, totaling 131, including the 29 students who left the sample before senior spring, most of whom are missing because of school attrition - either moved away, transferred, or stopped out. 102 of 109 enrolled seniors completed this item.

Note: Questionnaire item replicated from ELS 2002: 2004 Follow-Up survey instrument. Question reads as follows: "How important is or was each of the following in choosing a school you would like to attend? (Mark one response on each line)"

Table 6.4: College matriculation data, by cohort, at times 1 and 2

College Tier	Class of 2006		Class of 2007		Class of 2008	
	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
No college/military	9	12	9	11	11	10
2 year college	24	39	16	21	43	46
4 year college, less selective	10	11	9	10	14	13
4 year college, selective	17	11	14	9	19	18
4 year college, more selective	27	14	25	22	15	15
4 year college, most selective	4	4	2	2	6	6
Missing (transferred, moved, no info)*	0	0	10	10	0	0
Total	91	91	85	85	108	108

* Missing is in reference to the first wave of data collection in 2006, explaining why there is more missing data for younger cohorts who had more time to lose track of students over the course of the last years of high school. They have been keeping and building up an alumni database since the last years of the study. Most of the students missing in the class of 2007 transferred out before junior or senior year. (Source: Internal school enrollment lists)

Source: High School records, integrated into GELS Wave II survey. College at Time 1 valid for the summer after their senior year. College at Time 2 valid for April 15, 2009. In-between data, from Chicago Public Schools Postsecondary dataset and school records collected between 2004 and 2008 are available upon request.

College for College vs. College for Accreditation

Like Sonia, David Gomez, another senior in that low-middle academic tier, was set on a particular college which he expected to efficiently take him through to a two-year degree path to his chosen career path: graphic design. He plays a lot of video games so he understands it, he explains, and you can make a lot of money, he tells me: computer engineering and design is getting to be a really big field. He posed the question, to Ms. Garcia and me: "Why should I go to a four-year school without my major when it's

cheaper to go to a two-year school and start doing what I want to do right away?" Ms. Garcia showed displeasure and advocated for his application to a four-year college, walking over to her filing cabinet and pulling out an application to [University Y], a local lower-tier four year college with a majority Latino student population.[82] Here, just fill it out, she tells him. She turned to his girl friend, sitting one seat over, for support. Please get him to fill it out, she asked the girl, who smiled, with a slightly bored expression, and agreed to talk to him about it. Beeps sounded the end of class, and David walked out the door. When I saw Ms. Garcia later in the week, she was still pushing him to fill out the application.

By senior year if not considerably earlier, most students, and their families, are in agreement that college would benefit their career trajectories. Some students, interested in the sciences or design will decide that they should only apply to colleges with forensic science majors or graphic design programs, even if these colleges do not award B.A.'s and have abysmal graduation rates. They will go for what they know, whether they know the job from television programs or have heard commercials for the college on the radio. Jonny, in that same extended conversation in which he was negotiating the right college for him, advocated for his preference for the for-profit vocational college in which he eventually enrolled that fall: "Why should I go to a school where I'm taught by professors when I could be taught by industry professionals, who can help me get a job?" This argument, quite similar to a series of radio, metro rail, and television spots airing locally at the time, tied in with his argument that he could get his training done in two

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[82] Pseudonym

years instead of four years at that school, which, he argued calmly, is economically and practically more reasonable.

In addition to career-training specificity, money and obligations factor into these decisions. Students, like Jonny, project that attending these two-year technical schools, many of which do not offer financial aid, might be considered a cost-savings over four-year colleges, although this needs not to be the case for these low-income, aid-eligible students, especially when the low graduation rates of these colleges are taken into account . Some students, and the guidance counselor, tell me that their families will only send their children to college for one year, considering anything beyond that a luxury or indulgence that they cannot afford. Some students feel obligations to give back to their families who have "sacrificed" to help them through high school, and pass on four-year colleges in order to care for younger siblings or older relatives. These familial and financial pulls, either before college matriculation or afterward, generate the biggest challenges to Grand's endeavor to turn its students into future college graduates.

Tables 6.1 through 6.3 present Wave II survey data for the class of 2008, collected in the spring of their senior year. These tables demonstrate students' motivations for schooling and the relationship to occupations. Table 6.1 compares students' self-report of the relative importance of potential achievements over the course of their lives. Between 70-75% of students who responded listed the following as being most important, in descending order: getting a good job; giving their kids better opportunities than they had; career success; steady work; getting a good education; and making their family proud of them. Occupational aspirations varied, but tended to be

familiar occupations – through television programs or common experience. The most popular occupational aspirations (for age 30) were in teaching, law enforcement, medicine (doctor, nurse, and technician), small business ownership, business management, FBI work, and forensic medicine; additionally, engineering and graphic design (Table 6.2). The most important factors in their selection of a college were most strongly tied to occupations, curriculum and degree fields, and job placement, with financial aid and academic reputation being considered "very important" by most as well (Table 6.3).

The school's college guidance program attempts to counteract these decisions, steering as many students as possible into four-year colleges with financial aid support. Grand alumni in college are brought in to speak about their experiences. Increasingly, college trips are arranged to give all students an opportunity to visit colleges in the region, of varying types. These initiatives meet success. Each year, a consistent proportion of the relatively small graduating class matriculates into some of the most elite colleges and universities in the country. Major scholarships for private school tuition have made it easier for the academic stars of Grand to attend top colleges and universities, if they decide to matriculate.[83] A larger proportion consistently matriculates into the selective and more selective categories of colleges and universities (Table 6.4).

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[83] Two of these scholarships – from the Posse Foundation and the Gates Millennium Scholars Program -- award full-rides to some of the best colleges and universities in the country. The Posse Foundation, a scholarship program which recruits talented underrepresented youth from major urban school districts, for use at colleges, most of them small colleges. Each school district is permitted a short list of schools. Chicago Posse Scholars are permitted to use their scholarships to attend Carleton College, Denison University, DePauw University, Pomona College, Oberlin College, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Source: http://www.possefoundation.org/main/university/index.cfm. Note: Oberlin was added to the list in the

Even for those students who make it through four years of Grand, matriculation into a selective four year college is not a given, nor, as discussed above, is it necessarily a preference. Each year, between one quarter and one half of the class, mostly from the lower academic tracks, enrolls in community or vocational colleges after graduation. Although in April and May of their senior year, many of these students report intentions to enroll in four-year colleges (nearly half of those two-year school enrollees); these plans do not pan out. Further raising questions about college persistence: within months to a year after graduation, many of the students in lower and mid-tier colleges become college movers .

These students might officially transfer out, decrease their enrollment status, work full-time for some months, or shift between full-and part-time enrollment at one or more colleges at a time. Discussions with teachers, the former and present college guidance counselor, and alumni reveal varied explanations for these changes, from academic struggles to negotiating the common practice of dramatically minimized financial aid packages after the first year of enrollment to a variety of more subtle social and personal challenges. Table 6.4 shows matriculation and college change by category of primary college of first enrollment during the fall of first year after high school (time 1) and one to three years later, April 15, 2009 (time 2). This table shows the relative changes from one college tier to another but does not show the extensiveness of college enrollment moves (about 20% of the class within 1-2 years after college).

The college moves of Grand alumni tend to occur either within the same category (in particular between community colleges) or within 1-2 categories above or below in selectivity. Some of these moves represent transfers from no enrollment or two-year college enrollment to four-year college enrollment, the traditional community college to four-year college pattern. Overall however, these moves tend to explain either (a) moving from one local college to another, in particular within the Chicago community college system or (b) moving to a less selective and/or more local community college from a four-year college. For example, Vanessa Corral, profiled in Chapters Four and Five, told me in the summer before her senior year that going to college in Chicago was important to her, in response to my question about whether she was working during that summer (2005).

> Vanessa: For sure, when I graduate, the first thing that I want to do is look for a job. So that's gonna be on my list, right there.
>
> I: Would you look for a job for the summer then or during the year?
>
> Vanessa: If finding a job in the summer, since I'm out of high school, I'd probably keep it and try to, you know, balance out, when the sum—going, to a job and going to school. Because I really do want to go to college and if I go to college, I'll be the second to go college in my family. My grandma was the first, which was a real surprise, because, oh my gosh, she went to college, you know, back in the day a lot of people didn't go to college, you know. So she went and she works at the [local social service non-profit]; she works with them, and she tells me, because she doesn't speak much English, so she just tells me that she works for crazy people who see the psychiatrist. Something like that. So like, I wanna (pause) be (pause) the person to, you know, be successful in the family, you know, like she was.
>
> I: Do you think that you'll be going to college in Chicago?
>
> Vanessa: Yeah. That's a big thing for me. I wanted to go at first, I wanted to go to another state, but then I thought, you know, it's gonna be real hard for me because, like, I have a lot of family here and, I don't even see my family as often, and like if I leave, I'm not going to see them at all. So, like I don't want

to leave because of that and because one of my uncles on my mom's – my mom has one brother and he was born mentally ill [and I help my grandma a lot with taking care of him, but I don't want to leave her with taking care of him by herself. 'Cause my mother helps [R's emphasis], but since she's working she doesn't, she can't help as much she wants to. So since I'm always available, I'm the one who helps him. So like, I get to do that and I help her out. So…

I: So it's important for you to be around, to be able to help and to be with your family?

Vanessa: Yeah.

