The Racialization of Relationships Between Higher Education Institutions and Cities: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Changing North Denver

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Abstract

Universities help shape the physical contours and the social fabric of cities. Historical forms of racial domination repeat themselves, reproducing spatial subordination. In the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods in North Denver, residents who are mostly low-income immigrant families have in the past faced housing discrimination; air, water, and soil pollution; environmental racism; highway construction and expansion; school dilapidation; and social, political, and economic neglect for over five decades (Doeppers, 1967; Cram, 2013; EPA, 2019). As the City of Denver turns its attention to these three neighborhoods, re-investment could result in improved quality of life. Colorado State University (CSU), two museums, and the mayor’s office are leading a redevelopment of the North Denver region. The redevelopment process will result in 38 parcels of land in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea (GES) being cleared (CAC Meeting Minutes, May 2018). This will cause people to lose their homes and small businesses, but in their place, a regional hub for research into agriculture, sustainability, and water in the U.S. West will be built. This research study uses Critical Discourse Analysis to explore how the town/gown relationship is unfolding between the university and the community and to learn what will be gained and lost. By examining the meeting transcripts from the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), I seek to learn how relationships between the higher education institution and the city are changing in racialized ways. Close analysis of the CAC meetings in which the campus redevelopment is being planned reveals that normative institutions are overpowering low-income communities of color. Consistent with a history of racialized processes of displacement and disempowerment that remake the face of a city or a region within a city, the discursive events that transpire during the CAC meetings can be read through a theoretical lens, and better understood by bringing to bear information that situates GES in a historical context. Doing so sheds light on the CSU expansion and reveals it to be an instance of a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) for higher learning lending itself to downtown business interests and city leaders. Together, these institutional actors are removing low-income people of color from land so that it can be used to better fulfill the economic ambitions that the allied institutions share. By using Critical Discourse Analysis to closely examine the CAC meeting minutes, I show how the instance in North Denver exemplifies theories about the racialization of space and the spatialization of race (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, 2011). This regional study of racialization in an administrative decision-making process is worthwhile because university involvement in urban change is a phenomenon that has implications for higher education researchers and leaders beyond Denver.

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The Racialization of Relationships between Higher Education Institutions and Cities:
A Critical Discourse Analysis of Changing North Denver

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Sabrina C. Sideris
August 2019
Advisor: Dr. Ryan Evely Gildersleeve
Abstract

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*Keywords*: higher education, town, gown, space, race
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Chapter 1

Project Overview

This study examines the relationships between higher education institutions and the cities in which they are located. It considers how universities and colleges shape the physical characteristics, and in the process, the social fabric of cities. It examines the process of relationship formation between a campus and the city where it will be located to determine if and how race is playing a role as those relationships are forming. By addressing a specific example in North Denver, I use Critical Discourse Analysis to look in detail at Colorado State University (CSU)’s process of redeveloping the National Western Center, an entertainment facility for agricultural expositions. I examine how the Black spatial imaginary and the white spatial imaginary (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, 2011) can be identified in discussions in the community about CSU’s evolving relationships there.

Examining language, a fundamental part of social life, can allow us access to act to transform the social world. As CSU enters North Denver, I pose questions about the racialization of the town/gown relationship. I identify plausible answers to these questions using publicly available archives from over 60 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings about the National Western Center’s redevelopment process. I unearth competing discourses by CSU, the mayor’s office, multiple developers and
subcontractors, as well as those who oppose the development. Discourse, a site for both the construction and contestation of social meaning, can contain conflict and tension. While cities grow, neighborhoods change, and institutions expand, patterns emerge, revealing interconnected geographical layers (Morrison, Annamma, and Jackson, 2017), each of which is socially and dialectically produced. Since racial, social, and even spatial reality are constituted in part through discourse, I explore this focus question in my study: in the context of the Colorado State University partnership to redevelop the National Western Center in North Denver, how is the college/community relationship unfolding? And in what ways is the relationship between the institution and the city being racialized?

By examining racial undertones in community discussions about CSU’s evolving relationships in North Denver, I hope that I may advance the study of the role that higher education institutions play in urban restructuring. Etienne (2012) researches and writes about how universities engage in urban renewal practices, joining with real estate developers and hospitals to expand their campuses and make themselves more competitive and appealing to high-quality faculty, staff, and students. Colleges and universities succumb to the imperative of capitalist accumulation, in spite of their mission to serve the public good. United States history sets up the circumstances in which institutions of higher education can take such actions. At the time of the passage of the Morrill and Hatch Acts, two significant pieces of legislation impacting higher education in our nation, the frontier was the wide-open U.S. West (Kish and Leroy, 2015; Stein, 2017).

I suggest that North Denver neighborhoods can be viewed as new frontier in the context of CSU’s involvement in the redevelopment of the city. CSU’s move into North
Denver is in part about using space for more economically productive purposes. But D. P. Smith writes in “Student Geographies, Urban Restructuring and the Expansion of Higher Education,” when a university moves in, it can displace the cornerstone establishments and individuals (Smith, 2009), resulting in the marginalization of low-income families, social exclusion, and the fragmentation of the community. If this pattern persists in towns and cities across the United States, it is conceivable that the positive role that higher education is widely believed to play in society will develop a shadow side, and that university reputations will eventually be corroded. Since it is higher education’s responsibility to help the general public think through common concerns and solve persistent problems (Austin and Barnes, 2005), urban redevelopment bundles together a number of concerns that must be studied with care.

**The Next 100 Years of CSU.** Colorado State University is beginning construction on a new global campus in North Denver. The CSU expansion will provide a place for the study of agriculture, sustainability, and water in the West. As an educational and entertainment hub for the city, the CSU Center will be a place for experiential learning opportunities and impactful research rooted in the rich history and culture of the U.S. West, according to Amy Parsons, the Executive Vice Chancellor of the CSU System who is leading this initiative (CSU Center, 2018). Under Parsons’ direction, the university describes the project this way:

The National Western Center, when complete, will transform the National Western Complex site into a year-round global destination for agricultural heritage and innovation. The Center’s global reach will also have a powerful local impact by increasing neighborhood access to the South Platte River, adding bike lanes and running trails, and providing jobs and educational opportunities to surrounding neighborhood residents. ... Throughout the next several years the neighboring communities, project partners, civic and government leaders, and nonprofits will work together to build a campus that will be about more than
buildings; it will be about discovering solutions to world problems, providing education to anyone who wants to learn, creating entertainment for all ages, and establishing this space in Denver as a global hub for activity around energy, sustainability, agriculture, water, and health. ... CSU’s Water Resources Center, in partnership with Denver Water, will be the first building to be constructed as part of the project, which will cover the 250-acre site near the intersection of interstates 25 and 70. (Source, 2017)

These words are important because they provide an overview by one of the three most prominent CSU leaders who preside over the expansion into Denver – Amy Parsons, Tony Frank, and Jocelyn Hittle. Parsons makes promises about the many purposes of the future campus and she highlights activities that will take place there, benefiting not just the institution itself, but also the city, the state, the U.S. West, and even the global scientific community. In the words above, she also makes promises about the process by which various stakeholders “will work together to build a campus.” It is that process of collaboratively building a new campus that I appraise with care, in this study. Please see Figures 1-5 for maps of the area in question.
Figure 1. Current image of the neighborhoods of Globeville (to the West) and Elyria-Swansea (to the East), with Interstates 25 and 70 cutting through as well as the South Platte River and the National Western Stock Show Complex

Figure 2. Current image of I-70

Figure 3. Rendering depicting a proposal to expand I-70, lower it, cover it in a park (or “lid”) that connects surrounding residential neighborhoods with each other
Figure 4. Proposed redevelopment in relation to surrounding residential neighborhoods, with Globeville to the West of the South Platte River and Elyria-Swansea to the East of the NWC

Permission to use image granted on 1 July 2019 by Jenna Espinoza-Garcia, Communications Director, Mayor’s Office of the National Western Center. Illustrative Master Plan, accessed from https://nwc.colostate.edu/media/sites/78/2016/12/NWC_MPdoc_FINAL_web-3.3.15.pdf on 3 March 2018. Please note that this is not the final site plan.
Figures 5, 6, 7. New site map and renderings as of 1 July 2019 depicting the proposed CSU global campus integrated with the redeveloped National Western Center Permission to use images granted on 1 July 2019 by Jenna Espinoza-Garcia, Communications Director, Mayor’s Office of the National Western Center.

