

BOOK REVIEW

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Par EntreMundos: A Pedagogy of the Américas

Ed. Jennifer Ayala, Julio Cammarota, Margarita I. Berta-Ávila, Melissa Rivera, Louie F. Rodríguez, and María Elena Torre.

Peter Lang Publishing

Published: 2018

Pages: 259

Price: \$131.20 (Hardback)

Citation:

Ayala, J., Cammarota, J., Berta-Ávila, M. I., Rivera, M., Rodríguez, L. F., & Torre, M. (Eds.). (2018). *PAR EntreMundos. A Pedagogy of the Américas*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang US.

Word Count: 1551, including references

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In the anthology, *PAR EntreMundos: A Pedagogy of the Américas*, the editing authors bring together multiple scholars utilizing Participatory Action Research (PAR) EntreMundos methodologies. The editing authors argue that Latinxs have traversed the geopolitical and cultural landscapes that are the U.S. and Latin American borders for quite some time. Within these migrations, they add, there has been a steady Latinization of U.S. schools, and with these migrations, come people's intellectual and educational experiences. Therefore, the authors unsettle the discourse that the North is the main contributor of ideas and history by reorienting how pedagogical contributions also flow from the South towards the North. From these physical and epistemological movements, they push the framework of PAR towards one that is EntreMundos/Among Worlds (Torre & Ayala, 2009). Specific to PAR Entremundos, is the process itself that centers multigenerational collectives tied to social justice and attending to the complexities of power differentials. Additionally, this creation-space is instilled with disrupting and unsettling structural boundaries and binaries with a particular emphasis on centering the in-

between spaces of the self and other. Thus, each scholar's contributions in this volume create a mosaic of possibilities that emerge from a PAR EntreMundos methodology and epistemology.

In Part One, the editing authors develop their theoretical lineages and explain how they conceptualize a PAR EntreMundos methodology. They specifically draw on borderland theorizations from Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) to situate the EntreMundo concept and create a link with PAR to center both formal and informal educational spaces (Ayala et al., 2018). The ancestry of PAR EntreMundos can be traced to the southern hemispheric tradition and literature that centers on critical race theory, spiritual activism, indigenous cosmologies, and feminist approaches (Ayala et al., 2018). By drawing on such diverse and rich scholarship from numerous authors and fields of study, they weave their theoretical lineages together to suggest a PAR that can lead to mutual transformation and liberatory change, both from the outcomes of such work and the research process itself. Thus, they suggest eight guiding principles for a PAR EntreMundos that offer a guide to this theory and methodology, instead of a prescriptive formula or agenda. The eight guiding principles are: participation, critical inquiry, knowledge co-construction, power with(in)*, Indigenous cosmologies, creative praxes, transformational action, and *concientizacion para la colectiva*. The culminating principals suggest that a PAR EntreMundos can, in part, "be a way to heal communities and ourselves by 'wholing' the fragmentations imposed upon us" (Ayala et al., 2018, p.30). By addressing the self in the research, there is also an awakening by those researching to come to deeper understandings of social justice, activism, and liberatory change. Part Two brings together authors and members from the National Latinx Education Research and Policy Project (NLERAP) who have implemented PAR EntreMundos in different ways. These projects illustrate the guiding principles of PAR EntreMundos in various different capacities and geographic sites. Chapter 2 speaks of the PRAXIS (Participatory Research Advocating for Excellence Schools) Project in Southern California to address the continued dropout rate and low matriculation into higher education. Their project collaborated with high school students under the Freirean theories of desocialization, activism, and dialogic. Students were tasked to present their research projects to local and state-level stakeholders to address graduation rates at their schools, revoking truancy policies, and encouraging robust community support. Chapter 3 focuses on the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) in the Tucson Unified School District of Arizona. In this initiative, students gain social science credits for graduation and participate in graduate-level participatory action research techniques. The students were encouraged to develop projects that interested them, and many investigated social and economic issues that were prevalent in their community, such as, Latinx students being constantly policed and surveilled for speaking Spanish. Chapter 4 ushers in a theoretical model called the Creative Justice Approach that draws on the history and community work in El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, a small innovative school in Brooklyn, NY. Through this Creative Justice Approach, the students at El Puente created an art-based project at the end of the year called the Sweet Freedom Sugar Feast that detailed the histories of enslavement in the production of sugar and stories of resilience.