As noted in Chapter Four, Vanessa did leave Chicago for school initially, to go to a more selective state college within a few hours of transit from Chicago. I spoke with her again, at a school alumni party in December of 2007, where I was recruiting alumni to participate in the second-wave survey. When I asked her how she was going and what she thought of University X, she told me that she was no longer there; it was too hard to be there for school and also be working, and she decided to move back and attend Y College, a smaller selective enrollment college closer to her home, in order to be able to balance school and work and family.

Negotiating school, heavy work schedules, and family obligations while attending college locally can be significantly taxing however. Former Grand guidance counselor Bob Roberts raised that issue with me as a primary factor in the reasons given by alumni for stopping out of college during or after their first year. In particular, he argued, families who witness these struggles can contribute to the stop-out process if their support of post-secondary education is not aligned with a four-year model, but rather a one or two years is "enough" model.

Although students report that their parents have high expectations for them, as demonstrated in Table 6.5, such stories raise concerns about the ELS and GELS survey measures of parent education, which are specific about most potential educational outcomes, but designate a four-year degree as "graduate from college" a status attainment which Grand families seem not to read as being so specifically bound to particular number of years or types of colleges. If the prompt had instead read "Obtain a bachelor's degree or Complete a 4-year degree," it might not have been the dominantly most popular response for students' and parents' (by student self-report) educational expectations. Before we compare individual-level educational pathways through and post-Grand more extensively, we need understand the school's model for attempting to realize its stated mission of making "college" a reality for all of its enrolled students.

Table 6.5: Student Self-Report of Parent's Educational Expectations, Wave I

College Tier	Parent Expectation	
	Mother	Father
Less than high school graduation	1.5%	6.6%
High school graduation or GED only	11.9%	7.1%
Attend or complete a 2-year school course	5.4%	5.1%
Attend college, but not complete a 4-year degree	5.9%	5.1%
Graduate from college	33.2%	29.6%
Graduate from college or obtain a master's degree	1.5%	0.5%
Obtain a master's degree or equivalent	12.4%	9.7%
Obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced degree	15.3%	13.8%
Don't know	9.4%	12.8%
Does not apply	3.5%	9.7%

Source: GELS Wave I survey, May 2006

Note: No significant differences were found in cross-tabulations with gender, parent marital status, homeownership, or having a sibling who attended Grand.

Attempting to Equalize Academic Preparedness

The ability levels of entering students range dramatically, across all subject areas. Some students come in with problems as fundamental as reading and elementary-level math skills. Others enter from specialized middle school programs in public and Catholic schools that would have enabled them to gain entry to selective enrollment high schools. Although transformations are not revolutionary (i.e., ninth graders who come in at a fifth-grade reading level tend not to graduate in the top ten percent of their class), many of these least-prepared high school students do make it into college.

Given the importance of academic readiness for college admission, Grand must boost the readiness of the less prepared students to fulfill its mission as a college preparatory school. In efforts to meet this goal, teachers at this already small high school maximize their ability to give individual instruction and support using pedagogical tools to attain freedom of time within the classroom. As discussed earlier, teachers use visual message tools to limit distractions and task-oriented questions. Teachers are encouraged to start students on their homework in class, which serves three functions. First, as reported by Ms. Coleman, a white Algebra teacher in her 50s, this practice is intended to get students' momentum started because getting students to complete their math homework is, in her view, the biggest academic challenge to getting them ahead. In her view, there are "just too many distractions at home." In the math classes that I observed, getting the class a jumpstart on homework involves doing a few problems in class, sometimes on the board, and continuing the problem set at home. Teachers claimed that this practice provided an opportunity to address any initial issues or confusion regarding

the assignment. A second result is met when stronger students finish in-class assignments early, and are permitted to get started on homework. Finally, this practice frees teachers up to be able to address needier students' individual needs and be on hand to mentor stronger students, in attempts to keeping all students engaged and learning. This style of instruction distributes teacher support more intensively to each student, in efforts to support the school's goal of equalizing academic preparedness for college, a goal which necessitates holding all students to high academic standards.

Using a block schedule with long class periods in the style of college and college prep courses, Grand students take their classes according to their academic tier, or track. The faculty attempt to minimize the visibility of this categorization of students into different ability levels. The special education program exemplifies this strategy. One classroom teacher who identified herself as a special education teacher, explained:[84]

> "A lot of the kids don't know we have special ed and even some of them that are in it don't know they are in it.... we don't separate them out, but we do give them extra attention and focus on their weaknesses, and sometimes though not always or often, lighten their assignments. So they don't always know. And because we can team teach, the kids can get the special attention, but the class continues, so it's smoother. Actually, two of the students in here are special ed, but you might not know who they are. And they sometimes turn out to be the best students... we help them get their skills up to par. And sometimes they don't need the special ed anymore. Like I said, you don't always know who's in it even; they blend in.... When they first started, five years ago, they took kids aside in individual sessions but now they're in the same classes and it's better."

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[84] I was only given permission to tape record interviews with students; therefore none of my teacher interviews are audio-recorded. Teachers were all informed that I was a researcher doing a study on Latino kids' pathways to college. With no major exceptions, they were curious about the study and openly participated in discussions with me about the school. I had my laptop or other writing utensils with me during most classroom observations and transcribed these informal interviews as close to the event as possible. This particular interview occurred during a break in a long classroom session in which students were working on papers in the computer lab portion of the classroom. I transcribed the interview minutes after it occurred.

Although intentionally minimized by teachers, academic ability tracking does occur at Grand, in the forms of academic tiers.

Grand offers various enrichment programs to allow all of its students the opportunity to move up the academic tier system. Although such mechanisms make mobility across these tracks possible, in particular from year to year, many students see these tiers as fixed, and even go so far as to describe social judgments made across groups on the basis of these tiers:

> Michelle (top tier): So, the top three tiers are on A day, like, English, History and ... Reading. And then, so our B days would be Math, Health, and, and then some other classes. So then our A days would be considered the smarter people and then the B days would be considered the less *(pause)* smarter people. *(Pause)* That's kind of mean. You don't want to be like, oh what do we have for English today? Oh, I don't have English today. Oh, you're a B day student. That's just *(pause)*; it sounds really horrible thinking about that. *(Beginning at "just", R begins laughing.)*

> But that's the reality of it. We're, that's how you can tell who's on what level. Freshman year we all took a test and now we're placed where we need to be in and we've been with the same people since. I mean, I've been in the same class with my friends or my Tier 1 since freshman year.

> I: Has your Tier I group changed at all?

> Michelle: Yeah, it has. If you're slacking, you get bumped down a tier. If you're doing well, you get bumped up a tier, so we're doing, well, yeah. The majority is still the same. I'd say over the years, a few people have moved in and out but since in your senior year, you're based off of your math level, a few people who were in AP last year are here now.

Tracks are not only socially indexed, but they are written in text on the chalkboard of each classroom, under the handwritten daily schedule. For example, among the seniors, the "A" tracks go from 1-4 and "B" tracks from 1-2. On the board, the schedule might note that A4 meets from 9:20-10:40am, followed by A1 from 10:44-11:24am, with the

rest of the day's scheduling block listed accordingly. In this way, tracks are made visible and in effect sanctioned as a part of each classroom and daily in-school interaction.

High rates of students participate in summer enrichment programs (Wave II and internal school data) in order to move up or, for some, because their parents wanted them to have something to do for the summer. In either case, students who take a full summer session could increase their academic placement in multiple subjects after one summer of, most often, half-day academic schooling. For students who start out below seventh grade math ability, there are $25 remedial classes to take the summer before the first year and after the first year to place students on track to complete at least Algebra 1 by senior year. Failure to enroll in Algebra 2 by sophomore year can often close the door to four-year college admission therefore the investment in remedial enrichment training benefits the school overall, boosting its ability to place graduates in college. Further summer work toward college occurs for many Grand students through their participation in the Summer Start program.[85]

Making College Tangible: Summer Start Program

Coordinated in collaboration with support from Grand trustees and college programs seeking to diversify their student base, the Summer Start program allows an average of twenty Grand students per year to participate in college courses. About half of these placements are at some of the best national colleges and universities.[86] Some of these

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[85] Pseudonym.

[86] For example, participants have been placed at The University of Michigan, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Georgetown, Brown, and the University of California campuses.

placements are local, at Chicago area colleges. A few of these placements are for study abroad programs. Participation in Summer Start accomplishes multiple functions for the students and for the school. The program makes college tangible, giving the abstract aspiration a physical space, enabling interaction with professors, college students, and potential peers. At the higher level institutions, these peers tend to be either private school students or generally more socioeconomically advantaged peers. These programs present some of the students' first interactions with the types of peers that they might encounter in college. These programs also present them with the potential to experience stereotype threat as a result of their minority status in these residential summer college programs, experiences in which individuals' performance drops and/or they disengage from experiences in which negative stereotypes about their group might be salient, attributed to internalization of stereotypes of one's group . Across the Summer Start programs, participants' first-hand experience with college settings motivates their postsecondary choices in one way or another.

Military Track

One aspect of the school culture that receives little mention at Grand, and occupies a considerably more subtle space than its sister programs at neighboring public high schools, is the prevalence of JROTC in the school. Few students participate in the military after graduation; only one or two students per class on average enroll in either the armed forces or an officer-training school after high school. During high school

however, a quarter of the student body participates in JROTC.[87] Students rarely wear

military uniforms in school, allowing them to assimilate, in contrast to their peers at most

Chicago public schools that regularly signal their pre-military status with their uniform

fatigues. Although the Grand School program does not successfully *recruit* many

students into the military, it does breed *respect* for the military and its codes of discipline,

honor, and hard work against adversity. In this way, it reinforces and complements the

value-teachings of its college preparatory culture which Grand cultivates.