Overview: the CSU Process of Redeveloping the NWC. The City of Denver, led by Mayor Michael Hancock, is proposing multiple urban development projects simultaneously. In a project dating back to early 2013 (Denver City Government, 2018),
six sets of plans are grouped together under the name “North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative” (NDCC). The undertaking includes:

- Developing the area around the National Western Stock Show complex and renaming it the “National Western Center” (NWC)
- Widening a 10-mile section of I-70, lowering the interstate between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard, then building a park on top of it (see Figure 3; called the “ditch project”)
- Redeveloping the NWC, and in the process, connecting the neighborhoods of Globeville and Elyria-Swansea (GES)
- Redeveloping Brighton Boulevard
- Redeveloping the River North (RiNo) district, and
- Developing a new rail line to help commuters travel more efficiently from the heart of Downtown to the Denver International Airport (DIA). (NDCC, 2017)

This set of projects will cost well over $1.7 billion according to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT, 2018a). Measure 2C, which was passed in November 2015 by voters, raises those funds through a tax imposed on hotels and rental cars (Salazar, 2015). In a press release issued by Smart Deal for Denver, a lobbying group, spokeswoman Patty Salazar states that “with voter approval of Measure 2C, per House Bill 1344, Colorado State University will have access to $250 million in state funding to accelerate and build CSU education and research facilities and expand the university’s programming to the National Western Center” (Salazar, 2015). My inquiry consists of a closer examination of CSU’s role in the redevelopment of North Denver.
Between 1961-1964 (CDOT, 2018b), the initial construction of I-70 between Colorado Boulevard and Interstate-25 resulted in the loss of 30 homes in this particular area of North Denver. The proposed “ditch project” by the Colorado Department of Transportation would condemn 56 homes and 18 businesses, as well as the outdoor space surrounding Swansea Elementary School (Tracey, 2016). The project to redevelop the National Western Center (NWC) would result in additional dispossession: there are 38 private parcels the NWC needs to acquire in order to fulfill its redevelopment plans (CAC Meeting Notes, January 26, 2017; May 31, 2018).

The NWC project is of particular interest because it involves a higher education institution as a primary development partner. CSU spokesperson Tom Vilsack was asked by Colorado Public Radio host Ryan Warner about CSU’s plans for the revitalized National Western Stock Show Complex. In a November 9, 2017 interview, the former Obama-era Agriculture Secretary said CSU, together with the City of Denver and the state of Colorado, is developing a new educational and commercial area that “will celebrate the West for the next 100 years” (Vilsack, 2017). While the project features a facelift for facilities that already exist, the City will also need to acquire about 64 acres -- currently inhabited by working-class Latino families and individuals (Tracey, 2016). Indeed, Daniel F. Doeppers wrote “The Globeville Neighborhood in Denver” in 1967 in the Geographical Review, where he describes Globeville as an old ethnic community of working-class Mexican-American residents in the packing house district. At that time, he said, “the partial destruction of seven residential blocks and the resulting truncation of the community by the construction of Interstate 70 ... has had a demoralizing effect” (Doeppers, 1967, p. 522). The mayor’s office has said as well that the two
neighborhoods, whose purposes are both industrial and residential, have not seen major infrastructure investments in well over three decades (NDCC, 2018).

Ryan Warner challenges Tom Vilsack in a public radio interview:

There are concerns that this expansion and other changes in this part of Denver which involve I-70 and a lot of gentrification, frankly (the increased cost of housing) -- that this project is going to displace those who currently live there. It’s one of the last affordable places in Denver where you can still get an affordable single-family home. (qtd. in Vilsack, 2017)

Vilsack’s reply downplays any threat to the livelihoods of individuals and families who own homes and businesses, while highlighting the tremendous environmental and educational purposes that will eventually be served inside the new CSU complex:

I think it’s going be important for the project to create and develop a strong relationship with the community and one of things that Christie, my wife, will be focused on is the educational and community building component of this project. There are ways to incorporate the community, to support the community, to create new job opportunities within the community, and there are also ways in which the community can be connected to the river. The South Platte is an important component of this overall plan. Colorado State [University]’s vision and the Denver officials’ vision of this is that there will be a better, closer relationship with that river, a better understanding of the history it plays in this area and the role it plays in the state. And particularly, focused on the schools, having a better understanding of food, agriculture, the environment, the role that river plays in their life, better conservation, re-use technology. All of that leads to a generation of people living in this state who respect and understand and appreciate the multiple uses of water . . . [trails off] better ways to use water most efficiently. In order to meet the demands that Colorado will have, you’re going to have to figure out how to do all of that. (Vilsack, 2017)

CSU is becoming a developer in one of the 20 fastest-growing cities in the U.S. according to the S&P/Case-Shiller national home price index (Delmendo, 2018). Since this pattern recurs in other cities as postsecondary institutions grow (Etienne, 2012; O’Mara, 2012; Chatterton, 2010; Smith, 2009; Smith and Holt, 2007), I believe this study
can inform higher education research because it depicts an administrative process and a social phenomenon that plays out in multiple cities. Higher education researchers ought to focus more attention on the impacts of growing a campus on the social and racial dynamics in the city in which that growth occurs. Using discourse analysis, I trace how town/gown relationships are forming and how they are racialized in the context of the CSU/NWC redevelopment plan.

**A Theory of Discourse.** There is a set of questions we can ask of a text about the way that social life is organized. Who benefits from the way that social life is now arranged and how could it be arranged differently? According to Norman Fairclough (2003), an education researcher can use Critical Discourse Analysis to reflect critically on the social order, asking: what do the texts reveal about how social relations of power, domination, and exploitation are established and maintained? Can power relations be altered? What role could institutions, such as universities and colleges, play in such a shift?

The word represents the world but the word also makes the world in particular ways, and as a consequence, not in certain other ways. As Barbara Johnstone says, “discourse both reflects and creates human beings’ ‘worldviews’” (Johnstone, 2008, p. 33). Our speaking and writing habits reflect and reveal the ways we imagine the natural and uncontestable world to be. Language can influence the way we perceive things. Words call forth a system of beliefs about how the world works, how social life is organized and why it came to be this way. Likewise, there are certain things that can never be said in a particular language if the words don’t exist to conjure it (Johnstone, 2008). Things that cannot be talked about are difficult to imagine.
The more we grow accustomed to hearing certain things, the more real and
uncontestable they begin to seem. Johnstone says, “each time a particular choice is made,
the possibility of making that choice is highlighted” (Johnstone, 2008, p. 46). It gains
clout. This applies to the ways we speak about history, space, cities, institutions,
education, social power, race, and each other: familiar ways of talking begin to make
certain things invisible, the more they recede into the blurry background of taken-for-
granted common sense. Those who are fascinated by social life will do well to study the
words through which it is continuously emerging and becoming entrenched. In Denver,
those who are concerned about how quickly the city is changing and how expensive
housing has become would do well to study the committee meetings where such
deliberations occur and where the changes are actually being made.

Language use constitutes processes of social practice and it can provide a
snapshot of social change. Instances of discourse can be considered instances of social
practice (Fairclough, 1992). Multiple dynamics – especially amongst people in a group
while they are in the process of communicating with each other to reach decisions – end
up being represented in their discourse. One can read the story of how they related with
each other, what they initially agreed or disagreed on, whether they came to see eye-to-
eye and if so, how that process unfolded. One can read whether they communicated in
formal ways or whether a sense of familiarity or trust formed between them. One could
discern the psychological and social meaning-making processes being used to order
people’s thoughts, perspectives, and conclusions. All of this and more can be inscribed in
the words that people use to communicate with each other.
Meaning is made through the interplay between the production of the text, how it is received, and the text itself. We must account for the institutional positions, interests, values, intentions, and desires of the producers of the text, as well as that of the receivers. Furthermore, Fairclough suggests that social agents “texture” texts by setting up relations between various elements within the text. (Those elements include subjects and their social relations with each other, time and place, values, and discourse). For Fairclough, social agents in Critical Discourse Analysis are those who initiate processes or act upon others (2003). In addition to scrutinizing the written and spoken word in search of what is being said by those agents and by others, in this study I also listen for silences (Allan, Iverson & Ropers-Huilman, 2010). What is unsaid? Are there patterns I can discern in the silences? I listen for the unspoken assumptions that provide the basis for what is being said in the text (Fairclough, 2003). I seek to clarify a text’s contribution to a process of meaning making about higher education and its role in shaping and re-shaping relationships with/in a city.

