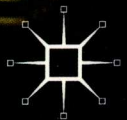# SCHOOLING IN THE AGE OF AUSTERITY

URBAN EDUCATION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC LIFE

ALEXANDER J. MEANS

WARNING
SAFE
SCHOOL
ZONE

YOU HAVE ENTERED A SAFE SCHOOL ZONE:
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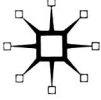OF DRUGS AND WEAPONS.
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Schooling in the Age of Austerity

Urban Education and the Struggle for Democratic Life

Alexander J. Means

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Schooling in the Age of Austerity

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Contents

Introduction: Schooling in a Time of Crisis and Austerity

> Schools express the conflicts and limitations as well as the hopes of a divided and unequal society; and they continue to be both testing grounds and battle-grounds for building a more just and freer life for all.
>
> —*Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis,* Schooling in Capitalist America[1]

As we drift further into the second decade of the twenty-first century, public schooling in the United States has become a focal point of anxiety and a signpost of sobering challenges. In the dominant media and among the financial and political elite, a corporate consensus has emerged that has declared public schooling to be a failed experiment—an antiquated social institution incapable of meeting the demands and assorted crises of the global era.[2] The rhetoric of educational failure is most often invoked in relation to "urban education"—a not-so-subtle "race neutral" euphemism for public schools that serve primarily impoverished communities and mostly black and Latino youth. Dominant explanations for the perpetuation of "failure" in such schools—low test scores, dysfunctional environments, high dropout rates, and so on—have become increasingly predictable. Across a network of high-profile corporate reform advocates, right-wing think tanks, business groups, and corporate foundations the problem is said to be located in the inefficient and corrupt nature of the public sector itself and the supposed incompetence and greed of teachers and their unions. The future of the nation is said to depend on restructuring public school systems by subjecting them to commercial management and the private discipline of market forces. In order to save public education, it is argued, we must break-up the "public school monopoly" through the wholesale privatization of the educational commons. However, while the corporate reform movement has been framed in the progressive language of educational innovation and equity, the evidence continues to mount that free market experimentation has failed to improve public education in any meaningful sense while contributing to already staggering social and educational inequalities. In this light, the reforms appear to have more to do with political and economic expediency than with robust investment in the human development and the educational futures of all young people. How else to explain policies that continue to undermine the very public education system on which the future of the nation supposedly depends?[3]

Not unlike the spectacular failure of the global financial system in 2008, the problems that confront inner-city public schools today can be attributed largely to a systemic failure—a toxic mixture of global economic change and volatility, profiteering and corruption, stunted imagination, and misguided policies, values, and priorities. This has contributed to deepening poverty and inequality in the urban sphere and the evaporation of social commitments to public schools and young people, particularly the most historically disadvantaged and vulnerable. *Schooling in the Age of Austerity* examines this systemic failure "on the ground" through an ethnographic case study in a low-income and racially segregated community and public high school in the city of Chicago. Through the perspectives of those most affected, namely youth and their teachers, it documents the lived contradictions and myriad impacts of educational privatization, disinvestment, commercialization, and the rise of a militaristic culture of policing and containment in urban public schools and neighborhoods. It argues that these processes are indicative of a neoliberal culture and political economy that is eroding the educative and democratic purpose of urban public schools while making the daily lives and futures of young people ever more precarious and insecure. While the book offers no easy answers or quick fixes, at its core is a belief that a vibrant system of public education is a key ethical component in imagining and realizing a future worthy of our highest aspirations and ideals. As such, it advocates for an educational vision that locates public schooling not as a *commodity* valued primarily for its role in shoring-up narrow economic and national security imperatives, but as a *commons*—a site critical to developing human security, economic justice, and democratic life. Such an educational vision is already shared by scores of educators, parents, students, and community activists who are deeply skeptical and disillusioned with corporate management and market experimentation in education and who yearn for public schools responsive to the complex needs and desires of youth and their communities; schools that do not reduce learning to issues of market competition, punishment, and test scores; and schools designed to cultivate restorative and sustainable futures for all young people.

