Injustice and School Closure

Mr Jacob Fay

Harvard Graduate School of Education
jzf554@mail.harvard.edu
Chicago

In the spring of 2013, the Chicago School Board voted unanimously to close 49 public elementary schools. All told, the decision relocated more than 11,000 students by the start of the following school year. It was the largest single school closure in the city’s history, representing a reduction of roughly ten percent of the total number of public elementary schools in Chicago. Justifying the closures, the CEO of Chicago Public Schools, Barbara Byrd-Bennett, explained:

For too long children in certain parts of Chicago have been cheated out of the resources they need to succeed in the classroom because they are in underutilized, under resourced schools.¹

However, for the largely black communities that faced the prospects of school closure, these words hardly seemed to reflect the reality of the situation. Community organizers asserted that closure was more akin to a hostile takeover than a salutary reform, pointing to the fact that although 42 percent of Chicago public school students identify as black, black students account for well over 80 percent of students affected by closures.² One member of a local school council described the closures in plain, clear terms: “Our community is being disrespected.”³

New York City

By the fall of 2014, the phase-out of Roberto Clemente Middle School, I.S. 195, was complete. District officials pointed to dismal academic results, decreasing demand for the school, safety concerns, and low attendance rates to justify their decision, noting how after a few years of academic gains, the school had fallen on increasingly hard times.⁴
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Still, parents in the West Harlem neighborhood around Clemente lamented the loss of the school. As one parent, Iris, explained:

The Roberto Clemente School was a school that represented us as a Hispanic community and as the striving community that we are. For many years, this was one of the best schools, but due to mismanagement and the lack of support we received, the school was slated for closure. Many of the parents in this community fought to keep our school open, but it was futile; it was too late. In other words, they already had plans for the floor that our school occupied. Today, it makes me sad to see the kind of supports that these new schools, that are occupying our spaces, are being offered. Today I see how many school buses arrive, full of children from many areas to fill the school and I ask myself: Why couldn’t they have done this with our school? Why wasn’t our school offered the same supports?

For Iris, the value of Clemente extended far beyond academic performance; the school was indelibly intertwined with her sense of her West Harlem community.

**Boston**

Sitting before members of the Boston School Council, the principal of John Marshall Elementary School, Theresa Harvey-Jackson, shared a statement she had prepared in the wake of the recent news that the district planned to close her school the next fall and re-open the building as an in-district charter school. “I support the idea of the Marshall becoming an in-district charter,” she read, continuing, “Our children deserve a new and clean facility. They deserve a longer school day. They deserve to be educated to their fullest potential and beyond.” Though these changes should be welcome, she noted, the district had not made those investments in Marshall when it first had the chance to do so, even when she had asked for help. In her mind, the district had “failed” the 700 children and their families that attended the school, of which nearly 99% are children of color. Jackson charged the district with starving Marshall of necessary resources in the years
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after the school had initially made average yearly progress goals. The loss of resources left Marshall floundering and without needed supports just as it had started to show improvement. Furthermore, she felt the district had ignored her requests for basic and pressing facility maintenance, many of which were suddenly taken care of in the weeks before the announcement that Marshall would become a charter school. Jackson questioned why the district was prepared to open its coffers to a charter school, but had kept the purse closed when the requests came from the Marshall community.

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Each of the above examples illustrates how hotly contested decisions to close schools can be. For some people, closure exemplifies real, necessary school reform. It addresses deep structural challenges that face many urban school districts, including steep budget deficits, under-enrollment, and schools that consistently perform poorly on state standardized tests. For others, closure is a means to introduce new actors into the schooling environment that will unsettle bloated and aging systems, spur innovation, and improve the quality of schooling for all students. Yet, for still others, closure is a signal that a community is seen as incapable of educating its own children, a policy that destabilizes and divests neighborhoods of important shared institutions, or a superficial reform that hardly scratches at the real sources of educational disparities.

Yet the above claims also make explicit and nuanced references to justice. Both proponents and opponents of closure draw on claims of justice to justify or challenge public decisions. Consider some of the language in the examples above: “cheated,”
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“disrespected,” and “deserve.” These words draw on notions of fairness, equality, and obligation—notions which are central to justice. At the same time, if these examples are any guide, the relationships among these normative claims can be difficult to understand. Some claims link justice to race and social geography, others link justice to material resources and opportunities. Thus, as a whole, public discourse about what it means to implement just school reform appears fragmented and multifaceted.