In this study, I use Critical Discourse Analysis to search for text that is “part of the legitimizing common sense which sustains relations of domination” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 207). I analyze the meeting minutes from the monthly National Western Center Citizens Advisory Committee (NWCCAC). The publicly available meeting minutes span from October 1, 2013 to January 25, 2018. These items constitute the data that I analyze using Critical Discourse Analysis. I trace the evolution of the town/gown relationship between CSU and its host community. Tension emerges in that relationship: what some consider gentrification, others consider the altruistic transformation of an area of the city that simply needs the gifts that a university can bring.
In addition, I use theories of the spatialization of race and the racialization of space (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, 2011) to examine both the spoken words and the silences about race, in relation to CSU’s relationships toward urban property in North Denver. I consider bodies of text in terms of their effect on power relations among players in the redevelopment process of the National Western Center, located in the neighborhoods of Globeville and Elyria-Swansea (GES). My research questions employing Critical Discourse Analysis are: in the context of the Colorado State University partnership to redevelop the National Western Center in North Denver, how is the college/community relationship unfolding? And in what ways is the relationship between the institution and the city being racialized? Please see Figure 8 for an overview of the elements of my research design.
Meaning making about a higher ed institutions’ relationships with cities (MACRO)

Observations about CSU’s racialized relationships in North Denver (micro)

Town/gown literature

Literature on urban restructuring

Theories of racialization of space/spatialization of race

Critical Discourse Analysis of National Western Center Citizens Advisory Committee (NWCCAC) meeting transcripts

Draw connections between Macro & Micro

Figure 8. Design of the research study
Chapter 2, Literature Review

Part I: Introduction

Space has an unresolved relationship with race. What this means is, relationships between race and property are entangled; historical forms of racial domination have evolved to reproduce spatial subordination in the present (Harris, 1995; Lipsitz, 2011). At times, these forms of racial domination are represented materially; they are emplaced. I examine higher education’s role in racializing cities and society. In order to elicit new knowledge about the relationships between higher education institutions and the cities they call home, in my literature review I discuss the histories of the Morrill Act and the Hatch Act which created land-grant universities. I outline the ways in which different higher education researchers tell this history differently. I review the romantic portraits of land-grant colleges as well as decolonial analyses. After that, I explore town/gown relationships between a university and the city or town where it is located, reviewing the common problems that arise in this relationship, as well as discussing what the research literature shows about some of the positive attributes a university often brings to a city. I depart from higher education research and turn toward urban planning and environmental design disciplines in order to discuss notions of “student geography” and “studentification,” two concepts that have an impact on understanding how universities
influence and shape the cities they call home. Briefly, I touch on literature that defines gentrification, but I do not exhaust this wide, interdisciplinary body of work. I confine my review to those literatures that specifically shed light on understanding how higher education institutions produce space for the benefit of their own users. Finally, at the conclusion of Chapter Two, I review the literature that theorizes a relationship between space and race. As I do so, I also explore *whiteness as property*, a conceptual tool. This chapter is intended as an overview of the various conceptual frameworks that my project employs.

**Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.** Two pieces of federal legislation from the 1860s and 1880s funded agricultural research and general education. The passage of the first Morrill Act in 1862 was a formative moment in the history of United States public higher education. According to Roger L. Williams (1991), Congress passed the 1887 Hatch Act and the 1890 revision of the Morrill Act to fund agricultural research and general education at land-grant universities, designating increases in federal spending on higher education and the establishment of land-grant institutions in 37 states. This legislation also created 17 institutions for Black students (at the time, and there are 19 currently), now known as historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Eventually, 74 land-grant colleges and universities emerged in the U.S. (APLU, 2018), organized under explicit obligations to their respective states, in exchange for steady federal government funding. The Morrill and Hatch Acts helped extend higher education to broad segments of the U.S. population (National Academy Press, 1995). This constituted an effort to democratize higher education by supporting a shift away from elite liberal arts colleges, toward a more practical higher education curriculum for a larger
segment of the citizenry. But Scott Key considers the Morrill Act to have been a piece of federal economic policy, not an educational reform, at the time of its passage (Key, 1996). It would do more for the nation’s economy than for college access, according to his assessment. The federal mandate of the land-grant colleges and universities is “to provide instruction in agriculture and the mechanical arts, conduct agricultural research, and deliver knowledge and practical information to farmers and consumers” (National Research Council, 1995). In addition to general education, many land-grant colleges now have schools of veterinary medicine (including CSU) and forestry.

Williams, a higher education historian, examines the era when land-grant colleges were transitioning from fledgling to thriving in his book, *The Origins of Federal Support for Higher Education* (1991). Williams studies George Washington Atherton in particular. Pennsylvania State University’s seventh president, Atherton lobbied Congress to create the Hatch Act, bringing about agricultural experiment stations with services aimed at farmers, mechanics, artisans, and other laborers. Once federal appropriations rendered these learning institutions stable, the student population also stabilized and soon, the land-grant college movement expanded. Nowadays, well-known universities that trace their roots to this movement include the University of California Berkeley, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as well as Colorado State University. Together with Williams, *Democracy’s College* by Ross (1942), *Colleges for Our Land and Time* by Eddy (1957), *The State Universities and Democracy* by Nevins (1962), and *The Magnificent Charter* by Edmond (1978) comprise the romantic portraits of land-grant colleges. These works suggest the land-grant movement fulfilled American educational and economic goals and ideals shared nationwide (Williams, 1991).
Williams also writes about Atherton’s role in creating a network of college presidents and agricultural scientists who formed the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations. The Association (now known as APLU) is significant to the history of U.S. higher education because it gave way to other higher education associations. These play important advocacy roles to this day, helping to develop policy that governs higher education and shaping public discourse about postsecondary education’s value. Williams finds it important to study Atherton’s contributions, believing that higher education leaders throughout history ought to be acknowledged. The author focuses on “great men” including university presidents who transformed “a stalled movement” into “a vigorous system of colleges” with similar standards for entrance and matriculation, similar curricula, and similar student populations (Williams, 1991, pp. 8-9). Other literatures of the land-grant movement include Goodchild, Jonsen, Limerick and Longanecker (2014), historians who have researched higher education in the American West; historiography by Sorber and Geiger (2014); and Key who calls land-grant colleges “the flagships of American public higher education” (1996, p. 196) and shows that economics was in fact the chief motivation for their establishment.

While romantic and nostalgic tones are features of the normative land-grant institution literature describing this history, especially the works of Williams, Ross, Eddy, Nevins, and Edmond, Sharon Stein’s 2017 piece strikes a different chord. She does not merely consider land-grant institutions to be part of “the educational evolution of the United States” (Key, 1996, p. 197). Ross, Eddy, Nevins, and Edmond “view the emergence of these colleges as inevitable because of the educational demands of a
growing democracy” (ibid), but in Stein’s piece, “A Colonial History of the Higher Education Present: Rethinking Land-Grant Institutions through Processes of Accumulation and Relations of Conquest,” she explains: the federal government’s material basis for the Morrill and Hatch Acts was the accumulation of Indigenous lands through conquest. Stein makes clear, there is more than one way of interpreting higher education history. She says, “imperatives of accumulation were established during colonization” (p. 1), and she shows how relationships of conquest did shape, and continue to shape the present (Stein, 2017).

What Williams, Edmond, Eddy, Nevins, and Ross gloss over is the “material entanglement of higher education with colonialism” (Stein, 2017, p. 4). This piece of the story does not get its due in normative higher education history texts. Stein explains:

In order to create land-grant institutions, the U.S. government had to first assert and secure its title over Indigenous lands. Next, it transferred some of those lands to individual states to be sold on the market; the profits from those sales were then used to buy stocks ... [and] interest from those stocks ... fund[ed] the public universities in perpetuity. Thus, from the beginning, ... land-grant institutions required the accumulation of lands through colonization, and a stable capitalist market on which those lands could be sold, and their profits used to continue to produce income. This is just one example of how public higher education has been both dependent on and vulnerable to the imperative of accumulation. (Stein, 2017, p. 11)

The frontier was the wide-open West at the time of the passage of the Morrill and Hatch Acts. I suggest that North Denver neighborhoods could be conceived as a new frontier in the context of the CSU redevelopment of the NWC. Stein’s work provides the basis for such an argument. Drawing upon work from Kish and Leroy (2015), Stein writes, “Indigenous, Black and other racialized and impoverished communities are perpetually targeted for the most brutal strategies of accumulation” (Stein, 2017, p. 4). CSU’s move to North Denver fulfills their land-grant mission, if one accepts the interpretation of that
mission as being: to create new frontiers for economic development that ultimately benefit the state or municipality. Ironically, the new CSU campus’s purpose will be to celebrate the U.S. West, cowboys, horses, and agriculture. In the works of Williams, Edmond, Eddy, Nevins, and Ross as well as on the CSU web site, the language used to define a land-grant institution discusses the public good they intend to do as they expand into North Denver, suggesting that colleges and universities are inherently good in a general way, as well as specifically good for the state or municipality in which they are located and the community that surrounds them, as well as the national economy. This romantic notion also persists in popular discourse about higher education in the U.S.

Some are under the impression that postsecondary institutions are entitled to constant accumulation of property, due to the frontier mindset established by the Morrill and Hatch Acts and folded into U.S. history. Meanwhile, others are intimately familiar with a different version of U.S. history – the history of dispossession and exploitation, which continues to color the present. Will that division occur along color lines in North Denver? Will this be detectable in the range of conflicting discourses (Weedon, 1997) in meetings about the CSU redevelopment of the NWC? I will search for evidence that while municipal leaders and CSU leaders have a vision of the purpose of higher education that connects with U.S. economic opportunity, others feel differently. I suspect that divide will sometimes occur along racial lines, although that will probably not always be the case. Again, Stein’s words help me lay the conceptual foundation for my inquiry: she says, “I emphasize white violence in an effort to disrupt the contemporary nostalgia that naturalizes white property and power .... Indigenous and Black peoples have persistently critiqued and resisted this violence and fostered worlds and futures that
refuse and exceed it” (Stein, 2017, p. 5). In the study that follows, I listen in the text for instances where GES neighbors resist in this way.