*   *   *

Over the last several years, I have had the good fortune of living in the city of Toronto, Ontario. As an American graduate student, living in Toronto has been valuable for observing issues concerning globalization and educational politics that have challenged and enriched my thinking not only about urban Canada but the United States as well. In 2007, during the first year of my doctoral studies at the University of Toronto, a 14-year-old student named Jordan Manners was shot and killed in the hallway of C. W. Jeffery's Collegiate Institute—a public high school in North Toronto. This rare and tragic event engendered an outpouring of public discussion in the Toronto media and prompted three major governmental commissions, one headed by attorney Julian Falconer at the behest of former Toronto mayor David Miller, another conducted by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), and another provincial study undertaken by former Ontario minister Alvin Curling and former Ontario chief justice Roy McMurtry. Each of the investigations concluded that a variety of factors contribute to violence and

insecurity in Toronto's schools, including concentrated poverty, racism, inadequate resources, and racial profiling of students by police.

Writing of the TDSB report in the *Toronto Star*, David Hulchanski (2008), director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Urban and Community Studies, has suggested that while the commissions rightly identified poverty and racism as central factors impacting schools and young people, they nonetheless fell short in sufficiently addressing the economic conditions and political decisions that serve to perpetuate and deepen inequality and exclusion in the city. His analysis points toward the systemic realities and effects of three decades of steep cuts to social services and the downward trajectory of income and job security within the city's postindustrial economy. Moreover, despite being relatively shielded from the most immediate and damaging effects of the global economic crisis—largely due to sane banking regulation and a western economic boom spurred by dirty tar sands oil—there has been a steady expansion of social inequality in Canada and a steady upward redistribution of wealth and power to the richest Canadians.[4] Hulchanski argues that amid these broader structural conditions, Toronto schools by themselves cannot be expected to provide substantive forms of security for students in a city that is increasingly divided by wealth and privilege. He concludes by asking "will 40 percent of Toronto be abandoned, as the research literature predicts, to become Toronto's vast 'ghetto of the excluded'?"

Hulchanksi's comments represent an attempt to make visible the economic, cultural, and political relations driving present experiences of insecurity and everyday violence across North American cities and beyond. They also raise basic questions about the meaning and limits of security within educational institutions and in the lives of youth at the margins of the new urban geography. Over the last three decades, cities across North America have become increasingly polarized along the lines of race, space, and class producing new patterns of social alienation, dispossession, and political contestation (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Leitner, Sheppard, Sziato, & Maringanti, 2007; Wacquant, 2008). This has been driven by globalizing transformations in capital and labor, combined with the concurrent restructuring of state policy frameworks favoring privatization and market integration, financial deregulation, and the empowerment of transnational corporations at the expense of public and social investment. Further, amid the broader erosion of the social safety net accompanying the decline of the Keynesian welfare state and the emergence of the neoliberal state, a reactionary cultural logic and right-wing politics has emerged that asserts that issues of poverty, joblessness, and other forms of social deprivation and dislocation are largely individual failures as opposed to collective problems. In order to manage the contradictions and the consequences, we have witnessed the emergence of various punitive forms of enhanced urban policing and social control. This has included a racially predicated "war on drugs" and "imprisonment binge" responsible for generating a "new military urbanism" and the widespread "criminalization of poverty" (Graham, 2010; Wacquant, 2009).

While this book was conceived during my graduate studies at the University of Toronto, the ethnographic research was conducted in my former home of Chicago. As a former junior high school teacher in Chicago, I witnessed

firsthand the systemic forces and everyday dilemmas that currently face urban schools and young people. The majority of my students, who were predominantly black and Latino, came from working-class homes. Many lived in poverty and many struggled to meet their basic needs. Some had one or both parents in prison, typically for nonviolent drug offenses, and many others had been victims of violence. My students often shared their sense of frustration at the insecurities permeating their lives and the very real existential dangers they faced navigating the city. Despite the fact that overall trends in crime and violence have declined since the early 1990s, each year dozens of Chicago youth continue to lose their lives in utterly senseless acts of violence.[5] Unlike in Toronto, these incidents typically do not inspire a great deal of public discussion, government commissions, and/or sustained social reflection. When the issue of violence is raised, the discussion tends to be much narrower such as in the aftermath of the tragic beating death of 16-year-old Chicago honors student Derrion Albert in the fall of 2009. Captured by a cell phone camera, Albert's death was run in full, sensationalized repetition on CNN and other corporate news outlets. Rather than seeking to understand and illuminate the historical inheritances and economic and political realities and decisions that perpetuate such violence, the media coverage tended to reaffirm reactionary narratives of urban youth as pathological and dangerous—legitimating further policies of disinvestment and containment rather than human development and restorative forms of justice.

