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Faculty Difference-In-Pay (DIP) Report for Fall 2016

During this Difference in Pay (DIP) leave, I worked on two different projects. The first was part of a larger on-going project envisioned to involve Tibetan, Chinese and Latina nannies/domestic workers. During the DIP, I focused back in on Tibetan nannies in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area. In-depth interviews have been completed with five women of varying ages. In addition, observations and additional contacts were made through participating in activities at a local Tibetan monastery. The Gyuto Foundation is located in East Richmond Heights, California and is dedicated to "the preservation of Tibet's living cultural and spiritual heritage." As part of their efforts, they focus on providing support to Tibetan seniors living in the East Bay. Many of these Tibetan seniors are actually employed as nannies and domestic workers themselves. This project is on-going one and will move into transcription in the coming year.

The second project I engaged in during this DIP was "Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) in the Schools" curriculum development aimed at K-8 children.¹ The first step was to begin to survey the state of the field as it related to WGS-related workshop/trainings targeting local elementary schools. This revealed a single community organization, known as *Gender Spectrum*. *Gender Spectrum* is a non-profit organization based in Oakland, California. Their mission is to "create a gender-inclusive world for all children and youth" (<http://www.genderspectrum.org>). They provide trainings that range from several workshops over a course of a few weeks, to year-long training and curriculum development to entire school districts.² Their focus however, is on gender and gender identity, with not a lot of intersectionality explicitly discussed (such as race, class, ethnicity, national status).

San Francisco-based "About-Face" is another SF Area non-profit that aims to educate elementary school/middle school children (K-8) on media literacy as it pertains primarily to girls and women's imagery within mass media. Their goal is to "equip girls with the tools... [necessary] to resist harmful media messages that affect their self-esteem and body image." (<http://www.about-face.org>). In addition to providing an online interactive 'gallery of offenders' (media ads with offensive messages to girls and women), they also conduct workshops to K-8 and high schools. However, their focus is on girls and women, with little outreach and education toward boys and men or issues beyond self-esteem.

¹ "WGS-related curriculum for children" would include education on issues such as the following: What is gender? What is sexism? Where do we see gender operate in everyday life? What is race/racism? How do social constructs such as gender and race intersect? What are the effects of the gender binary? What is consent for children? For tweens? What is sexual harassment? What does it mean to truly respect difference across axes of race, class, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc? How do politics and economics interrelate in all of this, etc...

² For the latter, see the documentary which follows their efforts, *Creating Gender Inclusive Schools*. <https://www.newday.com/film/creating-gender-inclusive-schools>

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As a parent of two elementary school children ages 8 and 11, I was able to visit their classrooms as a parent-volunteer. The stated purpose of the teachers was to have the parents share their expertise. As such, I was able to, twice, distribute surveys to 34 5th/6th graders on gender-related issues. These survey results were used to frame and shape the curriculum/workshops I engaged the students in at a later date. I worked with the 5th/6th graders 3 times and the 2nd graders once.³ Surveys were anonymous and analyses were divided among boys, girls, and gender non-conforming (should they identify as such).⁴ Future work will consider issues of intersectionality, and how our gendered norms are in fact also classed and raced (i.e. white middle class masculine norms), alongside questions of how to build media literacy in age-appropriate ways (the ability for young people to understand the hidden messages of gender, race, and class within the music, stories, and advertising they encounter).

Relatedly, I also began surveying and writing feminist reviews of books aimed at middle-school audiences. The books are from the genre known as “young adult” (YA) literature. Review and analysis was done looking for positive characterizations that center strong female characters (e.g. for whom their appearance is not the central focus), feminist boys/men, children of color, diversity within families and communities, immigration histories, etc... The YA literature has grown exponentially in the last ten years, with very little out there to guide parents or teachers who may be interested in suggesting socially conscious books. The organization Commonsense Media (<http://www.commonsemmedia.org>) rates films and television shows for violence, language, and ‘adult themes’ (e.g. overt sexuality), but not feminist content. The website of A Mighty Girl (<http://www.amightygirl.org>) also provides suggestions for toys, films, and books that have female fictional and historical characters. While a wonderful starting ground for parents, the website provides descriptions and consumer review links, but not analytical feminist analyses that look beyond the mere inclusion of female characters.

All the above efforts (surveys, reviews) will be used to hone materials that can assist in developing and teaching WGS-related curriculum in age-appropriate ways to children ages K-8.

³ For the 2nd graders, as well as younger—WGS curriculum looks more like reading published stories such as *Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress* or exercises asking children to list what toys they think “boys” v “girls” *should* play with (alongside lists of what they *actually* play with). Takeaways are along the lines of ‘being kind and respectful with all children regardless of difference’ and breaking down notions of heteronormativity (e.g. families come in all different configurations) and the gender binary.

⁴ Questions revolved around what sports and after-school activities the youth were involved in, commonly held ideas about “boys” v “girls” (e.g. ‘boys are stronger than girls’, “what does the phrase ‘boys will be boys’ mean?), what types of internet usage/social media are they involved in and for what purposes, what have they been taught about safety on the internet and cyberbullying, experiences with bullying, sexual harassment, what is consent, what musicians/singers are they interested in and why, etc...