In addition to Stein, other authors offer a critical view. Leigh Patel (2016) uses decolonial theory to interrogate the romantic and nostalgic tones found in the normative literature on land-grant colleges and universities in her book *Decolonizing Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability*. Brown’s *Hegemony and the Discourse of the Land Grant Movement* (2003) and Chaput’s *Democracy, Capitalism, and the Ambivalence of Willa Cather’s Frontier Rhetorics: Uncertain Foundations of the U.S. Public University System* (2004), as well as Fogel and Malson-Huddle’s edited volume, *Where America’s Great Public Universities Stand and Where They are Going Midway Through Their Second Century* constitute a body of literature about land-grant institutions. These authors help provide a foundation for my inquiry into whether CSU’s move to North Denver perfectly fulfills their land-grant mission, if you take decolonial theorists’ interpretation of that mission to be about settling land that already belongs to people of color.

**Town/Gown Relationships**

The town/gown concept in educational research has to do with the relationships between a college or university and the city or town in which it is located. Problems that afflict the relationship between a campus and its community were studied in 1967 by James Banovetz and in 1981 by Thomas Selland. The literature suggests a pattern where the town finds the campus to be interrupting their way of life. Common town/gown challenges described in the literature can be grouped into four categories:
• Economic impacts: Some neighbors begrudge the institution for its non-profit, tax exempt status. If the municipality lacks the funds to meet its goals, the university might be blamed for not contributing its fair share. Individual homeowners may complain of increased property tax rates since the university is a community asset which drives up the value of their properties, as well as housing shortages and increased rent.

• Physical impacts: Some in the town may be perturbed by dilapidated neighborhoods around the perimeter of the college where students live. In addition to properties that are mistreated by young people, physical impacts on the town may include traffic congestion, parking challenges and vehicle accidents. Other townies may be intimidated by the size of the physical campus buildings, including labs dedicated to research. Perhaps residents of the town take advantage of university facilities such as theatres and recreation centers, and events such as public lectures and musical performances, but they fear the university’s eventual physical expansion into their own residential neighborhoods.

• Demographic impacts: The activities and behavior of university students living off-campus will not be supervised or regulated. Older residents of the town may be startled by large waves of 18-24-year-olds who return annually. Move-in and move-out will bring larger crowds to town as parents arrive with their young-adult children to assist with transitions. Pedestrian traffic and noise generated by homecoming parties and football games will spill over into near-campus neighborhoods and population density will change seasonally.
• Social impacts: Some residents of the town fear crime, drug use, drinking, recklessness, noise, broken glass, and perhaps moreover, they anticipate social-psychological impacts on their town that include values, behaviors, and levels of engagement. (Banovetz, 1967; Selland, 1981)

These are all problems that impact how a community functions. James Banovetz describes a basic lack of rapport between the town and the postsecondary institution due to a failure to understand one another, and aggravated by all of the above. Off-campus community members may perceive the college to have a destabilizing social effect on the community. Commonly, the literature on town/gown relationships cites a pattern where the attitudes of members of the town are more socially conservative and they perceive the university as a nuisance, while the campus community is less conservative and they may feel ambivalence toward the town since all their needs are already met on campus.

O’Mara (2012) observes, “the elite American research university has to a great degree physically and psychically separated its campus from the city. The feeling has tended to be mutual” (p. 240).

Other literature on town/gown relationships is more positive. Michael Fox has spent 30 years working with small, medium, and large municipal governments, universities, and neighborhoods around urban renewal and civic engagement in communities where downtowns and surrounding neighborhoods may be in decline. Fox cites an example in Winnipeg, Canada. In the wake of industry changes and the abandonment of the central business district, restoring and converting heritage buildings, abandoned structures, old theatres, and churches sparked a multi-million-dollar downtown trend. This redevelopment was associated with student housing, arts, culture, and retail. This is a
positive example of what can happen when the municipality embraces the helpful aspects of the town/gown relationship. Colleges and universities can be assets to their communities, given proper planning and community development considerations, insists Fox (2014). In his consultancy, he strives to assist municipal governments in recognizing that the town/gown dynamic can be a symbiotic relationship. He proffers a checklist with more than 35 specific suggestions on building trust, respect, and a shared vision and creating a climate of civility for all stakeholders, including campus leaders and municipal officials. Fox suggests establishing mechanisms to review and monitor social, economic, cultural and physical changes within the community. However, he concedes that this will not be easy since more than ever, municipal governments and campus administrators are being defined and controlled by other orders of government, with increased constraints and fewer human and financial resources (Fox, 2014). Aside from Fox’s work, Kemp (2013) also has an edited volume on the best practices in town-gown relationships.

In 1991, Suzanne W. White developed a system of analysis to examine the relationship between an institution of higher education and the community in which it resides in her dissertation, *Town and Gown, Analysis of Relationships: Black Hills State University [BHSU] and Spearfish, South Dakota, 1883 to 1991*. She conducted a case study, finding that BHSU and the town of Spearfish, South Dakota had a symbiotic relationship. They tended to cooperate and exchange benefits. White intended for her analysis to be used by others as a research tool to study other town/gown relationships.

Overall, the normative literature on town/gown relationships falls short because it fails to consider race as a factor influencing such relationships. Most town/gown studies by higher education researchers are colorblind. In my study, I explore dimensions of the
town/gown relationship that are not necessarily enumerated above. I consider: in North Denver, in what ways are the town/gown relationships affected when the university is predominantly white and the surrounding “town” consists of neighborhoods of color?

Work by Warfield (1995) on the town/gown relationship adds yet another dimension that is applicable to the higher education problem I address. He introduces the notion of value or worth, and I choose to think of this as currency. The presence of a higher education institution in a community, Warfield claims, can bring prestige and cachet to the host community because the campus is a bastion of discovery and learning. Warfield puts forth images of neighbors walking past and pausing to proudly point out the college in their area, saying their children have gone there or will attend in the future. With a college in their back yard, they have something of high value in their neighborhood. I wonder if GES residents will think this way or feel differently?

Warfield’s analysis is colorblind. The author explores ideas in a race-neutral manner. Still, it is likely to be useful in my study because he taps into a sentiment that CSU personnel may also espouse, if they suggest that the proposed campus would add value to neighborhoods surrounding the NWC. In the NWCCAC meeting transcripts, as I will go on to show in subsequent chapters, I find a tangle of positive reception by a few GES neighbors, who are compelled by the emphasis on CSU’s prestige and the suggestion that a new source of pride and value will do their neighborhood some good. I also find resistance by others who reject the Warfield assertion. Images like the ones proffered by Warfield are available in the discourse of CSU leaders. But as I search the discourse for the neighbors’ sense-making processes, I contemplate how, when, and why they differ from one another’s and stray from the discursive logic in the normative town/gown
literature. The existing higher education research literature suggests patterns. I unearth them in the CAC meeting minutes under study.

**Literature on Urban Restructuring**

Shifting toward scholars who examine urban landscapes rather than small-town contexts helps provide additional literatures that will be relevant to this inquiry. To make this shift, I depart from higher education research and turn toward urban planning and environmental design. British geographer Darren P. Smith (2009) and other scholars from the United Kingdom write in European urban planning journals about the expansion of higher education, issues of urban change, and what they call “student geographies.” According to Smith, “studentification,” the annual migration of mostly middle-class British students from their home towns to universities, engages theories of urban restructuring. Smith warns that the “socio-spatial concentrations of students” can undermine the sustainability of local neighborhoods and reconstitute urban areas (Smith, 2009, p. 1797). As well, Berg and Russo (2004) do a comparative study of nine European cities that have universities, and the following works contribute to what is known on the topics of studentification and student geographies thus far: “Over-Educated, Over-Exuberant, and Over There?” by Allinson (2007); “The Cultural Role of Universities in the Community: Revisiting the University-Community Debate” by Chatterton (2000); “New-Build Gentrification: Its Histories, Trajectories and Critical Geographies” by Davidson and Lees (2008); as well as “Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance” (Lees, 2008); and “Students in Cities: A Preliminary Analysis of their Patterns and Effects” by Munro, Turok, and Livingston (2009). This
body of work supports my inquiry, since it takes into account urban systems including transport, communications, health care provision for students and university staff, housing, civic participation and societal trends including upticks in population transience, conflicts that relate to lifestyle clashes, the disintegration of community cohesion, detachment from local places, and a diminished sense of belonging. When a university moves in, it can cause the displacement of the cornerstone establishments and individuals (Smith, 2009). The new institution can alter the social fabric of the city, as well as its physical appearance.

Additional results of studentification that Smith considers are social exclusion, the marginalization of low-income families, the fragmentation of the community, deepening segregation, the concentration of social groups, as well as a dearth of affordable housing. Smith also considers possible advantages of large student populations for urban environments, such as regeneration, increased spending power in the local economy, higher demand for private and public services, student volunteering and enhanced cultural vibrancy. Smith suggests that a university can turn a city or a segment or district thereof, into a “preferred location,” as he calls it (Smith, 2009, pp. 1797 and 1826). Additional pieces by Smith include his work with Holt, “Studentification and ‘Apprentice’ Gentrifiers within Britain's Provincial Towns and Cities: Extending the Meaning of Gentrification” (2007). Some of these specific changes that universities bring to urban areas – both good and bad – arise in the texts about North Denver that I critically analyze.