In most urban schools, the military track and the college track do not operate

under this symbiotic relationship, particularly in wartime. From the first cohort of Grand

graduates onward, the U.S. has been engaged in active combat in Afghanistan and Iraq.

These wars have continued throughout the study, as has heavy recruitment from the

students' heavily minority and Latino communities, communities in which leaving home

for war is more common than leaving home for college. At Grand however, the

basement office of the Marine Corps JROTC operates below the radar and achieves

greater success producing future college graduates rather than military enrollees from its

working class soldiers-in-training.[88] That said, as seen in Table 6.2, the military track

does get some attention, in particular the Marine Corps.

In April of his senior year, and in front of his classmates who were working on

their resumes and related "college writing" activities, Ernest Gooding defended his

preference for the Marines against the cautions raised by me and Ms. Garcia. With the

---

[87] Sources: school reports and survey data, Wave I.
[88] JROTC is visible at special events such as the graduation, where the band and flag ensemble performs at the beginning of the ceremony. JROTC at Grand appears virtually invisible.

Marines, he said, you get to travel places. Plus, there's a lot of ignorance, a lot of racism

out there in the world, and I want to explain where we're coming from. Ms. Garcia

responded adamantly, but you don't need to risk dying to get to do that. I tested a middle

ground, noting that the military offers a lot of opportunity for career advancement and

financial support for college, but that my cousin-in-law was on his fourth tour in Iraq.

Ms. Garcia piped in that she has family in the military, too, and so Ernest should really

consider going to University Y instead. Ernest smiled and shook his head and then

started to tell me about how he was at my university watching for a Latino cultural show

that past weekend, visiting one of his friends who had enrolled there that fall, and the

details of the different performances. Ernest, a thoughtful, articulate, but not exemplary

student, fell in the lower-middle of his class in academic standing, with a 2.35 GPA and,

thereby, moderate college opportunities despite my observations of him on various

classroom occasions as being an engaged student and popular – across academic tier

groups - member of the school community.

From Abstract Aspirations to Actual Transitions

Despite the motivation that exists within most of their families for high educational

attainment, high ambitions do not necessitate alignment with the heavy educational

investment (time and money) needed for the professional careers to which college prep

schools – including Grand – train their students to pursue. Returning to the earlier

discussions of social capital, low-income and working class youth tend to have limited

connections to individuals with higher education and in education-heavy professions.

Rather, these social capital bridges primarily occur in school. The knowledge networks of these low-income youth and outside of school can be quite limited and often have incomplete or even incorrect information about how to move towards college degrees and careers of choice.

More problematically for Grand and its students however is the overall picture of academic achievement and academic preparation for college. After the fall of their senior year, the un-weighted GPAs of the class of 2008, in which more of its academically struggling students persisted than in previous years, ranged from 3.83 to 1.20. As demonstrated in the quantitative results presented in Chapter Four, Grand students place high value on their grades and report that their closest friends' also place high importance on their grades. This importance does not necessarily translate to high academic outcomes, even a for student population for whom many report – both in survey and interview results – strenuous work in class and at home.

The academic stars of Grand also entertain concerns about the sufficiency of their academic readiness for college. In their case, they are competing with peers from higher social class backgrounds, most of whom have completed the country's best elementary and secondary programs at both public and private schools. One of the alumni, after a year at [Top 10 Liberal Arts College B] lamented, with significant frustration, about what she called her insufficient preparation for college math courses. Her sister, with whom I spoke at length after three years at [Top 20 Liberal Arts College C], shared this opinion, although both sisters – children from a large family whose parents had emigrated from Mexico while the girls were children – were advancing successfully toward graduation

upon our last conversations in December 2008. Then current senior Michelle shared

these academic concerns:

> I: Do you think Grand has met your expectations in terms of academics?
>
> Michelle: In a way it has and in a way it hasn't. I mean, I haven't been let down
> at Grand because I've always been in tons of AP classes and [other advanced]
> classes.... Not that I haven't been challenged... I mean I definitely have to work
> sometimes to keep my grades up.... Because our school is small so it can't offer
> a range of classes....
>
> I: So if you were at a school with more levels...
>
> Michelle: Yeah, I'm second in the senior class but my class is only 93 students
> but... not that it's really important but sometimes I would like to feel a little
> more pushed around ... I mean, there are definitely times when I feel stretched
> but....
>
> I: Is that a motivation for you to be applying to come of the colleges that you're
> applying to? Because I mean, you're applying to some pretty top level places.
>
> Michelle: Definitely, it is. But, I mean, I've always done good, even in grammar
> school. But it does worry me that even though my ACT of a 25 is good in
> Illinois, where the average is 18, that's not good in other states where the
> averages are higher. I mean, I know that these kids that are going to the colleges
> I'm applying to – they've been to private schools and all these things that they
> could pay for and you know I haven't *had* to pay for my education. It just kind
> of worries me like maybe how, like, I may be able to get in but how am I gonna,
> I don't know, survive amongst the other students. Because I can get competitive
> and I –I just want to be at like the same level. I don't want to be the *best*, I
> know that that might not happen of course but just, I don't want to fall behind.
> That *is* a concern.

Michelle similarly persisted in her college career, at [Top 10 Liberal Arts College A],

however such concerns again raise the specter of something like stereotype threat,

whereby student's ethnic, socioeconomic, and non-brand name public schooling

backgrounds might inhibit some of their academic and occupational choices. This study

did not find indications of this outcome, but does raise questions about its possibility for

investigation in future studies.

Table 6.6: Bivariate Regressions on College Matriculation, by Selectivity Tier in Fall after High School and April 2009

Variables	College Tier, April 2009	
Grade in School	-.034	
Academic Orientation		
Disciplinary Infractions and Behavior (higher=more infractions)	-.153	*
Class Un-Preparedness (coming to class without pens, homework)	-.063	
Academic Club Member	.097	
College Timing (time of enrollment after graduation)	-.197	**
Educational Aspirations (how far you'll go)	**.233**	**
Academic track		
Grades Important	.145	*
AP Class	**.350**	***
College Decision Factors		
Job/ Degree Program Availability	.186	*
Racial or ethnic composition	-.157	
Size of college	-.004	
Ethnicity, Race, and Generation		
Ethnic Identity Affirmation	.110	
Not Hispanic or Latino	-.002	
Puerto Rican	-.041	**
Mexican	.126	*
Generational Status	.014	
Female	.146	*
Psychometric Measures		
Emotional Health (self-rating)	.087	
Physical Health (self-rating)	.002	
Self-worth	.120	
Self-efficacy: Plans work out	.057	
Self-efficacy: Able to do things as well as most people	.072	
Pride in one's self	-.035	
Teacher Sees Me as Important	-.012	

Table 6.6, continued

Social Capital within School

JROTC participation	-.030
Participation in rugby	-.003
Involvement in Sports	.077
Academic club	.097

Family Demographics

Married parents	-.010
Own home	.095
Religiously active	.067
Number of siblings	-.031

^ Statistically significant beyond the .10 level.
* Statistically significant beyond the .05 level.
** Statistically significant beyond the .01 level.

Table 6.7: Multivariate Linear Regressions on College Matriculation, by College Type in Fall after High School and April 2009

Variables	Time 1		S.E.	Time 2		S.E.
Gender (female)						
	.243		.164	.279	*	.150
Academic Orientation						
Disciplinary Infractions and Behavior (higher=more infractions)	**-.327**	*	**.152**	-.428	***	.130
Class Un-Preparedness (coming to class without pens, homework)	-.102		.092	-.043		.077
Grades important	**.467**	*	**.195**	-.179		.172
College Decision Factors						
Job/ Degree Program Availability	**.358**	*	**.143**	**.284**	*	**.122**
Live at home	**-.178**	^	**.098**	**-.141**	^	**.083**
Ethnicity, Race, and Generation						
Foreign-Born	**-.384**	^	**.228**	**-.744**	***	**.196**
Feel good about ethnic group	-.051		.723	-.004		.118
Racial or ethnic composition of college important	-.139		.104	-.296	***	.089
Psychometric Measures						
Self-efficacy: Plans work out	.025		.095	-.025		.082
Self-worth	.032		.133	.026		.116
Social Capital within School						
Grades important to of closest friend	.174		.116	-.024		.098
JROTC participation	.216		.136	-.026		.111
Involvement in Sports	.232		.214	.152		.183
Involvement in Clubs	-.212		.153	.065		.129
Teacher Sees Me as Important	**.212**	*	**.096**	.066		.080
Social Capital outside School						
Intergenerational social closure (know friend's parents)	**-.473**	***	**.173**			
Religiously active	.274		.177	.018		.150
Family Demographics						
Number living in home	-.178		.042	**-.100**	**	**.036**
Married parents	.131		.161	**.217**	^	**.133**
Own home	.071		.160	.038		.135

Table 6.7, continued

R2	.388		.410		.598
Adjusted R2	.243		.271		
F-statistic	2.686	**	2.952	***	

^ Statistically significant beyond the .10 level.
* Statistically significant beyond the .05 level.
** Statistically significant beyond the .01 level.
*** Statistically significant beyond the .001 level.

