Democracy Lab 2.0

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Changing spaces

& the creation of settings
The original learning center
The intermediate learning center
The new community center
Democracy Lab works to expose opportunities for **experiential democracy** in daily life.

Democracy Lab focuses on experiences with **tools and practices** for imagining, building, and processes of repairing our shared life together.

**Video (co)production as democratic practice**
“Throughout the whole quarter, I’ve realized the importance of storytelling and narratives. It just kind of clicked for me, how we are creating our own identity through these videos – like, we are the science people, in our case, and then here’s the sports people and the traveling people. But, just hearing out their stories and us sharing our stories, kind of bridges the gap of where we’re seeing each other in the world. Before going to the center, I had a different notion of that community, I had a different idea; although my parents are just a couple of miles away from that community, I never stopped and wondered what is going on. And I think being able to understand the power of individual stories, gave me the perspective that we all have a story to tell and they’re all their own truth and we should value that to empower their own community and empower ourselves.” (FM, 3/14/19)
Next Steps

Ways to address a paradox:

The state’s largest youth serving institution is charged with laying a foundation for democratic participation while also reproducing the authority of the state.

Public schools are important spaces for realizing the potential of democratic public participation.

Fifty million children and youth attend public school in the United States (Kena et al., 2015), making schools the central public institution within which young people have a stake and one where they have a clear, collective claim to citizenship:

- cultural citizenship (Rosaldo, 1994)
- self-actualizing citizenship (Bennett, 2008)
- enfranchisement
- decolonial pedagogies & ethical relations (Zavala, 2018)
- and more
Emerging d.lab projects

Dept. of Communication
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San Diego Public Library
Developing Partnership
San Diego Public Libraries

Marc Chery
San Diego Public Library

Supervisor, Humanities Section, Central Library

Former branch librarian for Malcolm X Branch and Performing Arts Center

Screenwriter
Developing SDSU Partnership
Geography & YESS Center

Kate Swanson
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border policies, youth agency, rights, crime and violence

volunteer and researcher

has worked extensively with Central American & Mexican migrant children in the border region

recent work: unaccompanied migrant children and migrant detention centers
Next stages of design

Questions:

1. When is democratic practice most readily available to young participants, and how do impediments to their practice function?
2. What tools and practices are most readily accessible for democratic engagement as an activity in daily life?
3. What forms of relational work promote the development of civic knowledge and political practice?
4. When and how does mobility affect democratic participation?

place-based

- incubator
- expansion

mobile design plans
inquiries/musings: democratic practice

**Contribution**: Latin con- (with) + tribuere (bestow) to form contribuere to contribut- (brought together, added) to contribute in the mid 16th century

What would it look like to know democracy on these terms: Contribution…a form of bringing together; and Lucretius (via Mary Oliver)…a form of recognizing something will be made from what already is

**Democracy**: Greek demos- (the people) + kratia (power, rule) to form demokratia to late Latin and then to late French to become démocrotie and then democracy in the late 16th century

What if *rule* is more like a guide? (comes from Latin regula- (straight stick)…becomes regulare in late Latin and then reule in Late French)

**Power** comes from the Latin posse (be able) and becomes poeir in Anglo-Norman French to power in middle English
Thank you!