How should theorists and policymakers understand and attend to such fragmentation? I suggest that recent work by Nancy Fraser, in particular her account of maldistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation, provides a useful starting place. Fraser’s three forms of contemporary injustice illuminate the normative force of the various claims about justice and school closure. Equally important, her expansive conception of justice enables us to identify and analyze the relationships among the different forms of injustice implicated in instances of school closure. For example, engaging with claims of injustice in this manner reveals how efforts to mitigate one form of injustice may actually trigger or exacerbate another form of injustice. Thus, to theorize about school closure or consider closure as a policy option requires theorists and policymakers to engage meaningfully with injustice.

The Dimensions of Injustice

In her recent work, Nancy Fraser suggests that there is currently a great deal instability surrounding the very notion of what constitutes a justice claim. She suggests this instability arises from different ontologies of injustice, and identifies three distinct
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sources of injustice. Each is located in different social cleavages and represents a distinct normative concern. These are maldistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation. The first source of injustice, *maldistribution*, refers specifically to economic injustices and can include exploitation, economic marginalization, and deprivation. More generally, we might think of maldistribution as describing circumstances where some people have either less or more than their fair share of social resources. When people make claims of maldistribution, they expect *redistribution* to follow.

The second source of injustice, *misrecognition*, identifies injustices associated with the cultural dimension of social life and may include cultural domination, nonrecognition, and disrespect. In order to understand misrecognition as a matter of justice, Fraser offers what she terms the “status model of recognition.” Rather than understand recognition in the traditional Hegelian sense of self-realization, Fraser construes misrecognition as a violation of equal status. In other words, misrecognition reflects institutionalized status hierarchies and typically forms around socially constructed identities like race, gender, or sexuality. Thus, when people make claims of misrecognition, they intend *respect* and *nondomination* to repair distorted social relations.

Finally, the third source of injustice, *misrepresentation*, reflects the “stage on which struggles over distribution and recognition” play out. It is concerned with political boundaries or decision rules that wrongly deny some people the ability to participate in public contestation over issues of distribution and recognition. This notion of injustice
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calls into question the particular political structures that are used to make decisions—
electoral systems, forms of representation, etc. \textsuperscript{xiii} These structures may limit some
people’s ability to substantively participate in public decision-making, even though they
may, in principle, have a role to play. For example, consider decision-making procedures
that create entrenched minorities. Even though such groups may formally participate in
decision-making, because there is little chance their interests will find institutional
support their participation in public debates is not substantive. On Fraser’s account, this
is the injustice of “political voicelessness.” \textsuperscript{xiv} When people make claims of
misrepresentation, they expect to be \textit{included} in formal political action as \textit{legitimate}
political actors.

Though these three forms of injustice are conceptually distinct, in practice they are often
bound up with one another. For example, maldistribution may accompany misrecognition
as an equal and independent injustice or misrecognition may eventually result from
persistent maldistribution. Misrepresentation may occur in the absence of misrecognition
and maldistribution, but it may also be closely linked to either injustice. However, even
though the forms of injustice tend to bundle, this is not a reason to think any single form
is reducible to the others. \textit{Ontological monism}, Fraser explains, is a mistake. This is
because the harm each injustice incurs is distinct. \textsuperscript{ xv} For example, the targets of
institutionalized racism are likely deprived not only of resources but \textit{also} social
recognition \textit{and} political equality. They have, if you will, three separate complaints.
Similarly, addressing any one single form of injustice on its own does not necessarily
address the others, and in fact may undermine efforts to mitigate the other dimensions of
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injustice. Consider social welfare supports for low-income families. While these programs are certainly a form of resource redistribution, they typically are enacted in a social and political context that shames recipients for receiving such support. Redistribution, in effect, reinforces misrecognition. Thus, as Fraser suggests, efforts to mitigate injustice must account for both the distinct harms of each dimension, as well as the irreducible entanglement between them.\textsuperscript{xvi}

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Disagreement over school reforms like closure exemplifies the multidimensional nature of injustice. Recall the three vignettes at the start of this essay. One striking feature running through all three vignettes is the conceptual divide between the claims at the heart of each dispute. Fraser’s notions of maldistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation can help us make sense of such conceptual divides.