As a teacher, it became clear to me that cultivating relationships through trust, mutual respect, compassion, humor, and socially relevant curricula provides the most powerful and empowering basis for promoting successful classrooms and ethical school cultures. Such commitments hold the potential to break down the walls of fear, violence, and insecurity that pervade the lives of so many of our students, enabling them to develop their moral, creative, and intellectual potential in safe and enlivening school environments. Unfortunately, many urban public schools across the United States are not presently organized in ways that facilitate this kind of climate. This is due to a variety of factors: extensive privatization and the drive to incorporate market forces into public governance leading to the further marginalization and defunding of public schools; deep cuts to social and educational services based on a neoconservative tax schema that serves the rich and deepens systemic inequalities; a deadening standardized test-based curricula that has laid waste to liberal arts and other socially relevant forms of pedagogy; attacks on teaching as a professional and intellectual endeavor; and, finally, the rise of a zero tolerance culture of metal detectors, surveillance cameras, lock-downs, contraband searches, drug sniffing dogs, and punitive law enforcement practices responsible for perpetuating a "school-to-prison pipeline" (AP, 2005, 2010). All of these factors present distinct challenges to the democratic purpose of public schooling and the livelihoods, dignities, and futures of young people in the inner-city and beyond.

* * *

Schooling in the Age of Austerity examines the unfolding drama of educational change and the human security of young people in the contemporary city.

Urban schools and communities find themselves subject to powerful destabilizing forces associated with globalization and neoliberal governance. The book analyzes these dynamics through an ethnographic study in a neighborhood and public high school in Chicago: Ellison Square and Carter High School (CHS).[6] It asks: What are the material and imaginative limits of security in urban education in a moment of escalating economic instability and social dislocation? Recent social science research has tended to examine questions of security in relation to the expansion of state security and global war in the post-9/11 period. In educational studies, the tendency has been to understand security primarily as a mode of educational risk management, violence prevention, and school discipline. While important, these perspectives have tended to occlude an adequate understanding of the *systemic and symbolic forms of violence* responsible for the *fragmentation of human security* in the lives of youth in their schools and communities. Specifically absent are empirical perspectives that chart the relationship between neoliberal transformations and precariousness in public schooling from the point of view of educators and youth themselves. My argument is that reading "security" both as a *form of governance* and as a *lived condition* offers essential insight into urban and educational change in relation to the present capacity of youth to secure their lives and futures. This approach enables insight not only into contemporary forms of systemic insecurity and violence, but also into how educators and youth strive for and imagine possibilities for change and transformation in urban schools and neighborhoods.

Central to this analysis is a critique of neoliberal political rationality—a mode of free market fundamentalism that has colonized state organization, culture, and public policy in matters of health care, education, labor law, taxes, financial regulation, and environmental protection over the last three decades. Despite having its central claims to greater shared prosperity and progress universally discredited by the global financial crisis in 2008 and its devastating aftermath, neoliberal ideology remains more powerful than ever. This is nowhere more visible than in the acceleration of public disinvestment and the turn to austerity in the wake of the Great Recession. Canadian political scientist David McNally (2012) observes:

> The Great Recession of 2008–9 represents a profound rupture in the neoliberal era, signaling the exhaustion of the accumulation regime that had emerged almost thirty years earlier. Rather than an ordinary recession, a short-lived downturn in the business cycle, it constituted a systemic crisis, a major contraction whose effects will be with us for many years to come. Among those effects are the extraordinary cuts to social programs, and the resultant impoverishment, announced as part of the Age of Austerity inaugurated by all major states. (p. 1)

As McNally and other analysts have noted, austerity is a strategic response by transnational capital markets, financial elites, and institutions to discipline nation states, particularly across Europe and North America, in order to socialize the costs of the economic crisis.[7] Concretely, this means that the toxic debt that accrued in the banking and financial system originating from the US subprime

housing and securities markets has been converted into sovereign debt through massive government bailouts (an estimated $20 trillion in total). Rather than punishing those financial institutions whose excesses tanked the global economy, the costs, along with future financial risks, are being passed along to the public and to the poor through the intensification of neoliberal privatization, painful cuts to social services, and continued tax breaks for corporations and the already rich. What we have seen is spiraling levels of social inequality and insecurity—mass foreclosures; evaporating wages and savings; levels of unemployment, homelessness, and poverty not seen since the Great Depression; and an explosion of personal bankruptcy and debt. In this sense, austerity reflects both mutations in neoliberal governance and in its pauperizing consequences.