The New Jersey Urban Youth Research Initiative (NJUYRI) is the project of focus in Chapter 5. NJUYRI primarily addresses the changing graduation requirements in the state of New Jersey that would add upwards of six new end-of-year content assessments for all 11th graders. By collaborating with a collective of educators, high school students, university faculty, and community organizers, the NJUYRI encouraged all participants to engage in participatory policy work, or what Valenzuela (2016) calls "engaged policy" (p.13). In chapter 6, #BarrioEdProj grew out of the material and racio-cultural effects within the East Harlem neighborhood and its schools, which Edwin Mayorga describes as racial neoliberal urbanism that is pervasive in this community.

Drawing on Digital Critical Participatory Action Research, this project brought together participants from this neighborhood in order to critically assess the social injustices caused by exploitation, gentrification, and market-logic diversity initiatives. Lastly, Chapter 7 documents the development of Jovenes con Derechos (JcD), a group formed after the creation of Spanish Heritage classes at Eleanor High School. JcD was a cohort of students who orchestrated a multilingual linguistic rights summit where they announced a declaration of actions that the school must take to welcome all languages and address the debilitating language educational policies they faced.

Part Three situates PAR EntreMundos within two grow-your-own teacher education initiatives. These two initiatives provide a multilayered understanding of how PAR EntreMundos can be an experience that is shared between educators and generations of students. Chapter 8 is based upon the initiative called, FUERTE (Future Urban Educators conducting Research to Transform education), with its primary goal of encouraging students to partake in ethnographic research to destabilize discourses of power and opportunity within their schools. By repositioning these "urban youth" as researchers, instead of the "problem," FUERTE provided avenues for the participants to consider education as a possible profession, even though the students' research analysis demonstrated the arduous realities of this career aspiration. In Chapter 9, a pilot program was initiated at California State University, Sacramento, to increase Latinx representation in the teaching profession. Two participants in this pilot program utilized a social justice framework, specifically PAR EntreMundos approach in their student teaching. Ultimately, they share how a PAR EntreMundos approach to teaching allowed them to further embed social and cultural issues into their classrooms and witness the potential application of transformative pedagogy. Lastly, Chapter 10 draws on an ethnographic study over two years in three different English classrooms. By strategically embedding PAR EntreMundos into the curriculum, the teacher was able to push students to question multiple power dynamics and unsettle notions of self-segregation, race, gender, and language in their respective schools.

The editing authors provided an array of different approaches to their developing theory of PAR EntreMundos. As demonstrated throughout the book, PAR EntreMundos is both a theoretical and methodological undertaking that manifests in a multiplicity of possibilities. The varying manifestations also resulted in *choques* or clashes/collisions between the projects and educational policymakers, school administration, and school curriculum. One *choque* that is particularly contentious is how specific PAR EntreMundo projects existed within the context of neoliberal regimes that proliferate in schools and educational institutions. A PAR EntreMundos would lead us to question systems of power and redirect accountability to structural forces that condition inequities. However, this was not always met with welcoming arms, as we see in various chapters. The culmination of different projects provides the reader with the stories of how PAR EntreMundos has emerged and how to enact this theory and methodology. The appendices offer various materials that many educators, teachers, and curriculum builders can utilize to implement a PAR EntreMundos in their communities, schools, and research projects. Although the theoretical lineages of a PAR EntreMundos are robust and brought into question systems of power and dominance through multiple streams of epistemologies, *mestizaje*, as a tool of racial whitening or *blanqueamiento* (Safa, 2005), was left unsettled. The historical and cultural context of *mestizaje* is rooted in discourses of *la Raza cosmica*, which relies on anti-Indigenous and anti-Black narratives in favor of a whiter cultural hybridity.

Further disrupting *mestizaje* could provide avenues to think of "other worlds" in even more profound ways. Overall, the book is timely and provides the importance of Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a legitimate and necessary framework for students. In many cases, the students

were the experts of their communities. Such a framework provides an avenue for students to think critically and beyond the worlds they are forced to live in and towards an understanding of possible worlds; a possibility that exists is Entre Mundos.

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