Confronting Educational Inequality

Maldistribution is a distinct and consistent concern across all of the opening vignettes. In Chicago, the district explicitly notes that closing “underutilized, under resourced schools” is necessary to ensure success for all students. In New York City, Iris is keenly aware of the “supports” offered to the schools that replaced her Clemente. In Boston, Principal Harvey-Jackson lists a number of resources and opportunities she believes the children attending Marshall “deserve.” Each of these claims draws on notions of who is owed what, by whom, for what reasons, and under what circumstances. Each also refers to stark
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inequalities of educational resources and opportunities that define American school systems.

Indeed, there is a fair amount of agreement between all parties that skewed distributions of resources and opportunities are a profound source of injustice in education. Referencing the phase-out of Dyett High School, located in the historically black Chicago neighborhood of Bronzeville, community activist Jitu Brown asserts, “We are going to demand that we have an equitable school system…that gives children at Dyett High School the same educational opportunities that children have in Lake View,” a high school in a predominantly white Chicago neighborhood. He goes on to specifically compare the course offerings at Dyett to those of Lake View, pointing out the 21 language classes offered at Lakeview versus only 2 at Dyett as an example of the structural inequities that are in place.” Although Brown is opposed to mass school closures as a policy solution, he fully agrees that maldistribution is an on-going, even structural policy problem, as exemplified by the highly unequal course offerings available to students at Dyett versus Lake View.

However, closure appeals to some people because it appears to solve the distributive disparities between schools like Dyett and Lake View in a particularly efficient way. If maldistribution is the problem, shouldn’t redistribution be the answer? Yet redistribution, by definition, implies taking from some and giving to others. Philosophers commonly refer to this as “leveling down.” This sort of zero-sum redistribution reflects an intuitive notion of redistribution; some educational goods are a finite resource, thus giving
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resources to some means taking from others.\textsuperscript{xviii} Still, leveling down creates both a philosophical and practical problem. It can be very challenging to justify leveling down outside of instances where the resources or opportunities of someone or some group have been gained unjustly at cost to others, and such a course of action is often politically unappealing.\textsuperscript{xix}

Proponents of closure suggest that the policy avoids the challenges posed by leveling down. Closure is based on the assumption that the district inefficiently makes use of its limited resources. Thus, addressing those inefficiencies redistributes resources to those who need them most, without taking anything away from those who have what they need. Indeed, the logic behind CPS’s justification for closures public bears this out. When CPS initiated the closure process in November of 2012, the first factor that determined whether a school was a candidate for closure was its utilization rate, or the degree to which a school functioned at, below, or above capacity.\textsuperscript{xx} Schools that were drastically under capacity quickly made it to the short list for closure. In theory, then, no child needs to lose out as the system is streamlined and the district is able to distribute limited resources more efficiently. Thus, closure appears to redistribute goods by leveling up—it raises the actual distribution of educational goods closer to the ideal.

\textit{From Maldistribution to Misrecognition}

There are, however, at least two reasons to approach the redistributive logic of efficiency and leveling up with caution. The first is empirical: evidence that closure actually redistributes resources and opportunities is nascent and indefinite. By the district’s
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standards, nearly all Chicago students displaced by the wave of closures in 2013 enrolled at a better school, but this has not been the case in previous instances of school closure in Chicago.\textsuperscript{xxi} Research also suggests that closure has little effect, on average, on student academic outcomes and other measures like on-track rates to graduate over the long-term. That said, students who transferred to highly-ranked schools or schools with high levels of teacher-student trust had larger gains, on average, than students transferring to low-ranked schools or schools with low levels of teacher-student trust.\textsuperscript{xxii} In addition, the longitudinal data simply do not exist in order to determine how school closures affect individuals’ all-things-considered prospects or long-term wellbeing, which is presumably what we actually care about with respect to redistribution.\textsuperscript{xxiii} In the absence of clear evidence that closure is in fact positively redistributive in the right ways, then the case for closure is significantly weakened.