In addition to the ways that city planners’ theories of urban restructuring can be brought over to studies of higher education, there is also a body of literature on university
campuses located in large metropolitan areas. Margaret P. O’Mara (2012) studies town/gown conflict and collaboration in urban renewal and neighborhood revitalization scenarios. The time period she takes into account is 1949 - 1980. O’Mara says, “Universities are potentially ‘good neighbors’ or ‘bad neighbors’ for ... a neighborhood, a city or an entire metropolis” (2012, p. 234). She shows that the rise of the modern American research university between 1950 - 1980 coincided with the economic decline of large U.S. cities – particularly their poorest neighborhoods. O’Mara concludes that even if there are benefits to the university’s presence in a city, poor neighborhoods have been conditioned by what she calls “the urban crisis of the 1960s” (p. 234) to react negatively towards research-intensive elite universities. Her work fills a gap left by the colorblind town/gown literatures detailed above. O’Mara actually attends to race in her historiography:

In becoming partners in urban renewal, universities often found themselves in a localized and historically particular kind of triple helix, one in which industry, government, and university allied in a pro-growth coalition focused on shoring up the fortunes of large institutions and [sic] try to revive the white and middle-class character of urban neighborhoods. (p. 247)

If this explains the bad taste that was left in people’s mouths in communities of color, as O’Mara’s historical analysis shows, then it is possible these antipathies will endure into the present. They may even be detectible in the texts I analyze below. In Chapter Four, I will more closely explore the 1960s and the urban renewal that took place in Denver specifically, and by doing so, I will bring O’Mara’s work to bear on North Denver.

Gavazzi, Fox, and Martin (2014) share a positive case study from Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. A campus located in one of the most prestigious neighborhoods of the city dominated a substantial portion of the urban environment and
was a financial powerhouse in the community, contributing an estimated $1 billion annually to the Kingston economy. With more than 21,000 students, campus had been expanding into nearby residential areas. After neighborhood associations expressed their animosity, a shift occurred. Significant goodwill, funding, university leadership and civic leadership were dedicated to a prolonged process to strengthen and improve relationships. A result was the 2011-2014 City of Kingston Town and Gown Strategic Plan.

In a study by Cooper, Kotval-K, Kotval, and Mullin (2014), additional examples of university-community partnerships are provided. In Boston’s Roxbury neighborhood, Northeastern University proposed to build a new residence hall to accommodate the out-of-state student population that had risen sharply. This occurred against the backdrop of Boston’s rapidly increasing population, and after segments of the Roxbury neighborhood had already been taken by eminent domain for a highway project. At the same time, Northeastern University was unarguably valuable for the community – a source of pride for residents of Boston.

Cooper et al. state, “as universities grow ... housing availability quickly becomes a point of conflict between an institution, its neighborhood, and the wider municipality” (2014, p. 89). To Roxbury residents, it felt as though the city government moving land that had once been theirs into Northeastern’s hands so that college students could live comfortably in the very places they had been forced to vacate, was a tremendous insult. But a partnership was created between university staff and neighbor representatives in order to maintain a harmonious town/gown relationship, as Cooper et al. tell the story. The result was a 50/50 split of the land that became highly symbolic for the community. Half the new units that were built were for students and the rest would be owner-
occupied affordable housing for Roxbury residents. By reducing student density and increasing home-ownership opportunities, the development partnership created a way for all parties to thrive in Roxbury. Similar scarcity of affordable housing exists in the Denver metropolitan area (S&P/Case Shiller Denver Home Price Index, 2018), ensuring that any redevelopment project could be socially and politically sensitive. It will be interesting to see whether this case study about Roxbury will have any relevance to GES, or whether creative partnership ideas are emerging in the NWCCAC meetings that emphasize cooperation and mutual benefit to all parties.

Paul Chatterton discusses the gentrification of central urban areas in The Student City: An Ongoing Story of Neoliberalism, Gentrification, and Commodification (2010). This article critiques student housing facilities that receive an upgrade, to the detriment of the rest of the people in the city whose physical realities are transformed. Chatterton derides “the continued reinvention of city centres as places for the professional classes to live, work, and play” and he describes “whole swathes of city centres ... dedicated to servicing students, especially in terms of retail, entertainment, and leisure. Pubs, bars, nightclubs, and fast food and other retail outlets all pitch themselves at this lucrative, sizable, and dependable consumer population” (2010, p. 511).

In a video production by WhatsPOPPYN, a faculty-student-community research collaboration, a new stadium for Temple University is proposed in North Philadelphia in a working-class, African-American neighborhood. “They trying to push us out, break up my kids’ friendships and my friendships after I’ve lived here for 43 years,” says one resident who is interviewed on film (WhatsPOPPYN, 2017). A senior citizens’ home, multiple daycare centers, a playground, the area’s premier STEM high school and
hundreds of residences would be removed to make way for the stadium, as well as parking, hotels, and retail opportunities for Temple University alumni and students. Despite promises that some of the businesses will be run by and for people of color, and a pledge that jobs will be created for which residents of the neighborhood will be considered first, an activist coalition of Temple University students and neighbors called the Stadium Stompers opposes the development (Ferman, B., Kelsey, S. & Smith, N., personal communication, May 18, 2018; WhatsPOPPYN, 2017). Pushing Back the Gates: Neighborhood Perspectives on University-Driven Revitalization in West Philadelphia by Etienne (2012) provides historical context for understanding the changes occurring in Philadelphia. This book asks, “Can colleges and universities that need to expand and are governed by competing factions, offices, and stakeholders ‘hear’ what their neighbors are saying to them” (pp. x-xi)? Tom Slater, Elvin Wyly and Loretta Lees’ textbook on the topic of gentrification is intended for upper-level undergraduates in geography, sociology, and planning (2003). Their work presents the major theoretical ideas and concepts and offers case studies. The same authors created The Gentrification Reader in 2010.

Finally, in an article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, Davarian L. Baldwin asks, “Is it in the public interest to have giant urban campuses freeload off their neighbors’ taxes?” (Baldwin, 2017, p. 1). Baldwin studies Yale, a tax-exempt university that occupies the most expensive urban buildings of New Haven, Connecticut. Meanwhile, city government struggles to come up with enough revenue to fulfill its goals and promises to New Haven residents. Baldwin explores the town/gown animosity that
arises over property taxes, hearkening back to the Banovetz and Selland research showing that property taxes are a common source of tension. Baldwin says,

Over the past 40 years, Yale had become the single largest commercial power in New Haven, as part of a national urban economy largely driven by universities and hospitals .... Municipalities across the country face a similar tension: they attempt to patch budget holes while watching the endowments and urban footprints of tax-exempt colleges and universities grow (Baldwin, 2017, p. 1).

Multiple large universities who grow their campuses inside urban areas face such critiques.

Universities are powerful employers and health-care providers, they have their own security forces or police departments, and they are players in the real estate sector in cities across the United States. Columbia University and New York University are two of the largest private landowners in New York City, for example. Postsecondary institutions “can deliver positive urban outcomes,” Baldwin says,

but a public-good paradox arises: nonprofit status ... allows for ... higher education’s urban developments, with little public oversight or scrutiny. Colleges and universities pay virtually no taxes on their increasingly prominent downtown footprints. They also reap the benefits of ... municipal services while shouldering little financial burden (Baldwin, 2017, p.1).

The author insightfully draws attention to an inconsistency: at what point is the university no longer demonstrating its interest in the public good, if what the municipality needs most is revenue?

The Public Purpose of Higher Education

A survey of scholarly literature shows that higher education’s role has traditionally been to develop the intellectual and artistic talents of individuals. The public roles of the academy are to educate citizens for participation in the democratic process; to
develop the intellectual and artistic talents of individuals; to generate, preserve and share knowledge in service to the community; and to support other institutions upon which the population relies by preparing the leaders whom they will employ. Also, higher education’s role is to increase diversity while shaping society by continually expanding access to postsecondary opportunities (Kezar, 2005). Universities nurture scholars who can raise contentious issues that are important to society, according to Austin and Barnes (2005). Higher education helps the general public think through common concerns and solve persistent problems. The activities of academe must be in sync with the needs and expectations of society, or else trust in those institutions will be lost (Tierney, 2006). Higher education institutions must prepare ordinary citizens to participate in public discourse (Fretz, Cutforth, Nicotera, and Thompson, 2009). These ways of contemplating the contemporary purpose of higher education consider webs of relationship that bind institutions together with their local community.

In the dissertation project that I have undertaken, I look for echoes of the research literature on the public purposes of the academy, expecting to hear CSU officials making claims that their global campus in North Denver will be dedicated to the public good. Against the backdrop of the other bodies of literature I have explored in this review, I encounter tension and conflict over how the public purpose of higher education could be fulfilled by CSU, given its expansion into North Denver.