In the United States, calls for austerity represent commitments to the same failed supply-side, trickle-down ideology that emerged under Reagan in the early 1980s. Painfully demonstrative of what happens to a society when unfettered capitalism is mindlessly conflated with democracy, the United States now holds the ignoble status as the most unequal advanced nation with relative levels of inequality similar to many of the poorest nations in Africa and Latin America, and, despite a national presumption of meritocracy, the United States also has one of lowest rates of social mobility (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009; Stiglitz, 2012). Despite three decades of economic growth (90% of which went to the top 10%) and despite record breaking corporate profits in the post-2008 period (the benefits of which have accrued mainly to the top 1%), 97.3 million Americans are now defined as "low income" or "near poverty" largely due to declining wages, reduced hours, job losses, and rising costs of living, while an additional 49 million struggle to survive below the federal poverty line. This means that 146 million, or 1 in 2 Americans, are now classified as either low-income or impoverished (Mishel, Bernstein, & Shierholz, 2009; Yen, 2011). Further, 28 million people are unemployed or underemployed (meaning they have a job that does not cover their needs); 45 million are relying on food assistance; and 50 million lack health insurance. Meanwhile, the United States continues to pour trillions of dollars into supporting the planet's largest and most costly military and prison industrial complexes (Alexander, 2010; Davis, 2005). According to the Pew Research Center, in the nation that brands itself as a global beacon of freedom and justice, 1 in 31 adults are currently under the direct control of the criminal justice system (either in prison, on parole, or probation) which is more than any other nation (PEW, 2009). These trends reflect three decades of institutionalized exploitation and the subversion and decay of public values and the democratic trust. What has emerged in the United States over this period is a hyperfragmented and punitive society where corporate forces and a fanatic right-wing stand openly determined to roll-back all vestiges of social progress made in the previous century.

The Great Recession and neoliberal austerity have taken an especially severe toll on young people and public schools. According to research conducted for Duke University's Child Well Being Index, "virtually all of the progress made in the family economic well-being domain since 1975 will be wiped out" as "families, schools, neighborhood, and community organizations, and governments

continue to cope with budget cuts and the loss of jobs" (Land, 2010). Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond (2011) elaborates on the condition of youth and the warped priorities that drive US policy:

> We live in a nation that is on the verge of forgetting its children. The United States now has a far higher poverty rate for children than any other industrialized country (25 percent, nearly double what it was thirty years ago); a more tattered safety net— more who are homeless, without healthcare and without food security; a more segregated and inequitable system of public education (a 10:1 ratio in spending across the country); a larger and more costly system of incarceration than any country in the world, including China (5 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of its inmates), one that is now directly cutting into the money we should be spending on education; a defense budget larger than that of the next twenty countries combined; and greater disparities in wealth than any other leading country. Our political leaders do not talk about these things. They simply say of poor children, 'Let them eat tests!'"

Alongside extensive cuts to social programs for the most vulnerable children, social disinvestment and austerity have been acutely felt in their impact on public education.[8] A report by the National Education Association titled *Starving America's Public Schools*, details how the spiraling costs of the Great Recession are being passed along to schools and communities through deep spending cuts (Bryant, 2011). Since 2008, states have laid off hundreds of thousands of teachers and staff, cut back curriculum and extracurricular programs, expanded class sizes, shortened school days and weeks, and even closed many schools altogether. For instance, Illinois has cut $152 million, New York $1.3 billion, Pennsylvania $422 million, Washington $1 billion, and Arizona $560 million in state funding to k-12 public schools, early childhood education, and child development services. Further, the report details that while educational budgets are being slashed, public money that would be going directly to schools is instead being redirected to corporate vendors mainly for expanding privatized commercial management, commercial curriculum contracts, commercial online "cyber-charter" school ventures, and commercial standardized testing services (a booming aspect of the $600 billion-per-year education market). Florida, as just one example, has cut $1 billion from its educational budget while it redirects roughly $299 million to corporate interests in the education market. These cuts are contributing to the erosion of the educative and civic mission of public schools by raising class sizes, narrowing the curriculum, and eliminating essential services (particularly in the poorest communities), while redirecting funding from the public to private interests (corporate lobbying for vast educational contracts has become a grand enterprise in the post-No Child Left Behind era).[9]