The second reason is that reducing systemic inefficiencies and leveling up do not seem to match the extent of the normative concerns surrounding educational disparities. Recall Jitu Brown’s comparison of the course offerings at Dyett and Lake View high schools. Earlier, I suggested that Brown’s claim substantiated concerns about maldistribution. Yet, while his claim ostensibly points to the actual disparity between the course offerings at the two schools, the choice of neighborhoods (and schools) he compares is equally important and underscores an additional normative concern. Data compiled by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, a regional planning organization in Illinois, depicts distinct demographic sets at each school: an overwhelmingly white majority in Lake View and an overwhelmingly black majority in Bronzeville.\textsuperscript{xxiv} With this particular
context in mind, Brown’s concern for “structural inequities” can be understood not only as a reference to the disparity in course offerings between schools, but also to the way that American society unequally values black citizens compared to their white peers.\textsuperscript{xxv}

As the Journey for Justice Alliance, a coalition of 36 community organizations across 21 states, puts it:

> Yet now, similar to the pre-\textit{Brown} era of “separate and unequal” schools, the children and youth in our communities are being treated as second-class citizens, and our public schools are being treated as schools of last resort.\textsuperscript{xxvi}

We can thus understand Brown and other community organizers to rest their understanding of educational inequality on a second notion of injustice, misrecognition. Disparities like those between Dyett and Lake View exist not simply because of some racially-tainted maldistribution, but because of the prior injustice that black citizens lack equal standing compared to their white peers.

Fraser helps clarify the conceptual distinction embedded in such claims. Misrecognition is distinct from maldistribution insofar as misrecognition is an issue of social status and is rooted in the cultural dimensions of social life. It reflects a concern for the ways that “institutional patterns of cultural value” can render some groups of people “inferior, excluded, wholly other, or simply invisible” simply because of ascribed or accepted social identities.\textsuperscript{xxvii} These profound forms of status inequality are problematic from the perspective of justice because they are forms of \textit{status subordination}. That is to say, the ability of members of particular groups of people to participate in social life on par with their peers is hindered and, in the worst cases, completely obstructed. It refers to institutionalized patterns of value that distort the very notion of what is a just distribution,
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as such judgments rest on unequal notions of personhood. Claims of misrecognition, then, call attention to distinct forms of disrespect that cannot be addressed simply by focusing on instances of maldistribution.

Still, someone might suggest that because misrecognition is fundamentally about respect for personhood (or the lack thereof), redistributing resources through a policy like school closure is an appropriate response to both misrecognition and maldistribution. After all, what better way to respect another than to distribute resources to them fairly? If this proved to be true, not only would concern for maldistribution subsume or even negate concern for misrecognition, but polices based on redistribution would also imply recognition. However, to interpret recognition and redistribution as interchangeably or even symmetrically addressing instantiations of disrespect ignores the abnormal character of the dispute.

For many students and families that call “underutilized, under resourced” schools their own, misrecognition is not only a distinct source of injustice that school policy ought to address, but it is also a consequence of some efforts to reform schools—even efforts that have redistribution as their aim. For example, recall the New York vignette, in which Iris describes the closure of her West Harlem middle school, Roberto Clemente, as both a gain and a loss. She acknowledges the flow of resources to the charter schools that replaced Clemente. Yet, she admits that it is painful to see new schools occupy a space she understood as a vital piece of her West Harlem community. She wonders why the new supports went to new schools rather than Clemente, and she questions why an
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important piece of her community was taken away. Similar to Brown’s claim, concerns like Iris’s are ultimately about the misrecognition of her community. Yet, the source of misrecognition she points to is not any educational disparity, but the policy meant to mitigate such disparities.

The voices of those who experience closure first-hand suggest at least three ways in which closure itself instantiates misrecognition. First, school closure can be interpreted as a form of cultural rejection. As Iris makes clear, schools have symbolic importance to her community. Clemente reflected “us,” she explains, as a “Hispanic community” and as “strivers.” Like her community, the school was not without faults, but the struggle to make things better inextricably linked the school to a social purpose shared by community members in West Harlem. The school’s struggle was their struggle; Clemente both reflected and nurtured their shared cultural identities. As a result, the district’s decision to close Clemente and entrust new charter schools with the supports that Clemente could have sorely used seems to be a verdict not only about her school, but about her community as well. In effect, the district conveys the message that West Harlemites may strive, but they cannot succeed; others must do this for them.

Second, school closure perpetuates cultural subordination by denying communities the opportunities to demonstrate their cultural assets moving forward. As 17 year-old Parrish Brown put it, “They closed my elementary school and now they’re phasing out my high school. One day there’ll be nothing in my community to come back to.” Here we can see that communities experience school closure not just as a one-time expression of
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disrespect, but rather as tool for ongoing oppression, for dismantling the community itself. Indeed, community groups often talk about schools as “anchors” or “hubs” of their communities or, recalling Iris’s description of Clemente, as sources of pride and shared history and identity. Thus, many communities experience closure is a loss which finding another place to educate their children is a poor remedy. In their words, closure “creates a gaping hole within our neighborhoods.”