Modeling Student Pathways

Until now, we have primarily examined individual-level results with qualitative data and only engaged quantitative findings at the descriptive, aggregate level. The tables below show regression statistics for theoretically important predictors and controls of college enrollment types, (a) within a semester of graduation and (b) one to three years later (depending on cohort). The multivariate model using Wave I variables to predict college matriculation, presented in Table 6.8, has highly statistically significant predictive power (beyond .003 for Time 1 and beyond .001 for Time 2). For predicting college enrollment at Time 1, teachers seeing R as important (positive), importance of job or degree program in selecting a college (positive), grades important to R (positive) and disciplinary infractions (negative) were the most significant. For predicting college enrollment at Time 2, female gender (positive), importance of job or degree program in selecting a college (positive), importance of race or ethnic composition in selecting a college (highly positive), foreign born status (highly negative), number living in the home (highly negative), and disciplinary infractions (negative) were the most significant.

Although social capital indicators, ethnic identity, and self-efficacy have been theorized as being highly important, and although they have been found to be very important in the qualitative data, the measures used here found support for positive effects on college matriculation but not beyond levels of statistical significance. It is possible that support for these theories might be better found in quantitative data with more precise measures and more sophisticated recoding of extant data.

Table 6.8: Student Self-Report of Educational Aspirations, 10th grade, Wave I

College Tier	Aspiration				
	Grand	ELS Hispanic	ELS Black	ELS White	ELS Multi-racial
High school graduation, GED, or less	3.7%	11.7%	9.6%	7.2%	8.2%
Some college (e.g. 2-year degree or attend without completing 4-year degree)	7.4%	12.1%	11.6%	10.0%	8.7%
Graduate from college	40.7%	35.0%	37.3%	35.9%	35.0%
Graduate or professional degree	25.9%	28.2%	33.1%	37.6%	39.8%
Don't know	22.2%	13.0%	8.5%	9.4%	8.2%

Source: GELS Wave I survey, May 2006 and ELS Wave I Survey, Spring 2002

Comparisons with National and City Data

In the spring of their sophomore year, Grand students aspire to four-year college

graduation at rates higher than their national peers on the same survey item, about three

to five percent higher than the ethnic subgroups most represented in the ELS population

(Table 6.8). The differences are greater in comparing rates at which Grand and ELS 10th

graders aspire to only a high school diploma, GED, or less. Grand students, most of who

are Hispanic and self-identify as such, select this aspiration at a rate of 3.7 % whereas

11.7% of Hispanics in the ELS dataset select this aspiration. These differences, for a

college-prep charter school population might be expected. When graduate school

aspirations are factored in however, Grand 10th graders report lower higher educational

aspirations than most of their peers in the national data, with the exception of Hispanics.

66.6% of Grand youth aspire to college graduation or a graduate or professional degree,

compared with 63.2% of Hispanics, 70.4% of Blacks, 73.5% of Whites, and 74.8% of

those who chose more than one race. Overall, youth from all groups report high

educational aspirations toward, even if the corresponding educational attainment levels

are low in their families and communities.[89] The next set of comparisons reveals

differences which can contribute to the explanation of the more complicated pathways.

The third most popular selection of Grand sophomores, at 22.2%, was "Don't

know," an item which 13.0% of Hispanic sophomores, 8.5% of Black sophomores, 9.4%

of White sophomores, and 8.2% of Multi-racial sophomores selected. And although a

---

[89] For a majority Latino school, the low rate of foreign-born status (11.3% of my sample) at Grand lowers the relative weight of citizenship status as an obstacle for college matriculation; among this population, many foreign-born students at Grand have lived in the U.S. for many years and have permanent residency papers however I do not have figures to report for this.

relatively small proportion of Grand students report aspiring to college attendance

without completing a 4-year degree program (7.4%), the data presented in this chapter

and earlier chapters reveals this to be the case at a rate higher than 7.4%, although the

recency of student's graduation from college might allow time for more alumni to get on

the college bandwagon.

Table 6.9: College Enrollment Data, all graduates of the Class of 2006, in comparison to alternate schools and Chicago Public High School graduates as a whole

College Tier		Grand	Magnet School A	Neighborhood School B
Number of graduates		91	929	364
Enrolled in college		67.0%	75.6%	30.2%
	4 year college	82.0%	80.5%	54.5%
	Outside Illinois	18.0%	9.7%	N/A
	Full time	80.3%	80.2%	53.6%
	Very Selective	34.0%	14.0%	N/A

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Data, reported by Department of Postsecondary Education and Student Development, Office of High School Programs, Chicago Public Schools. Report published April 24, 2007. Includes only students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution prior to November 1st. Some post-secondary institutions and some students who did not apply for loans (e.g. got a full ride) are not included in this data.
Note: The comparison schools were selected on the basis of their status as the most popular selections
for the item - "Where would you have attended had you not gotten into Grand" in their category for Grand students sampled.

Table 6.9 compares graduates from Grand to graduates from the two most popular

alternate high school choices reported by Grand students in their Wave I survey data.

The data in this table comes from National Student Clearinghouse Data, which has some

irregularities but is at present the strongest sources of post-secondary enrollment data for

Chicago Public Schools. Data on graduation and postsecondary enrollment would tell a

more complete story and enable a more accurate analysis of what happens to youth who

enroll in Grand, in comparison to students who did not get in. Because of current data

irregularity issues in how graduation rates are recorded from school to school and at the

city and state levels, this comparison will focus solely on graduates, using the National

Clearing House Data. This dissertation study does not intend to, nor can it, evaluate the

effect of a Grand education. Rather, contextualizing Grand as a case is the sole the

purpose of comparing Grand post-secondary outcomes to other schools.

Of those students who graduate from their respective high schools, Grand students

are likely to be enrolled in college at more than twice the rate of the most popular

neighborhood school by November 1st after their graduation. The most popular magnet

school, which selectively enrolls students based on their high academic skills and

training, has 75.6% of its graduates enrolled in college by November 1st, a rate nearly 9

percentage points higher than that of Grand. Comparing the proportion of students who

are enrolled in college, Grand's students are nearly twice as likely to be enrolled in

school outside of the state and two and a half times as likely to be enrolled in a very

selective college.

CHAPTER SEVEN
IMPLICATIONS

As an institution, Grand has realized many of its high aspirations. Grand's college

placements and the appearance of college preparatory model replication notwithstanding,

there are cracks beneath the surface. Air-conditioned science laboratories feature

laboratory tables, microscopes, and enthusiastic instruction, however the school did not

procure science textbooks until the fall of 2005, Grand's sixth year. Math is another area

of academic weakness for Grand. These deficits create particular challenges given the

pre-calculus and calculus classes they need to be taking as seniors in order to gain

admission to most four-year colleges. Math teacher Tricia Coleman confided that failure

to complete homework remain a major obstacle she faces in getting students to succeed.[90]

Many seniors and alumni agree that of all of their challenges, their readiness for college-

ready math was their biggest concern in preparing for college; for alums who had

transitioned, it was among their biggest frustrations.

Three alumnae from the class of 2004, all attending elite liberal arts colleges,

complained to me that the first question they received from teachers upon their summer

2005 visit to Grand was the same: "Are you going back next year?" The students felt

"extremely hurt" by this question, believing that the teachers expressed a lack of faith in

their ability to "make it" through four years at predominantly white institutions, far from

home. Mindful of the then high attrition rate for Grand students after their first year of

---

[90] Pseudonym.

college, around 20% at the time, the question becomes more forgivable. Students who do

not persist in college tend to be the students who also had trouble in high school,

academically and with family issues.[91] Students who have built enough social and

academic resources during high school, like these three alumni, graduate more resilient

than would be expected.

From my interviews with students, teachers, and administrators, I conclude that

the socialization experience of Grand counteracts the potential for stereotype threat: if not

ruling it out altogether, then softening its potential blow to the potential of the self.

Although few students rank diversity of their post-secondary institution as important to

their college decisions in Wave I (regardless of grade), respondents later report that the

culture and support of the institutions in which they enroll has much greater importance

than they had predicted. Nevertheless, both qualitative and quantitative data find little

support – using these measures – of an educational impact of race and ethnicity on

educational enrollment and attainment.

Overall, the psychometric indicators found less support than I had expected on

educational attainment, from self-efficacy and self-esteem to well-being and ethnic

identity. The most significant psychometric indicators dealt with students' perceptions of

teachers' estimations of them, which ties into the qualitative findings of the importance of

student-teacher relationships on their secondary and post-secondary educational success.

This study design presents strengths and weaknesses. Within case studies, it was

possible to triangulate data and connect interview respondents to ethnographic

---

[91] Source: interview with guidance counselor.

interactions to two waves of survey data and, for the seniors, their senior year grades. These gains demonstrate the potential of mixed-methods, longitudinal work and the potential contributions that it can make to the fields of human development, sociology, and education.

At the aggregate however, there were challenges caused by the study design, challenges which reinforce the reasons why this kind of ambitious study design is so rare, and is perhaps better accomplished in collaborative teams than on solo projects. As a dissertation, this study could and perhaps should receive the same critiques that many other mixed-methods projects – like Prudence Carter's first major study – for not excelling at either methodology for the sake of putting the methods together. Although I was in the field off-and-on for three years, I was not in the field for continuous time, due in part to concerns about over-taxing the school and keeping them interested in allowing me to run my surveys. On the survey end, because I initially had limited resources for enticement carrots and wanted to keep good enough relationships with the school to keep qualitative data follow-up in the study, I passed on more aggressive potential means to address missing data, made more of a challenge by limited time (because of my other data and analysis efforts) spent running missing data and replacement analyses, HLM models by advisory group, and propensity score analyses by years of enrollment. That said, I am confident that I can employ these rigorous quantitative analyses – and the greater comparison with the ELS 2002 dataset which I had intended to include in this dissertation – in later articles and book manuscript.