In the ensuing analysis, I draw upon the higher education research literature as I examine relationships between Colorado State University and the city into which it will be moving. In the study that follows, I consider how universities shape the physical characteristics, and in the process, the social fabric of their host cities. I also analyze
questions about the ways in which the relationship between the campus and the city is being racialized. In order to accomplish this, I employ theories of the racialization of space and the spatialization of race as my conceptual lens. I also employ town/gown concepts, and in so doing, I hope to advance the study of urban restructuring by higher education, making a unique contribution. It remains to be seen whether growing CSU into North Denver by developing a global campus in the Globeville and Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods is antithetical to CSU’s public purpose as a land-grant university. By rigorously analyzing the process by which they have proposed that redevelopment, to Globeville and Elyria-Swansea neighbors, I hope to uncover answers to my Research Questions.

**Part II: Institutional Change**

Higher education institutions must compete with their peers in order to move up in the rankings. Innovations which make institutions more competitive in the crowded field of universities and colleges include adapting education programs to the changing labor market, increasing faculty research, and enhancing technology in teaching. These innovations show that the institution is agile, according to Michelle Weise, a Senior Research Fellow in Higher Education for the Clayton Christensen Institute (2014).

This is reiterated in a Gallup poll conducted in collaboration with the Lumina Foundation. The majority of people in the United States who were polled want to make sure that investing in an advanced degree or certificate will lead to a good job. Important factors in selecting a college or university include faculty qualifications, the quality of the available degree, and the percentage of students who are hired after graduation into desirable professional positions (Lumina Foundation, 2014). Adrianna Kezar and Peter
Eckel say, “Financial pressure, growth in technology, changing faculty roles, public scrutiny, changing demographics, and competition in the world both within and beyond our national borders make change an imperative for higher education” (Kezar and Eckel, 2002, p. 295).

According to *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development*, the Master Plan by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE), the state of Colorado hopes to prepare an increased percentage of adult students for changing workforce demands by 2025, while maintaining a high quality of life and a vibrant economy. The CCHE hopes more adults will obtain postsecondary credentials in high-demand STEM fields (CCHE, 2017).

It is not necessarily the case, but it is feasible that these imperatives for institutional change are impacting CSU President Tony Frank’s thinking, as well as other institutional leaders’ choices as they endeavor to come home to North Denver. Frank says Amy Parsons, the Executive Vice Chancellor of the CSU System’s job is to “find innovative approaches to the financial restraints of an educational institution” (Source, 2017). The literature on institutional change lends itself to my inquiry.

**Institutional Image and Identity**

How external constituencies view CSU will have an impact on the university’s growth and change process, as it embarks on this expansion into North Denver. Image has been defined in the organizational literature as how members believe that others view their organization (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). Adrianna Kezar (2001) states that an organizational change process ought to be connected by university leaders to institutional identity. Deeply entrenched beliefs, habits, and norms coalesce to form the institution’s
identity (Kezar, 2001). Discussing the mission at the beginning of and throughout a change or growth process is a demonstration of how a university leader might connect that change process to organizational identity. In the case of CSU’s redevelopment of the NWC, their status as a land-grant institution and their mission and values are constantly invoked and reiterated (CSU Center, 2018; CAC Meeting Minutes, April 2015 and May 2018). In the CAC meeting minutes, I search for the effects of this discursive strategy. Change processes, Kezar suggests, can engage not just the overarching institutional identity but also the individual identities of employees, current students, alumni, and others associated with the college or university (Kezar, 2001). Whether distant from or intimately connected with CSU, as the university moves into North Denver, its identity may evolve, as will the relationships that individuals will forge with the organization.

**Part II: Theoretical Framework**

**Theories of the Spatialization of Race and the Racialization of Space.** This research study employs theories of the spatialization of race and the racialization of space. People of different races in the United States are relegated to different physical locations. The factors that cause this to happen are historical, structural, administrative, institutional, and legislative. These include housing and lending discrimination such as redlining; zoning regulations; school district boundaries and the links between public school quality and property taxes; security, surveillance, and policing policies and practices; and public transit and connectivity. The racial makeup of the places where people live their daily lives exposes them to rewards and opportunities, or to risks and challenges. There is a socially shared system of exclusion and inclusion that corresponds with the nation’s racial hierarchy, and with physical places. Race is a variable that
determines who has access to certain life chances. The ability to accrue wealth and pass it down to subsequent generations; to own a home that will appreciate in value; to grant one’s children access to education and employment opportunities as well as physical health, safety, and security; to be surrounded by a clean and safe natural environment – these are spatial privileges that have been systematically granted to white people. Meanwhile, to be exposed to environmental hazards such as lead poisoning; to have unsightly or loud train tracks in close proximity to one’s home, with bleating horns, bright headlights, and loads of natural resources being carried through your place to elsewhere; to find one’s neighborhood cut down the middle by the construction of a new highway -- people of color have disproportionately faced these types of adversity because of the physical attributes of their spaces. People of different races in the U.S. live different spatial lives (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, 2011). Relationships among race, place, and power stretch back to the founding of the United States.

George Lipsitz writes, “communities of color have experienced social subordination in the form of spatial regulation” (2007, p. 8). Systematic discrimination that has been going on for generations prevents people of color from acquiring assets that appreciate in value. Even when they have the means to do so, it is more challenging for families and neighbors of color to move to desirable neighborhoods with amenities and high-quality services including thriving public schools, because of racial discrimination by realtors, lenders, and insurance agencies. Not only do families of color find it challenging to move into areas of the city where they do want to live. With higher frequency than white families and neighbors, they also are removed from their places. Urban renewal projects disperse communities of color, undermining the equity they had
built in their homes and businesses and disrupting the social and communal routines from which happiness and mental stability are derived (Lipsitz, 2007; Fullilove, 2004).

“The placemaking practices of urban blacks differ from those of the white middle class. White institutionalized practices are able to both symbolically and materially destroy the ‘homeplaces’ of inner-city blacks through the ideological and social practices of white developers” (Haymes, 1995, p. xiii; see also hooks, 1990). To describe and explain these differing placemaking practices, Lipsitz uses these terms: the Black spatial imaginary and the white spatial imaginary (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, 2011).

An imaginary is a set of values and priorities that guide the way a particular social group self-organizes. The Black spatial imaginary emphasizes use value. It focuses on what people can do with/in the places they occupy. In the close examination of CAC meetings that follows, it becomes evident that GES neighbors want public safety, better connectivity between their three neighborhoods and the rest of the city, preserved cultural sites, public art, strong social webs, gathering places where relationships can be maintained, improved facilities for school children, parks and other outdoor spaces such as trails and river access, and environmental cleanup. These changes would benefit not just a few property owners but all people, consistent with the Black spatial imaginary (Lipsitz, 2011). Lipsitz calls this defensive localism: it forms in places where people have been living with adversity and figuring out how to thrive in spite of disinvestment and political and economic abandonment. The Black spatial imaginary is characterized by mutual aid societies, often informal and unofficial, where neighbors help each other meet needs as they arise and pursue forms of self-help. When a GES neighbor who is a CAC member describes how people use space to socialize, she tells about hosting parties for
decades as an Avon lady and she places emphasis and value upon knowing all her
neighbors (Cram, 2013). This exemplifies an imaginary that “transformed these resorts of
last resort into wonderfully festive and celebratory spaces of mutuality, community, and
solidarity” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 51).

According to Lipsitz, there is a contrasting way that predominantly white groups
of people have of imagining themselves as part of a social whole. The white spatial
imaginary emphasizes exchange value. Economic development is the central aim of the
white spatial imaginary (Lipsitz, 2011), which is fixated on increasing the property value
of the space. Tax-subsidized privatization and exclusivity are typical in neighborhoods
with more race and class privilege. One of the purposes of this study is to explore and
acknowledge the degree to which society is structured according to the white spatial
imaginary, and to interrogate higher education’s role in sustaining this way of racially
organizing cities.

It is important to pause and clarify that Lipsitz’ theory is applicable not just to
Black communities but to other communities of color as well. He makes space in his
theory, saying, “all communities of color have experienced social subordination in the
form of spatial regulation” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 52). Examples in the United States include
the Trail of Tears, the creation of reservations, Japanese internment camps, the theft of
Native American lands (which I speak more about in Chapter Four when I situate GES
neighborhoods against a historical backdrop), and the theft of Mexican lands (Lipsitz,
2011). There are many examples of white supremacist uses of space that have affected
communities of color who were not Black, despite the labels that Lipsitz chooses to use.
The Black spatial imaginary holds within it the possibility to create new life chances for all people, not just Black people.

Theories of the spatialization of race and the racialization of space can be applied to this instance of CSU, a predominantly white institution, expanding into Globeville and Elyria-Swansea, which are neighborhoods of color. I will examine the CAC meeting transcripts to see whether public policy and private prejudice are working together to create or sustain racialized hierarchies in North Denver. Social structures and administrative processes value and reward whiteness and limit the opportunities of non-white people. The neighborhoods where we live “skew life chances along racial lines” and “inhibit opportunities for asset accumulation” (Lipsitz, 2006, p. xiii). The redevelopment of GES neighborhoods by CSU and other institutions (to whom I refer as “MOU partners,” as they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that describes how they will engage in development together) provide an opportunity to examine whether and how these theories of space/race are at play in North Denver.