Finally, third, closure instantiates misrecognition insofar as the grounds for determining “failure” are themselves culturally constructed and contested. Schools do not clearly fail or succeed. Rather, as sociologists Vontrese Deeds and Mary Pattillo observe in their study of school closure in Newark, New Jersey, different stakeholders construct different meanings of school failure. While districts “legitimate” closure through a logic of budget balancing, inefficiency reduction, and low performance, teachers, students, and parents offer alternative legitimacies that evaluate their schools according to values like community, safety, relationships, and stability. Deeds and Pattillo conclude that these competing understandings suggest that failure is not an “irrefutable outcome but rather a complex process that brings disruptions for stakeholders who disagree on the designation of failure.”

The process, however, typically results in outcomes that reflect school districts’ narratives of failure. Thus, closure may reflect a form of epistemic subordination insofar as public authorities do not treat the definition of a “good” school as a matter of deliberation. As a result, stakeholders like Iris are left wondering why their district officials do not recognize the connection she and others feel to their schools. Why is “striving” not as important a value as the district’s notion of excellence?
School Closure and Misrepresentation

That the meaning of failure almost always tracks the meaning officials give to the concept may also reflect Fraser’s third form of injustice: misrepresentation, or unequal political voice. Fraser’s framework again helps clarify that the means by which communities can advocate for themselves, as well as the spaces they have to even make such claims, matter. As she puts it, misrepresentation concerns how “relations of representation [are] unjust in and of themselves, apart from the effects of maldistribution and misrecognition.” What is at stake, then, is the process by which public policies are proposed, deliberated on, and enacted. Put another way, misrepresentation concerns the institutionalized denial of political voice through political structures and decision rules.

Decisions to close schools reveal three distinct sources of misrepresentation. First, decisions to close schools may simply exclude communities from participating in the process, or deny them any meaningful role. Take the closure of John Marshall Elementary in Boston. School principal Theresa Harvey-Jackson made repeated demands of the district for funds to repair her school. The district repeatedly ignored her requests, later noting that because Marshall was designated a “superintendent school” in 2007, the school had extra resources and flexibility in hiring. Yet, it did not seem to be an issue of the district’s lacking funds. When the Boston School Council decided to close Marshall and reopen it as a charter school, many of the outstanding repairs were suddenly made—as Harvey-Jackson noted, without a work order. Thus, despite acting as an agent
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with formal authority to do so, Harvey-Jackson was unable to even initiate processes to repair or reform Marshall. It was as if the school was outside the district’s concern. Indeed, Harvey-Jackson recounts how a group of Boston residents who wanted to visit a well-resourced school and a low-resourced school were sent to see Marshall as an example of the latter, but still no help followed the visit.

The community’s role in the decision to close Marshall was also unequivocally minimal. Indeed, the decision to close Marshall and replace it with a charter school was made public in October of 2012. The district met with parents two weeks after the proposal to close Marshall was announced, not before. And only two days after that meeting, the Boston School Committee voted to approve the proposal. District officials invited parents to attend the School Committee vote and offer their thoughts, but despite pleas to halt the closure, as well as questions about how and when this decision was made, the vote took place as scheduled and passed unanimously. In short, when the district finally turned its gaze back to Marshall, it implemented a remedy on its own terms, with little input from the community at all.

Second, decisions to close schools typically legitimize professional reformers as agents of reform at the same time that they delegitimize urban communities as similar agents. In the spring of 2014 in Nashville, Tennessee, the state announced that it would replace one of two schools—either Madison Middle School or Neely’s Bend Middle School—with a charter school. The decision was met with strong opposition at both schools. Many parents wanted the state to help them preserve the structure and character of their school...
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while providing additional support. As one parent put it, “If we can get Metro schools to put the right resources that this school needs, then we don't need a conversion.”

Instead of responding to such sentiment, the state moved forward with plans to turn Neely’s Bend Middle School into a charter school.