One of my primary sets of findings regards the limitations of ELS 2002 and quantitative work in general, particularly among a population experiencing rapid change, such as youth. For example, the presumably straight-forward "Occupation at age 30" variable demonstrated high unpredictability, even shortly after the survey. Grand alumna Yesenia Santos is a case in point. Although her survey response to this question in May of her junior year was "forensic science technician," Yesenia explained her occupational aspirations one year and two months later as follows:

> Yesenia: "My mom wants me to be a doctor. I don't think that I want to go to medical school. We'll see. You never know, but, I want to be a biologist. But I also know that I want to write a book some day, so I think I'll need a Ph.D."

Now an anthropology major at a top 10 national university within a half hour drive of her home, Yesenia's path could not have been accurate predicted in relation to the primary pathways of the Grand students interested in forensic science fields, some of the strongest advocates for two-year over four year colleges. Further questions arise about strength of ELS variables, in particular with repeat responders in my Wave 2 survey, some of whom gave considerably different answers just one hour or two weeks apart. Again, some of this variation might in part because youth is such a time of change, however in interpreting survey analyses of studies of youth, we should consider these limitations.

From the dissertation, I expect to extend this work into more extensive engagement of ethnographic analysis and quantitative modeling and comparisons to ELS 2002.

This dissertation raises questions about the frequency and predictors of college change, which is seen here and in other studies as being critical for understanding the

pathways of low-income and ethnic minority youth, most of which do not take the four-year college path. To understand what happens to these youth, we need to pay more attention to community colleges and vocational colleges, and their relationship with four-year college-going.

Further, this dissertation's results expand the concern about ethnic minority males and the importance of gender in secondary and post-secondary educational and occupational trajectories.

Although generation, race, and ethnicity do not emerge as important predictors in the quantitative data, the descriptive quantitative data and extensive qualitative data raise further questions about the operation of ethnicity and race in schooling environments. Given the rarity of studies of majority minority schooling situations in which the school and the students are not failing, in which the research could connect to normative, dominant studies of schooling environments, examinations of school climate in such settings could make significant contributions to the field. In this study, Latinos and most other ethnic minorities had high sense of well-being but African Americans did not, which, perhaps for selection and demographic reasons, does not associate with negative educational outcomes.

Finally, more studies tying social capital to specific operations and longitudinal effects would benefit the field, in which social capital and social networks as theoretical frameworks abound but vary in their contributions.

APPENDIX A
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

In addition to the social mechanisms detailed in the analytic chapters, the school employs

pedagogical mechanisms that merit detailed description in order to more accurately

understand the case study. To that end, this appendix notes a few important components

of the educational structure of the school in lay, non-social science language.

ORIGIN OF THE SCHOOL

At Rogers High School, in the vicinity of where Grand came to be, Mr. Schurski taught

math and mentored his calculus group toward college. At the same school, Mr. Roberts

had mock trial. In deciding to found a new charter school, Mr. Schurski and his wife,

also an educator, gathered together an initial base of staff from their contacts at Rogers

School and the community.

PEDAGOGY

Skill building

In designing and implementing curriculum, the school has strongly incorporated skill

building programs into its writing and math programs. Students are taught how to write

using graduated difficulty type papers – in their first years, they work on type 1 and type

2 papers and are expected to build up in sophistication to be able to write type 3 and type

4 papers in their later high school years. In Math, the program that receives the greatest

criticism from teachers and students regarding its efficacy and success, many classes use

an influential curriculum intervention called IMP, which math teachers at Grand have

told me builds critical thinking and is meant to make math more exciting.

Repetition and Time Resource Management

Teachers explain the day's assignment both orally and then on the board.[92] The use of

such visual content instructions frees the teachers from frequent re-explaining of basic

principles and directions during class time, with the intent of allowing them to focus

attention talking with students individually about their progress on their assignments

rather than lecturing.

---

[92] The assignment was delivered, in similar language, to ensure comprehension and to keep students on the task. The message was delivered orally: "When your thesis is done, let me know and I'll approve it. Remember, after your thesis, you need to begin gathering evidence." After this statement, the instruction was written immediately on the board: "If you've got the thesis, the next step is this → where are you going? → And then gather evidence."

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRES

GRAND CHARTER SCHOOL
EDUCATIONAL LONGITUDINAL SURVEY
MAY 2006

Administered by:
Lara Perez-Longobardo
University of Chicago and the National Opinion Research Center

---

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS NOT A TEST.

WE HOPE YOU WILL ANSWER EVERY QUESTION (OTHER THAN THE ONES YOU ARE DIRECTED TO SKIP OVER), BUT YOU MAY SKIP ANY QUESTION YOU DO NOT WISH TO ANSWER.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.

FILLING IN CIRCLES:

It is important that you completely fill in the circles next to your answers and print clearly.

A correct mark is dark and thick, with the circle completely filled.
An incorrect mark is light and thin.

Answer Selection: Correct = ●   Incorrect = ⊠ ✓ ⊖

PART 1: INFORMATION FOR FUTURE FOLLOW-UP

PLEASE NOTE: Your information will be kept confidential. All personally identifying information will be coded and kept separate from your responses.

1. **Please print your name, address, home phone number, and email address.**

Your name:

_____

Last name   First name   Middle name

Address where you can be reached next year (include number, street, apartment #, etc.):

_____

Address

_____

City   State   Zip Code

Email address: _____@_____

2. **How many people live in your home?** _____
      (Include your parents, your siblings, yourself, and anyone else)

3. **What is the marital status of your parents?**

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O Married
O Divorced
O Separated
O Never Married
O Other (please specify) _____

4. **Do your parents rent or own their home?**

O Rent
O Own
O Don't Know

5. **How many siblings do you have? (Write the number of siblings for each category. Write "0" if none apply):**

Full Siblings _____   **Half-Siblings** ____   **Step-Siblings** ___

6. **Where were you born? (city, state, country)** _____

7. **Please state your birth date.** (ex. June 22, 1989) _____

8. **What is your sex?**

Male........................ O
Female .... O

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 9-11:

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. These questions are about your <u>ethnicity</u> or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

9. **Please fill in:**

A. In terms of ethnicity, I consider myself to be _____

B. For each of the following, use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(4) Strongly agree   (3) Agree   (2) Disagree   (1) Strongly disagree

1- I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.   _____

2- I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

_____

3- I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

4- I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.   _____

5- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.   _____

6- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.   _____

7- I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.   _____

_____

8- In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked
to other people about my ethnic group. _____

9- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group. _____

10- I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food,
music, or customs. _____

11- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

12- I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background. _____

_____

10. My father's ethnicity is: _____

11. My mother's ethnicity is: _____

12. Are you Hispanic or Latino/Latina?

O Yes → GO TO QUESTION 13
O No → SKIP TO QUESTION 14

13. If you are Hispanic or Latino/Latina, which one of the following best describes you?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano/a
O Cuban
O Dominican
O Puerto Rican
O Central American (Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, Costa Rican, etc.)
O South American (Columbian, Argentinean, Peruvian, etc.)

14.
15. Please select one or more of the following choices to best describe your race.

(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

O White
O Black/ African American
O Asian
O Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
O American Indian or Alaska Native

16. Where were your parents and grandparents born?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH LINE)

	U.S. Mainland	Country (Specify)	Puerto Rico	Other
a. Your mother		O	O	O_____
b. Your mother's mother		O	O	O_____
c. Your mother's father		O	O	O_____
d. Your father		O	O	O_____
e. Your father's mother		O	O	O_____
f. Your father's father		O	O	O_____

17. About how many family members live in the Chicago area (aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents):

A. On your mother's side? _____   B. On your father's side? _____

18. Do you attend church or other religious services at least once a year (Yes or No)? _____
19. If so, what kind of church or religious service (For example: Catholic, Baptist, etc.)?

PART II: SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES

20. A. Why did you decide to attend Grand, instead of another high school?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Yes	No
a. My brother and/or sister went to Grand	O	O
b. My friend(s) went to Grand	O	O
c. My elementary school teachers recommended Grand	O	O
d. I wanted to go to a small school	O	O
e. Because I didn't get into one of the other schools on my list	O	O
f. My parents didn't think that my neighborhood school was good enough	O	O
g. I didn't think that my neighborhood school was good enough	O	O
h. I thought that my chances of getting into a good college were better at Grand than they would be at Lane Tech or a similar school	O	O

B. If you had _not_ been admitted to Grand, would you have attended your neighborhood school (Yes or No)? _____

C. Name of the school that you attended before coming to Grand _____

21. How many times did the following things happen to you in the first semester of this school year?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Never	1-2 times	3-6 times	7-9 times	10 or more
a. I was late for school	O	O	O	O	O
b. I cut or skipped classes	O	O	O	O	O
c. I was absent from school	O	O	O	O	O
d. I got in trouble for not following school rules	O	O	O	O	O
e. I was put on in-school suspension	O	O	O	O	O
f. I was suspended or put on probation	O	O	O	O	O

22. How often do you come to class <u>without</u> these things?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Never	Seldom	Often	Usually
a. Pencil/pen or paper	O	O	O	O
b. Books	O	O	O	O
c. Homework done	O	O	O	O

23. Please write down the names of your best friends at your present school. Please fill in up to <u>three</u> names. If you have fewer close friends, provide less than three names. Then for each friend you named, answer questions 22a through 22g.