**Other Literatures of Racialized Geography.** Lipsitz’ theory draws upon other literary works. *The Philadelphia Negro* by W.E.B. DuBois (1899) was the first Sociological case study of a Black community, commissioned by a wealthy white philanthropist. DuBois shows that “the problem” he was hired to research is actually not located in the individual but in systemic racism and historical inequity. DuBois’ book, an ethnography of the Black community in Philadelphia, rejects assumptions of Black inferiority and inherent racial differences that were prevalent at the time.

Lorraine Hansberry’s play *A Raisin in the Sun* (1966) engages some of the links between race, class, and life opportunities linked with geography. *A Raisin in the
Sun portrays the Youngers, an African-American family living on the south side of Chicago in the 1950s. The father in the family has recently passed away and the Youngers are about to receive a life insurance check for $10,000. Each member of the family has a different idea about how to use the money to solve the family’s financial problems. When Mrs. Younger makes a down payment on a house in a white neighborhood, the Clybourne Park Improvement Association returns her money and refuses the Youngers, excluding them from the neighborhood. This play contends with how racism is emplaced.


Mindy Thompson Fullilove’s book Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America (2004) is about how people find their identity in the places where they live. Fullilove researches a traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of one’s emotional support landscape, which she names root shock. Beyond nostalgia or longing, she attests that being uprooted from places actually harms people by contributing to the cultural breakdown of communities (Fullilove, 2004, pp. xxi-xxii). “Diss-placement” is about dising the people with no power to stop “The Plan” and people who are stripped of their roots will struggle as they replant themselves (Fullilove, 2004, pp. 166 and 191).
Cultural Anthropologist Melissa D. Hargrove’s work is on the economic power, linked with racism, that institutions have over places. As she researches segregation, she looks at the collection of skills, techniques, and capacities that institutions have to claim, distribute, and redistribute capital. Hargrove’s work is focused on power struggles and strategies for domination and control of capital. She is interested in how the leaders of institutions know and use laws related to finance and real estate in order to grow their power and control within cities, counties, and the state (Hargrove, 2009).


**White Settler Property Established on Seizure.** There is an extensive body of literature on the relationships between United States higher education institutions and
structural racism, market expansion, and settler-colonialism. It shows that modern higher education has its roots in racialized exploitation (Smith, 1999; Stein, 2016; Patel, 2015; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Ahmed, 2012). This has implications for the roles that modern higher education institutions play in society at large. The roots of higher education in slavery and colonialism also have wider-reaching societal consequences. The scholarship that has been produced in many universities and colleges has provided ideological support for racial, colonial, and imperial subjugation (Stein, 2016; Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; Smith, 1999; Wynter, 2003). Battiste states this unequivocally:

> Education, like the institutions and societies it derives from, is neither culturally neutral, nor fair. Rather, education is a culturally and socially constructed institution for an imagined context with purposes defined by those who are privileged to be the deciders, and their work has not always been for the benefit of the masses. Education has its roots in a patriarchal, Eurocentric society complicit with multiple forms of oppression of women, sometimes men, children, minorities and indigenous people. (Battiste, 2013, p. 159)

Battiste shows that education systems were devised against the backdrop of a particular ideology wherein all people were not equals. The ideologies of subjugation that influenced the founding of our education institutions and that are sustained by them perpetuate the distribution of racial disparities and racial opportunities.

Historian Craig Steven Wilder (2013) chronicles the ways in which slavery was instrumental in the founding of many U.S. postsecondary institutions. In particular, colleges/universities have been funded with revenue connected to slavery, inscribing white supremacist ideology into their DNA. In his book *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities*, Wilder says,

> The founding, financing, and development of higher education in the colonies were thoroughly intertwined with the economic and social forces that transformed West and Central Africa through the slave trade and
devastated indigenous nations in the Americas. The academy was a beneficiary and defender of these processes (Wilder, 2013, pp. 1-2).

Eve Tuck and K.W. Yang (2012), Leigh Patel (2006), and Linda T. Smith (1999) also lay bare this dark side of higher education’s role in imperialism. In “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” Tuck and Yang state that all educational institutions are engaged in nation-building. They write, “settler-colonialism is built upon an entangled triad structure of settler-native-slave” (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 1). They show how white European settlers dispossessed Native people and African slaves who were brought in chains to the New World, and they explain how this all figured into the origin story of modern U.S. institutions (see also Tuck and Yang, 2014). When postsecondary institutions thrive at preparing their pupils to be the institutional leaders who are employed throughout society, this is nation-building. Tuck and Yang suggest that education institutions are complicit in the past and current racial, colonial, and genocidal crimes of this country – and even in future offenses.

In “Desiring Diversity and Backlash: White Property Rights in Higher Education,” Leigh Patel situates universities and colleges as “white settler property established on seizure” (Patel, 2015, p. 657). She goes further, adding that a society borne of stratified racist settler colonialism “relies on myths of meritocracy and rhetorics of diversity to maintain the underlying social order.” College campuses are positioned at the very heart of the nation’s discourses of meritocracy and upward mobility (Patel, 2015, p. 658). White settler-colonialism is intimately tied to -- and in fact dependent upon -- other forms of oppression (Arvin et al, 2013; da Silva, 2014). The differing discourses that can be found in the NWCCAC meeting minutes and the contested purposes of urban space
that are being quarreled over demand a re-thinking of the racialized relationships between education institutions and places belonging to people of color.

George Beckford’s writing, published throughout the 1970s, on the black diaspora and the economy, known as his “plantation economy thesis,” suggests that the plantations of transatlantic slavery underpinned a global economy. Katherine McKittrick says,

this plantation history not only generated North Atlantic metropolitan wealth and exacerbated dispossession among the unfree and indentured, it also instituted an incongruous racialized economy that lingered long after emancipation and independence movements in the Americas .... the protracted colonial logic of the plantation came to define many aspects of postslave life (McKittrick, 2013, p. 3).

Although education is often idealized in association with its potential to level the socioeconomic playing field, in practice it has functioned as one of the primary locations of societal stratification. Education reproduces social inequality (Patel, 2005; Anyon, 1980; Bowles and Gintis, 1976), generation after generation. Many authors have engaged in research to show how education often serves problematically to create barriers for non-dominant populations and what Patel calls “apertures of access for culturally dominant populations” (Patel, 2005, p. 660). She shows that education does not just facilitate the distribution of capital. In and of itself, education is and represents property -- more specifically, white property.

**Whiteness as Property.** White people built -- literally -- upon the privileges and benefits of their supremacy, and in doing so, they reinforced and reproduced the subordination of non-white people. Whiteness as property affords rights to possession, use, and enjoyment (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004, p. 28). “Whiteness as the embodiment of white privilege is usable property, the subject of the law’s regard and protection” (Harris, 1995, p. 282). Property ownership and cultural capital reify white supremacy (Patel,
Being able to exclude others from a space is an aspect of property rights to that place (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). I believe examining the ways universities have been positioned and maintained as white property (Patel, 2015; Wilder, 2013; Alexander, 2010; Matsuda, 2005) is one way to show specifically how white people lay claim to institutions that confer privileges, over and over. In my ensuing project, I search in the NWCAC meeting notes for discourses of claiming land in GES that are being used by CSU, to the detriment of those who currently reside there. Besides Cheryl Harris (1995), others who expound on concepts of whiteness as property include Delgado and Stefancic (2001), Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), Matsuda and Lawrence (1993), and Lipsitz (2006).

**Exploring the Contours of Whiteness as Property.** Just as George Lipsitz shows as he explores relationships between space and race (2006, 2007, 2011), white people built upon the privileges and benefits of their supremacy, and this is one of the ways they have reproduced and maintained that supremacy. Property ownership and cultural capital reify white supremacy (Patel, 2015, p. 666). The way that land-grant universities were initially founded in the United States and how they have been maintained as predominantly white property (Patel, 2015; Wilder, 2013; Alexander, 2011; Matsuda, 2005) sheds light upon the ways in which white people and predominantly white institutions desire land and property ownership because it confers privileges and compounds and sustains affluence and power.

Whiteness as property as a dimension of my analytical framework can help me see and show whether CSU is excluding some (low-income neighbors in a community of color) from decision making even if they are present in the NWCCAC meetings as
“advisors” to the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (the allied developers, under the auspices of the Denver Mayor’s office). In the following chapters, I examine in the discourse how the city itself is being contested, where the specific components of the racialization of this contestation are arising, and through which turns of phrase. I hope to learn what discursive strategies are being used by GES neighbors and others involved in the NWCCAC meetings and how this plays out in the context of CSU’s efforts to participate in North Denver’s redevelopment. I analyze whether the redevelopment process is being racialized – consciously or unconsciously – by institutional leaders. I believe this notion from Patel gets to the heart of my study: “education is not just a conduit for distribution of capital for other social fields. In and of itself, education is and represents property, and more specifically, white property” (Patel, 2015, p. 661; see also Harris, 1995). I will examine how the town/gown relationships emerging between CSU and North Denver intertwine with a “logic of stratified rights and exclusion” (Patel, 2015).