In doing so, Tennessee positioned communities as subjects rather than participants or agents in school reform. For the Journey for Justice Alliance, this lack of agency is a large part of the problem with school closure policies: “While the proponents of these policies may like to think they are implementing them for us or even with us, the reality is that they have been done to us.” Such a claim stands in sharp contrast to the position taken by professional reformers. For example, in response to parents’ concerns about closing Neely’s Bend, the CEO of the charter organization tasked with reopening the school remarked: “We have a great track record of [raising performance]. But we can’t do it alone. We need a community to support us.” Parents at both Madison and Neely’s Bend, however, demanded the exact opposite. They were not looking to support somebody else changing their school; rather, each community was looking for someone to support them.

Third, school closure is most often deployed in districts that are under centralized mayoral control. Indeed, the last roughly two decades of school reform have witnessed a push to centralize authority over schools under the office of the mayor, particularly in urban communities. During that time, Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., among others, have all transitioned to mayoral
control. Proponents of centralization argue that the direct connection between the mayor and the school district enables tighter control on district-wide policies that also align with pressing needs across the city. \(^{xxxviii}\) Others suggest that community organizations and local school boards are ineffective or unaware of the challenges their schools face. \(^{xxix}\) In either case, the shorter leash enables more efficient policymaking.

However, centralization also narrows opportunities for citizens to participate in democratic decision-making. As control over schools becomes more hierarchical, there are fewer and fewer formal structures and spaces for communities to participate in decision-making about their schools. The fallout has been deteriorating trust. Jeanette Taylor, a Local School Council chair in Chicago put it this way: “We will not go to any more sham school closing hearings. We will not sit at any more bogus advisory councils.” \(^{xli}\) While mayoral control may lead to efficiency or coherence, it also reinforces the sense that communities have little control over defining the status of their schools (good/bad or effective/failing), as well as, in the case of closure, the fate of their schools. Again, communities become spectators rather than agents in political action. Thus, school reform enacted through centralized political structures comes at the expense of democratic voice.

**Attending to Injustice**

The ultimate goal of any theoretical project is to shape how people understand a particular phenomenon. At its best and worst, theory is simply a device to help us describe the world in which we live, though it often helps us to see that world in a new
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way. The lens I have argued for here understands injustice to be multidimensional and, consequently, the process of mitigating injustice to be complex. I have clarified three different notions of injustice that undergird advocacy for and opposition to school closure in order to reframe the practical and theoretical challenges facing school reform. In short, it becomes increasingly important to understand the relationships among different forms of injustice. Doing so will not only further our insights into the nature of social injustice in our world, but also reorient the practical and theoretical problems we set out to address.

As for school closure, the failure to act without regard for the multidimensional nature of injustice comes with stark human costs. In Chicago, the closure of Walter Dyett High School ultimately resulted in a thirty-four day hunger strike, led by Jitu Brown. The strike followed the cancellation of a meeting that would have featured proposals to re-open Dyett High School. For Taylor, Brown, and their fellow strikers this was elected officials’ latest, and last, attempt to ignore them. They put their bodies on the line in order to ensure that, as Eve Ewing has described it, their schools are not inhabited by the “ghosts” of the past and memory, but rather by the voices of their children, and the hearts and souls of their community. Their strike says more about the gravity of their claims than any theoretical framework, but I hope that in explicating such a framework, we may all better learn to listen and act from that knowledge.
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Ibid, 29.


Fraser also proposes a second form of misrepresentation: “meta-level political injustices, which arise as a result of the division of political space into bounded polities.” In other words, misrepresentation describes how political boundaries, such as states and countries, effectively rule out some people from making claims of other people. See Fraser, “Abnormal Justice,” 407–409; Nancy Fraser, Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 145–147. For my purposes, because closure is a domestic dispute, I will consider misrepresentation only in its “domestic” form.

Fraser, “Abnormal Justice,” 403.


While we may not think something like a particular academic outcome is finite, the amount of financial and human resources needed to achieve such outcomes is most certainly finite.

One might think, however, that if such redistributive policies were necessary to achieve a more just educational system, then they would be required—making the feasibility complaint less forceful. However, for the point of simply demonstrating the appeal of closure, the feasibility complaint is helpful. While closure may not have the impact we want a redistributive policy to have, the fact that it is doable goes a long way when the aim is to actually achieve more justice in the real world.


Marisa de la Torre & Gwynne, 2009.


In some ways, epistemic subordination may be similar to what Miranda Fricker refers to as epistemic injustice. See Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice*, 145.