The impoverishment of young people and the institutions designed to protect and serve them not only raises disturbing questions about the status of public education as a fundamental right and basic social good, but also the status of youth as a key ethical and symbolic referent in a democratic society. This has led cultural critics like Henry Giroux (2009) to observe that youth, especially those marginalized by class and color, have become the primary collateral damage of

the neoliberal era—a "disposable population" increasingly dispossessed of the means to secure their daily lives and future. He writes:

> Youth have become the all-important group onto which racial and class anxieties are projected. Their presence represents both the broken promise of capitalism in the age of deregulation and downsizing and a collective fear of the consequences wrought by systemic class inequalities, racism, and "infectious greed" that has created a generation of unskilled and displaced youth expelled from shrinking markets, blue collar jobs, and any viable hope in the future. (Giroux 2003, p. xvi)

Similarly to Giroux, I argue in this book that the precarious conditions facing young people in urban neighborhoods and schools in the age of austerity are expressive of the elevation of a market imperative and a military imperative over and above a social democratic imperative. Schools do not exist separately from the social contexts in which they are located. The hard realities of poverty combined with lack of access to living-wage job opportunities, basic health and human services, and affordable housing all create distinct barriers to successful urban communities and public schools. Rather than investing in young people and their communities, free market reforms combined with social disinvestments in neighborhoods and schools are exacerbating a historical legacy of race and class inequality while consigning marginalized young people to an attenuated future at the bottom of the postindustrial labor and consumer hierarchy. Perhaps most disconcertingly, as I outline in the following chapters, as public values and broader social commitments to young people and public schools have receded in the neoliberal era, there has been a stunning expansion of militarized zero tolerance enforcement and criminalizing punishment in urban public schools and neighborhoods. These developments present significant challenges to realizing the promise of public schooling as a commons oriented to social justice and authentic democracy.

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The analysis that unfolds over the following chapters is a *critical ethnography of neoliberal schooling*. Critical ethnography is a post-positivist approach to social research that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the social sciences particularly within the fields of sociology, anthropology, and education (Anderson, 1989; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Yon, 2003). This diverse research perspective combines critical theory with traditional qualitative methods. It is both analytical and normative in orientation and seeks to study social processes, experiences, and human agency as they are produced and articulated in specific institutional and cultural contexts. Critical ethnography's *analytical dimension* is oriented to understanding the relation between values, understandings, and social practices in relation to the broader political, economic, and cultural forces in which they are located. In this sense, it attempts to make connections between the global and the local and the particular and the universal through a variety of empirical materials including document and data analysis, observations, and through dialogue with

cultural insiders. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest, such an approach represents an effort to "make the world visible" by "attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3).

Critical ethnography relies centrally on critique as an analytic tool to not only bring knowledge to light but also to unsettle and challenge assumptions that reinforce and underlie dominant forms of knowledge and practice. Therefore, unlike positivist approaches to research, critical ethnography has an openly *normative dimension*. This is another way of saying that critical ethnography does not subtract ethical considerations from the research process. Rather than claiming value neutrality, it is driven by a sense of "ethical responsibility," which Soyini Madison (2012) describes as "a compelling sense of duty and commitment based on moral principles of human freedom and well-being, and hence a compassion for the suffering of living beings" (p. 5). Critical ethnography thus recognizes that research is a value-laden activity and therefore researcher positionality necessarily impacts interpretation. However, while critical ethnography seeks to remain critical of all knowledge claims including its own, it openly seeks to challenge injustice and to advocate for solutions to social problems in the interest of equity and democracy. The social sciences have a long history implicated in colonial and imperialist assumptions and practices including classism, racism, sexism, and homophobia (Clifford, 1983; Said, 1989). Against this historical legacy, critical ethnography is committed to unraveling and decolonizing relations of domination in the interest of promoting human development and social justice (Mohanty, 2003; Smith, 2005). Madison suggests that this entails probing "other possibilities that will challenge institutions, regimes of knowledge, and social practices that limit choices, constrain meaning, and denigrate identities and communities" (p. 5).