Friend 1	**Friend 2**	**Friend 3**
First name _____	First name _____	First name _____
Last name _____	Last name _____	Last name _____

a. Is this friend...?

O Male   O Female | O Male   O Female | O Male   O Female

b. Is this friend Hispanic or Latino/a?

O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No

c. What is this friend's race? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY FOR EACH FRIEND)

O White	O White	O White
O Black/ African American	O Black/ African American	O Black/ African American
O Asian	O Asian	O Asian
O Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	O Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	O Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
O American Indian or Alaska Native	O American Indian or Alaska Native	O American Indian or Alaska Native

d. What grade is this friend in at your school? (MARK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH)

O 9th   O 10th | O 9th   O 10th | O 9th   O 10th
O 11th   O 12th | O 11th   O 12th | O 11th   O 12th

e. How important is getting good grades to this friend? (MARK ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH)

O Not at all important | O Not at all important | O Not at all important
O Somewhat important | O Somewhat important | O Somewhat important
O Very important | O Very important | O Very important

f. Do you know either or both of this friend's parents?

O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No

g. Does your mother or your father know either or both of this friend's parents?

O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No | O Yes   O No

24. What level of Math are you currently studying?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O Math 7/8
O Algebra 1
O Algebra 2
O Calculus
O Other (please specify) _____

24. Have you ever been in any of the following kinds of courses or programs in high school?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Yes	No
a. Advanced Placement (AP)	O	O
b. Dropout prevention, Alternative, or Stay-in-School Program	O	O
c. Special education program	O	O
d. JROTC or similar military program	O	O

25. For each sport listed below, indicate whether you have participated on a team during this school year.

(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

	Did not participate	Participated in a club or intramural team	Participated on a junior varsity team	Participated on a varsity team	Participated as a team captain/ co-captain
a. Baseball	O	O	O	O	O
b. Softball	O	O	O	O	O
c. Basketball	O	O	O	O	O
d. Football	O	O	O	O	O
e. Soccer	O	O	O	O	O
f. Rugby	O	O	O	O	O
g. Other team sport	O	O	O	O	O
h. An individual sport (ex. Track)	O	O	O	O	O

26. Have you participated in the following school-sponsored activities this school year?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Yes	No
a. Band, orchestra, chorus, choir	O	O
b. School play or musical	O	O
c. Student government	O	O
d. National Honor Society or other academic honor society	O	O
e. School yearbook, newspaper, literary magazine	O	O
f. Academic club	O	O
g. Debate club, model UN, or mock trial team	O	O

PART III: PLANS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

27. As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

Less than high school graduation	O
High school graduation or GED only	O
Attend or complete a 2-year school course in a community or vocational school	O
Attend college, but not complete a 4-year degree	O
Graduate from college	O
Obtain a Master's degree or equivalent	O
Obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced degree	O
Don't know	O

28. Do you plan to continue your education right after high school or at some time in the future?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

Yes, right after high school	O	
Yes, after staying out of school for one year	O	
Yes, after staying out of school for over a year	O	→ (GO TO QUESTION 29)
Yes, but I don't know when	O	
No, I don't plan to continue my education after high school	O	→(SKIP TO QUESTION 33)
I don't know if I'll continue my education after high school	O	→(SKIP TO QUESTION 34)

29. Which of the following do you plan to attend?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O Four-year college or university
O Two-year community college
O Vocational, technical, or trade school

30. If you are a senior and have applied to college, to how many schools have you applied? (MARK ONE RESPONSE)

None   O →(SKIP TO QUESTION 32)
1 school   O
2 to 4 schools   O   → (GO TO QUESTION 31)
5 or more schools   O

31. Print below the names and locations of the two schools to which you have applied that you are most likely to attend. If you do not know the complete address, write in as much as you know. (If you applied to less than two schools, print only those to which you have applied)

School 1 name: _____

City: _____   State: _____

School 2 name: _____

City: _____   State: _____

32. How important is or was each of the following in choosing a school you would like to attend?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
a. Low expenses (tuition, books, room and board)	O	O	O
b. Availability of financial aid, such as a school loan, scholarship or grant	O	O	O
c. Availability of specific courses or curriculum	O	O	O
d. Strong reputation of the school's athletic program	O	O	O
e. Active social life at the school	O	O	O
f. Ability to attend school while living at home	O	O	O
g. Chance to live away from home	O	O	O
h. A low-crime environment	O	O	O
k. Strong reputation of the school's academic programs	O	O	O
l. Easy admissions standards	O	O	O
m. Availability of a degree program that will allow you get a job in your chosen field	O	O	O
n. Racial or ethnic composition of the school	O	O	O
o. Size of the school	O	O	O
p. Geographic location of the school	O	O	O

33. Which of the following are reasons why you have decided <u>NOT</u> to continue your education past high school?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Yes	No
a. I do not like school	O	O
b. My grades are not high enough	O	O
c. My college admission scores are not high enough	O	O
d. I will not need more education for the career I want	O	O
e. I cannot afford to go on to school	O	O
f. I haven't taken the right courses	O	O
g. No one in my family has ever gone on to school after high school	O	O
h. I plan to join the military	O	O
i. I would rather work and make money than go to school	O	O
j. I don't feel that going on to school is important	O	O
k. My counselor or teachers recommend that I work rather than continue my education	O	O
l. I need to help support my family	O	O

34. Write in the name of the job or occupation that you expect or plan to have <u>at age 30</u>. (Fill in the blank or check one of the ovals below).

O I don't plan to work when I'm 30
O I don't know

WHEN WE SAY PARENT(S), MOTHER, OR FATHER, ANSWER FOR THE PARENT(S), GUARDIAN(S), OR STEPPARENT WITH WHOM YOU LIVE MOST OF THE TIME.

35. How far in school do you think your mother and father want you to go?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Mother	Father
Less than high school graduation	O	O
High school graduation or GED only	O	O
Attend or complete a 2-year school course in a community or vocational school	O	O
Attend college, but not complete a 4-year degree	O	O
Graduate from college	O	O
Obtain a Master's degree or equivalent	O	O
Obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced degree	O	O
Don't know	O	O
Does not apply	O	O

PART IV: LANGUAGE

36. Is English your native language (the first language you learned to speak when you were a child)?

        O Yes → (SKIP TO QUESTION 38)

        O No → (GO TO QUESTION 37)

37. What is your native language?

(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

O Spanish	O Polish	O Chinese
O Portuguese	O French	O Japanese
O Russian	O Korean	O Other

38. How often do you speak your native language with...?

(IF ANY EXAMPLE DOES NOT APPLY TO YOU, PLEASE MARK "Does not apply.")

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Never	Sometimes	About ½ of the time	Almost or more than half of the time	Does not apply
a. your mother	O	O	O	O	O
b. your father	O	O	O	O	O
c. your brothers and sisters	O	O	O	O	O
d. your friends	O	O	O	O	O

PART V: MONEY AND WORK

39. Have you ever worked for pay, not counting work around the house?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O No → (SKIP TO INSTRUCTION BOX BEFORE QUESTION 41)

O Yes, and I am currently employed → (GO TO QUESTION 40)

O Yes, and I am not currently employed → (GO TO QUESTION 40)

40. What kind of work do/did you do for pay on your current job or most recent job? (If you have two or more jobs, answer for the job that pays the most per hour. Do not include work around your own house.)

PART VI: FAMILY

WHEN WE SAY PARENT(S), MOTHER, OR FATHER, ANSWER FOR THE PARENT(S), GUARDIAN(S), OR STEPPARENT WITH WHOM YOU LIVE MOST OF THE TIME.

IN THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, "GUARDIAN(S)" MAY INCLUDE FOSTER PARENTS, LEGAL GUARDIANS, OR OTHER OLDER ADULTS LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, SUCH AS GRANDPARENTS, WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU.

41. **What kind of work does your mother normally do? That is, what is the job called?** (If she is unemployed, retired, or disable, answer for her most recent job. If she works more than one job, answer for the job that you consider to be her major activity.)

    OCCUPATION: _____

42. **What kind of work does your father normally do? That is, what is the job called?** (If she is unemployed, retired, or disable, answer for his most recent job. If he works more than one job, answer for the job that you consider to be his major activity.)

    OCCUPATION: _____

43. **How far in school did your parents go? Indicate your mother's and father's highest level of education.**

                                                      (MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Mother (or female guardian)	Father (or male guardian)
Did not finish high school	O	O
Graduated from high school or equivalent (GED)	O	O
Graduated from high school and attended a two-year school (such as a vocational or technical school, a junior college, or a community college), but did not complete a degree	O	O
Graduated from a two-year school (such as a vocational or technical school, a junior college, or a community college	O	O
Graduated from high school and went to college, but did not complete a four-year degree	O	O
Graduated from college	O	O
Completed a Master's degree or equivalent	O	O
Competed a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced professional degree	O	O
Don't know	O	O
Does not apply	O	O

44. How often do your parents do the following?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
a. Give you privileges as a reward for good grades	O	O	O	O
b. Limit privileges because of poor grades	O	O	O	O
c. Require you to do work or chores	O	O	O	O
d. Limit the amount of time watching TV/ playing video games	O	O	O	O
e. Limit the amount of time going out with friends on school nights	O	O	O	O
f. Give you money for going out with friends	O	O	O	O
g. Help you with your homework	O	O	O	O

45. Does your family have the following in your home?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Have	Does not have
a. A daily newspaper	O	O
b. Regularly received magazine	O	O
c. A computer	O	O
d. Access to the Internet	O	O
e. DVD player	O	O
f. Electric dishwasher	O	O
g. Clothes dryer	O	O
h. More than 50 books	O	O
i. A room of your own	O	O

PART VII: FRIENDS, BELIEFS, OPINIONS ABOUT SELF

46. Altogether, since coming to Grand, how many of your close friends have either dropped out or transferred from Grand to another high school?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE)

O None of them
O A few of them
O Some of them
O Most of them

47. How would you rate your health?

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a. Physical	O	O	O	O	O
b. Emotional	O	O	O	O	O

48. Most people think about how others see them. How do you think your <u>teachers</u> see you?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Very	Somewhat	Slightly	Not at all
a. As organized?	O	O	O	O
b. As important?	O	O	O	O
c. As successful?	O	O	O	O
d. As intelligent?	O	O	O	O
e. As deserving of respect?	O	O	O	O

49. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(MARK ONE RESPONSE ON EACH LINE)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. I feel I am a person of worth, an equal with other people	O	O	O	O
b. I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking	O	O	O	O
c. My plans hardly ever work out, so planning only makes me unhappy	O	O	O	O
d. On the whole, I am satisfied with my life	O	O	O	O
e. I am able to do things as well as most people	O	O	O	O
f. I feel useless at times	O	O	O	O
g. I feel I have a lot to be proud of	O	O	O	O

<u>YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!</u>

GELS ALUMNI SURVEY 2007-2008

[Note: Skip logic is not reflected in this document and is available by request to the author.]

Introduction and Consent

My name is Lara Perez-Felkner, and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Chicago. My work examines the factors that influence people's choices about college and their careers. Some of you may know me: from 2005-2006, I observed classes, volunteered, and interviewed students at your school.

This survey is being conducted for research. The survey asks about your educational and career plans and your academic and social experiences since graduation. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete.

By participating in this survey, you will be automatically entered in a RAFFLE to receive one of the following PRIZES: Grand Prize: $50 Best Buy gift certificate; Second Prize: $25 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble; Third Prizes (2): $10 gift certificate for Borders Books and Gifts. Winners will be contacted by email and will be sent their prizes in the mail.

I will distribute and explain a full report of the findings once the study is complete. Additionally, I will submit a version of the report for academic publication (a book, academic journal articles). To minimize risk to your privacy and to protect your confidentiality, once the survey information is collected, no personally identifying information will be linked to your responses. The survey collection will be stored on a secure data link online until the survey is complete. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer and locked data cabinets to which only the researcher has access. If you participated in the earlier wave of this survey, in 2006, your responses to this survey will be linked to your previous survey responses.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. You have the right to skip or refuse to answer any questions or parts of questions, however I hope that you will complete the survey and answer all of the questions to the best of your knowledge. You may stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. If you have questions, you may contact me by phone (773) 256-6179 or by email at larap@uchicago.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you can contact the following office at the University of Chicago:

Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board
University of Chicago,
5835 South Kimbark - Judd 333
Chicago, IL 60637
Phone: 773-834-7835
Fax: 773-834-8700
Email: sbsirbwise@listhost.uchicago.edu

Thank you so much for your participation!

1. Results will be reported only at the group level. Do you understand that you have the right to refuse not to answer any questions, to exit the survey at any time, and that your information will kept secure and confidential (no one will be able to connect you to your responses?

☐ I understand and agree to take the survey now

☐ I will email larap@uchicago.edu for clarification

Background Information

3. Which generation in your family was the first to live in the mainland U.S. (not including Puerto Rico)?

☐ You or your siblings   ☐ One of your grandparents

☐ One of your parents   ☐ Generation(s) before your grandparents

☐ Other (please specify)

```
[                    ]
```

4. Who would be the first in your family to attend college?

☐ You

☐ Your older brother or sister

☐ One of your parents

☐ Other (please specify)

```
[                    ]
```

5. Are you Hispanic or Latina/o?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Latino / Hispanic Ethnicity

6. Which one of the following best describes you? (You may mark more than one answer)

☐ Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicana/o

☐ Cuban

☐ Dominican

☐ Puerto Rican

☐ Central American

☐ South American

Race

7. Please select one or more of the following choices to best describe your race (You may mark more than one answer)

☐ White

☐ Black/ African American

☐ Asian

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

Ethnic Identity

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

8. In terms of ethnicity, I consider myself to be (fill in ethnicity)

9. For each of the following, use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with EACH statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me	☐	☐	☐	☐
In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group	☐	☐	☐	☐
I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs		☐	☐	☐
I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background	☐	☐	☐	☐

Plans for the Future

10. Write in the name of the job or occupation that you expect or plan to have at age 30.

```
|                                                              |
|_____|
```

11. When did you graduate from high school?

☐ 2003   ☐ 2006

☐ 2004   ☐ 2007

☐ 2005

☐ Other (please specify)

```
|                                    |
|_____|
```

12. What is your current status?

☐ Grand alumni/a in college

☐ Grand alumni/a not currently enrolled in college

13. If you are enrolled in college, please name the college or university that you CURRENTLY attend.

Note: If you are not currently enrolled but will be enrolled next semester, please name the college that you WILL attend. If you are not currently enrolled but have been enrolled in the past, please name the MOST RECENT college that you attended.

> [   ]

14. As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?

☐ High school graduation or GED only

☐ Attend or graduate from a 2-year school (community, technical, or vocational college)

☐ Attend a 4-year college, but not complete a degree

☐ Graduate from a 4-year college (B.A. degree)

☐ Obtain a Master's degree or equivale

☐ Obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advan degree

☐ Don't know

College residence

15. Where are/will you be living this year (2007-2008 school year)?

☐ At home, with your family

☐ In a dorm or apartment

16. For the academic year 2007-2008, are you ... ?

☐ Enrolled in college for the first time

☐ Re-enrolled at the same college as last year

☐ Enrolled at a different college from last year or planning to change colleges

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Taking time off for a while

☐ Not enrolling in college

> [   ]

College change

17. Name the NEW college or university that you are or will be attending.

> [   ]

College change part 2

18. Select the reason(s) why you have or will be taking time off, changing colleges, or leaving college.

☐ I need to help support my family

☐ It was too expensive

☐ My scholarship was only for the first year of school

☐ The work was too hard

☐ The work was not hard enough

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ I had different expectations of what college would be like

☐ I want to move away from home

☐ I want to move closer to home

☐ The school is not diverse enough for me

☐ I was suspended and/or asked to leave

> [   ]

College acceptance

19. Please list the colleges to which you applied and were accepted (if more than five, list your top five choices).

1. [   ]

2. [   ]

3. [   ]

4. [   ]

5. [   ]

College plans

20. Do you plan to continue your education...?

☐ Yes, some time this year   ☐ Yes, but I don't know when

☐ Yes, after staying out of school for one year ☐ No, I don't plan to continue my education

☐ Yes, after staying out of school for over a ☐ I don't know if I'll continue my education
year

Not planning to go to college

21. Which of the following are reasons why you have decided NOT to continue your education?

	Yes	No
a. I do not like school	☐	☐
b. I will not need more education for the career I want	☐	☐
c. I cannot afford to go on to school	☐	☐
d. I plan to join the military	☐	☐
e. I would rather work and make money than go to school	☐	☐
j. I don't feel that going on to school is important	☒	☐
k. I need to help support my family	☐	☐

Other (please specify)_____

Major, Grades, and Activities

22. What do you think your major will be? (e.g. Chemistry, Economics)

_____

23. For the most recent semester that you were enrolled in school, what did your grades

look like?

☐ Mostly A's

☐ Mostly A's and B's

☐ Mostly B's

☐ Mostly B's and C's

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Mostly C's

☐ Mostly C's and lower

☐ Mostly D's and lower

24. What kinds of clubs or activities are you involved in OR do you plan to be involved in this year?

☐ Student government

☐ Dorm council

☐ Varsity sports team

☐ Intermural or club sports team

☐ Literary magazine or paper

☐ Musical group

☐ Dance team or performance group

☐ Ethnically-affiliated organization

☐ Minority student organization

☐ Fraternity or sorority

☐ Religious organization / Campus ministry

☐ Other (please specify)

Family

WHEN WE SAY PARENT(S), MOTHER, OR FATHER, ANSWER FOR THE PARENT(S), GUARDIAN(S), OR STEPPARENT WITH WHOM YOU LIVE MOST OF THE TIME.

25. What kind of work do your mother and father normally do? That is, what is the job called? (If he or she is unemployed, retired, or disabled, answer for their most recent job. If he or she works more than one job, answer for the job that you consider to be the major activity.)

Mother's job	
Father's job	
Other parent/guardian's job (specify role, if applicable)	

26. How far in school did your parents go? For each parent, select their highest level of

education.

	Did not finish elementary school	Completed elementary school	Completed middle school	Graduated from high school or equivalent (GED)	Attended a 2-year college but did not finish	Graduated from a 2-year college (Associate's degree)	Attended a 4-year college but did not finish	Graduated from a 4-year college (B.A.)	Completed a Master's degree or equivalent (M.A.)	Completed a professional or doctoral degree (M.D., etc.)
Mother	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Father	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Explain choices here, if needed:

[   ]

27. How far in school do you think that your mother and father want YOU to go? Please select ONE choice for EACH parent.

	Less than high school graduation	High school graduation or GED only	Attend or complete a 2-year college program (Associate's)	Attend a 4-year college, but not complete a B.A. degree	Graduate from a 4-year college (B.A.)	Obtain a Master's degree or equivalent	Obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced degree	Don't know	Does not apply
Mother	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Father	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐

Explain choices here, if needed:

[   ]

Friends Page 1

Who are your three closest friends? Please fill in up to three names. For each friend you name, answer questions that follow.