While much has been written on the relationship between neoliberalism and educational policy (Apple, 2006; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Lipman, 2003, 2011; Olssen, Codd, & O'Neil, 2004) relatively little research has been conducted that studies neoliberalism "on the ground" in urban communities and public schools. In this analysis, I theoretically situate neoliberalism as both a form of political economy (Harvey, 2003, 2005) and as a mode of governmentality (Brown, 2005; Foucault, 2008) in order to engage questions of educational policy and practice in Chicago's Ellison Square neighborhood and at CHS from the point of view of those living and working there, particularly young people and their teachers. Such an examination is thus intimately concerned with relations of space, place, and subjectivity. Geography and place are central in defining and maintaining relations of power, privilege, and security in late modern life (Bauman, 1998; Massey, 2005). They play a fundamental constitutive role in determining the uneven historical distribution of material and symbolic wealth along with access to transportation, housing, health care, quality schools, employment opportunities, and social mobility. Moreover, space and place are central components in the articulation and operation of capital, state policy and governance, and social relations across scales and institutional contexts (Harvey, 2006; Smith, 2008). Crucially, relations of policy, governance, and power are not simply imposed from the top down but also meet powerful local forms of cultural and individual agency and resistance. This means that neoliberal schooling is something

produced in a dialectical relationship between the global and the local and implicated in forging unique expressions of meaning, understanding, and identity in specific institutional sites and everyday contexts.

Chicago is an ideal city to study the structural and political dimensions of urban change and educational policy and governance (Lipman, 2003, 2011; Wacquant, 2008). The city represents many of the contradictions of a "global city" between significant corporate economic development in finance, real-estate, and tourism, on the one hand, and profound economic insecurity and social polarization, on the other. While Chicago has become a powerful global financial center, it also features some of the most impoverished, racially segregated, and heavily policed neighborhoods and schools in the United States. Chicago has also consistently been at the forefront of adopting market forms of governance and management strategies in the educational sector such as privatization, centralized mayoral control, accountability, scripted curriculum, and high-stakes testing. Its 1995 reform agenda, for instance, was a blueprint for the No Child Left Behind Act. The Chicago Public Schools serve a population of over 400,000 students; 85 percent are visible minorities and 87 percent are considered low-income or live below the federal poverty line. In recent years, the policies adopted by the CPS, particularly under former Chicago schools' CEO and current secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (2001–2009), have pushed for extensive privatization and corporate integration in educational management. This has meant, among other things, overseeing the closing of dozens of public schools and the opening of over 90 new deregulated charter and contract schools. These policies have been highly controversial in Chicago and have increasingly come under intensive community resistance due to their failure to make good on promises of improvement and because of their implication in deepening inequities and disinvestment in traditional public schools.

The choice to focus on a single school and neighborhood at the margins of the neoliberal city was a conscious decision. I wanted the opportunity to shine a light on the human realities of a public school and a community too often rendered invisible in the broader public sphere. Furthermore, when urban public schools in high-poverty neighborhoods and the teachers and young people who inhabit them are taken up in media and public debate, the narratives that emerge are too often rooted in stereotypes and faulty assumptions in desperate need of empirical clarification. Moreover, while the focus on a specific school and community may present some challenges to generalizability as Chicago and its communities have unique historical and cultural trajectories, it would perhaps allow me to acquire deeper insight into the specific ways that educators and youth understand and negotiate the broader processes of neoliberal schooling described throughout this introduction and book.

After a difficult and lengthy access negotiation with the Chicago Public Schools which I describe in some detail in chapter 2, I was granted permission to conduct this research in Ellison Square and CHS on Chicago's South Side. Ellison Square and CHS are broadly representative of public schools in Chicago and many US cities. Ellison Square is a working-class and majority Latino neighborhood that has undergone significant economic and demographic changes