28. 1: Friend #1:

First name [   ]

Last name (first three letters) [   ]

29. Is this friend...?

☐ Male

☐ Female

30. Is this friend Hispanic or Latina/o ...?

☐ Yes

☐ No

31. What is this friend's race? (Mark all that apply)

☐ White

☐ Black/ African American

☐ Asian

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

32. How important is getting good grades to this friend?

☐ Not at all important

☐ Somewhat important

☐ Very important

33. Did you talk to this friend on the phone or email during the past seven days?

☐ Yes

☐ No

34. Do you know either or both of this friend's parents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

35. How long have you known this friend?

☐ Less than a year

☐ One to two years

☐ Two to five years

☐ Five or more years

36. Does this friend ...?

☐ Attend high school

☐ Attend college

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ Work full-time (does not attend school)

Friend 1 part 2

37. Does this friend go to your school (2007-2008 school year)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Friend 1 part 2 A

38. What school does this friend attend?

Name of school	
State (e.g. IL or Illinois)	

Friend 1 part 3

39. What grade is this friend in now?

☐ 11th   ☐ 2nd year in college

☐ 12th   ☐ 3rd or 4th year in college

☐ 1st year in college   ☐ Not enrolled in school

☐ Other (please specify)

Friends - Friend 2

Same directions as above

40. 1: Friend #2:

First name	
Last name (1st three letters)	

41. Is this friend...?

☐ Male

☐ Female

42. Is this friend Hispanic or Latina/o ...?

☐ Yes

☐ No

43. What is this friend's race? (Mark all that apply)

☐ White   ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ Black/ African American   ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Asian

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

44. How important is getting good grades to this friend?

☐ Not at all important

☐ Somewhat important

☐ Very important

45. Did you talk to this friend on the phone or through email during the past seven days?

☐ Yes

☐ No

46. Do you know either or both of this friend's parents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

47. How long have you known this friend?

☐ Less than a year   ☐ Two to five years

☐ One to two years   ☐ Five or more years

48. Does this friend ...?

☐ Attend high school   ☐ Work full-time (does not attend school)

☐ Attend college

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Friend 2 part 2

49. Does this friend go to your school (2007-2008 school

year)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Friend 2 part 2 A

50. What school does this friend attend?

Name of school [   ]

State (e.g. IL or
Illinois) [   ]

Friend 2 part 3

51. What grade is this friend in now?

☐ 11th ☐ 2nd year in college

☐ 12th ☐ 3rd or 4th year in college

☐ 1st year in college ☐ Not enrolled in school

☐ Other (please specify)
[   ]

Friend - Friend 3

Same directions as above

52. 1: Friend #3:

First name [   ]

Last name (1st
three letters) [   ]

53. Is this friend...?

☐ Male

☐ Female

54. Is this friend Hispanic or Latina/o ...?

☐ Yes

☐ No

55. What is this friend's race? (Mark all that apply)

☐ White

☐ Black/ African American

☐ Asian

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

56. How important is getting good grades to this friend?

☐ Not at all important

☐ Somewhat important

☐ Very important

57. Did you talk to this friend on the phone or through email during the past seven days?

☐ Yes

☐ No

58. Do you know either or both of this friend's parents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

59. How long have you known this friend?

☐ Less than a year

☐ One to two years

☐ Two to five years

☐ Five or more years

60. Does this friend ...?

☐ Attend high school   ☐ Work full-time (does not attend school)

☐ Attend college

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Friend 3 part 2

61. Does this friend go to your school (2007-2008 school year)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Friend 3 part 2 A

62. What school does this friend attend?

Name of school	[ ]
City, state (e.g. Urbana, IL)	[ ]

Friend 3 part 3

63. What grade is this friend in now?

☐ 11th   ☐ 2nd year in college

☐ 12th   ☐ 3rd or 4th year in college

☐ 1st year in college ☐ Not enrolled in school

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Final: Health and Self

64. How would you rate your health?

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Physical	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

65. Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. I feel I am a person of worth, an equal with other people	☐	☑	☐	☐
b. I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. My plans hardly ever work out, so planning only makes me unhappy	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. I am able to do things as well as most people	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. I feel useless at times	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. I feel I have a lot to be proud of	☐	☐	☐	☐

Final thoughts

66. Thank you for completing this survey!

Please use this space to ask a question, explain any responses, or make any comments.

Grand Student Interview Script

I'd like to ask you a few basic questions about yourself, and then find out more about how you came to Grand and what your thoughts are about what you'll do after Grand. Again, if there are any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering, we can either skip them or go back to them. No one will ....

School and general:

➢ How old are you?

➢ What grade are you in?

➢ What schools did you attend prior to Grand – middle school, elementary, any other high schools?

➢ What made you come to Grand for high school?

➢ (If unclear :)
   o Whose decision was it to find out more about Grand?
   o Have you been in specialized / magnet programs before coming to Grand?
   o Were there any other schools that you and your family were applying to?
   o How long of a commute is it to school? – What neighborhood do you live in?

➢ Could you tell me about some of your first thoughts in coming to Grand? (i.e. the school itself, the teachers, the students)

➢ What were your expectations of this school?

➢ You've been here for _____ years? How has it been? (Re: expectations, if probe is needed).

➢ What do you think are the advantages of going to Grand for high school, as opposed to any other possible schools?

➢ Do you have friends at your local high school? What do they tell you about the school? (Note: purpose is to see how close he/she is to students at these schools and get information about 1) what kind of kids they are and 2) what he/she imagines local high school to be like)

➢ If you ever imagine what it would be like if you had instead attended your neighborhood high school, could you tell me about that – what you think it would be like?

Identity
- How do you primarily identify yourself when asked about your ethnic or racial background?

- What does being (Latino/ethnic group) mean to you?

- You are attending a primarily Latino high school for students pursuing college.
    o How does your identity relate to your experience at Grand?

    o How would you describe your friends' racial and ethnic background?

    o When making friends, do you consider having a common cultural heritage to be important?

Social/ School:

- How did you make the friends you have at Grand? (if needed: through sports or classes or theater or advisory)

- Are you involved in clubs or organizations here at school? (If so :) Which ones?

- How much time do you spend on homework each day during the school year?

- So do you have free time during the week and weekends?

- How do you tend to spend it? – With friends, with family, at home, etc.

- Students come from all different neighborhoods – is it difficult to hang out outside of school?

- Where do you tend to hang out with your friends – what neighborhood? In people's homes?

More specific school questions:

- You're here for summer school. Are you participating in the full-day session or the half day?

- What are you in summer school for? (Making up a class or enrichment)?

➢ What are your grades like normally?

➢ What are you doing for the rest of the summer?

➢ (If working): Do you work during the school year, too?
➢ (If so): How often do you work/ how many hours?

➢ If visiting family: How often do you see them? OR When is the last time that you have been to _____ (city/ country)_____?

Family:

➢ Where do you live in Chicago?

➢ Have you lived there a long time? (Might also lead to whether or not their family is thinking about moving to suburbs or Florida, as happens often).

➢ (If not explained above): How long has your family been living in this country?
➢ ** NOTE: Try to get citizenship information in these questions, but ask carefully.

➢ What is your family's background?

➢ Do you participate in any religion -- go to church or youth groups?
   o Which?
   o If so, how often?
   o (NOTE: I have a mini-hypothesis about religious families and minority students in urban areas who go to charter/specialized high schools).

➢ Who lives with you?

➢ Do you have brothers and sisters? How old are they?

➢ Where do they go to school?

➢ Have any members of your family been to or graduated from college?

The future – aspirations and expectations

➢ We talked a bit earlier about how you came to Grand. What do you think are your parents' expectations of what you'll do after you graduate?

➢ What do you plan on doing after you graduate from Grand?

➢ (If unclear): Have you given much thought to college?

➤ It might change, but right now, what would you like to pursue in your career? What would you like to see yourself doing in the future?

➤ How did you come to think about _____ (career idea)?

➤ Have you had any role models in your life? Who have they been?
  o (NOTE: this was a fruitful question this past summer).

➤ What kind of advice have you received about college and your future – from family, friends?

➤ How does this advice compare to what you've heard at Grand?

➤ What do you see as being the biggest obstacles to achieving your college and career goals?
  o If not already, probe about language and citizenship.

➤ What kinds of resources do you see yourself as having to overcome these obstacles?
  o (NOTE: there may be a better way to ask this, but a similar question also yielded rich responses this past summer).

➤ How do you think that the issues or obstacles that you face compare to that of other Latino youth in the U.S.?

➤ (If Puerto Rican): Do you see any particular challenges for Puerto Rican youth?

Identity and College Choice
➤ How does your identity play into your thoughts about what kind of college you would like to attend?

➤ How comfortable would you feel attending a university that has a small Latino population? (Why?)

➤ How far away would you be willing to go for college? Are you planning to leave Chicago or Illinois for college?

➤ What makes you want to stay – or go?

➤ Do you have any ideas about where you would like to apply to go to college?

➤ What would you like to see in your future in the next five or ten years?

Conclusion
- ➤ Is there anything else that you would like to discuss or anything else that you would like to say? Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and participation.

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