Tangible things that are valued and protected by law are called property. James Madison defined property as “every thing to which a man may attach a value and have a right” (quoted in Harris, 1995, p. 279) and according to Jeremy Bentham, property is a thing possessed, from which one can draw advantage (p. 280). Legal constructs uphold certain people’s interests. The law reifies our social customs and reflects societal values and hierarchies. For more than 200 years, enslaved Black people were treated as property. “Through slavery, race and economic domination were fused,” says Cheryl Harris (1995, p. 278). A racial hierarchy was established as a social idea, through African chattel slavery; it was racial Otherness that was used to justify the subordinated status of non-
white people, and this idea clings to us today. Social hierarchy has implications for our present-day conception of property. Slavery turned certain human life into property (Harris, 1995; da Silva, 2007) and cast whites as those who are most capable of owning property and using it for its highest purpose.

A key feature of whiteness is exclusivity (Harris, 1995) which serves a specific function in society via institutions. How could we “break the distorting link between white identity and property?” Harris asks (1995, p. 290)? I look in the data for instances when participants in the NWCCAC meetings have proffered answers to this question. How might systemic racialized privilege be interrupted in North Denver?

**Not Only Race but Also Class.** Whiteness as property involves a relationship between white privilege and economic domination and describes the interplay between capitalism and property rights in this country (Harris, 1995; Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995). *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (1976) by Marxist economists Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis is considered a key text for the theory of the sociology of education. Rather than enabling us to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, Bowles and Gintis show how schooling actually colludes in the intergenerational persistence of economic status. This is also researched by Lipsitz (2006, 2007, 2011). In *Democracy and Capitalism: Property, Community, and the Contradictions of Modern Social Thought*, Bowles and Gintis show how students from different class backgrounds are rewarded for classroom behaviors that correspond to personality traits allegedly rewarded in the different occupational strata; working class pupils are rewarded for docility and obedience, and the school-going children of the managerial class are rewarded for initiative and personal assertiveness (2015). To further
show that higher education institutions in the U.S. were built -- both literally and
ideologically -- upon foundations of racism and white supremacy, Jean Anyon (1980)
wrote in “Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work” that there is a hidden
curriculum with implications for educational theory and practice. Echoing Bowles and
Gintis, she suggests that different curricula are offered to different classes of school-
going children. But Patel complicates these oversimplifications when she says, echoing
Craig S. Wilder, “to adequately reckon with universities as white property, institutions of
higher education must be situated as part of the societal structure in the United States that
has been created and maintained as part of a larger colonial endeavor” (2015, pp. 661-
662). The literatures that attempt to explain relationships between race, class, and higher
education’s role in society in maintaining racial and class castes make up the foundation
for my argument that universities are frequently an embodiment and expression of
whiteness as property. Higher education plays a significant societal role in perpetuating
racial castes. I strive to answer the question, to what degree is the CSU redevelopment of
the NWC an instantiation of this phenomenon?
Chapter 3, Research Design

Methodology

Research is a process of interpretation (Ravitch and Riggan, 2017). To analyze data is to construe meaning or decipher significance. Theories and methods help the researcher determine what is most important to ask, how best to ask it, and how to structure a study such that one is capable of answering her research question in data-based ways (Ravitch and Riggan, 2017). In order to elicit new knowledge about the relationships between higher education institutions and the cities they call home, and about the ways in which those relationships are racialized, I have decided to address this problem using Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis. Discourse constructs reality, produces perceptions, and shapes lived experience. Discourse refers to both spoken and written language, and discourse analysis includes the examination of both talk and text. We seek to understand the social context in which the language was constructed (Allan, 2003). Discourse analysis is breaking down the word and the world for the purpose of social science research. We stand to gain a better understanding of how we might improve the human condition and bring about social change (Fairclough, 2003).
Language is a fundamental part of social life. We cannot make sense of the world without examining it in concrete and detailed ways. “Language enables us to give meaning to the world and act to transform it” (Iverson, 2005). By pinning down the word, we can understand and act to change the world that it captures, fixes, and represents. Language “doesn’t just mirror reality; it actively shapes the way we perceive and understand it” (Fischer and Forester, 1993, cited in Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003, p. 14).

Fairclough, in *Analysing Discourse* (2003), states that the following elements are dialectically related: subjects and their social relations with each other, time and place, values, and discourse. It is possible to search for the relationships amongst these elements embedded within text or speech. Social science is influenced by the notion that the social world is socially constructed. Institutions, including colleges and universities, as well as cities themselves, are certainly material -- they are comprised of things -- but they are also brought to life and given meaning and particular social roles, through the written and spoken word. Institutions have become what they are in part because they have been dialectically and socially constructed. “Once constructed,” says Fairclough, “they are realities which affect and limit the textual or discursive construction of the social” (2003, p. 8). There are various ways of making meaning using discourse: some ways are dominant while others are marginal or non-dominant (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse is the site for both the construction and contestation of social meanings (Allan, 2010). There can be a range of conflicting discourses (Weedon, 1997). People become unconsciously positioned within a discourse: they interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they are doing, which reshapes what they are doing (Fairclough, 2003). This can contribute to the production of new imaginaries, or projections of possible worlds or
plausible states of affairs. These new imaginaries can, in turn, be enacted through representation. The word makes the world and in turn, the world makes the word.

The research project I have done employs Critical Discourse Analysis. As I read the transcripts from (and on one occasion, as I listen to audio of) the National Western Center’s Citizen Advisory Council (NWCCAC) meetings from 2013 to the present, I identify an interlocking set of political and institutional discourses. As I show in Chapter Five, I find that the mayor’s office staff, their progress reports and action steps, the various developers and contractors, and the CSU personnel who have been appointed to represent the university’s interests usually dominate the discussions (please see Figure 28 on spoken word count at select CAC meetings). They steer the majority of the CAC meetings, marking what constitutes progress at various stages. CSU President Tony Frank clearly states what he sees as the desired outcome for his institution:

I believe that assisting in attaining this vision for the NWC is not only fully aligned with the mission of and vision for the [next] 150 years of Colorado State University, I believe that helping to attain this vision may well be critical to the long-term vibrancy of our university and the educational system of which it is a part. (CSU Center, 2018)

These words confirm to me that CSU’s expansion into North Denver is being read by campus leaders as part of their organizational longevity strategy. Institutional change literature shows that when postsecondary leaders are guiding the campus community through significant change, they structure meaningful sense out of uncertain and ambiguous organizational situations (Kezar and Eckel, 2002). I listen for whether President Frank’s team is doing so in the NWCCAC meetings. I find that these are the voices that are most readily heard in the redevelopment process. But I also can identify other discourses. As Globeville neighbors and Elyria-Swansea neighbors answer back to
those who propose the redevelopment, I use theories about the spatialization of race and the racialization of space to identify challenges to and refutations of dominant discursive practices. Critical Discourse Analysis is the process by which I learn whether or how white supremacy emerges in meetings about the North Denver redevelopment project by CSU.

**Research Question for Employing Critical Discourse Analysis.** In the context of the Colorado State University (CSU) partnership to redevelop the National Western Center in North Denver, how is the college/community relationship unfolding and in what ways is the relationship between the institution and the city being racialized?

**Discussion of Research Question** As language is used to construct particular realities during an administrative process among multiple actors that extends across a number of years, the higher education institution under study is opening doors for itself. In the process, other doors are being closed as it gains a very particular identity as a university. How members of the campus community will be likely to interact in the future with residents of surrounding neighborhoods is hanging in the balance. This is an instance of a higher education institution co-constructing a new social reality in a part of the city. It will have ramifications later for how people will be able to live together and share an urban setting. The inquiry is a unique opportunity to focus attention on institutional actions that will be, once time moves on, buried amongst the roots of the social and racial reality that will – in the future – characterize this place. After studying the word that contributed to the genesis of a particular racialized world, one can better identify the moments of import in that administrative process upon which other decision-making will hinge, and then one can more skillfully intervene and act to transform that
imperfect, socially stratified world. Critical Discourse Analysis is the best method for this inquiry since it lends itself to focusing on such moments of import as well as studying the way power moves in groups of people by attending to their words and the effects of those words on building a shared social reality. I seek to understand the phenomenon of the university’s contribution to re-shaping a city.

**Limitations.** As I focus my study with this research question, I am aware that it precludes me from finding other things in the texts that I examine. Fairclough (2003) warns that there is no such thing as a complete or definitive analysis of a text. What we are able to see of the actuality of a text depends upon the social issues in focus and the social theory we draw upon. I ask the text certain questions about the racialization of the town/gown relationship and I ask it questions about the institutional identity of CSU, and I do not ask the text other kinds of questions. This assures that my study is partial – it leaves many stones unturned. However, I am motivated to ask these particular questions because I believe they will shed light on the relationships between higher education institutions and their host cities more generally.

**Criteria for Evaluating the Strength of the CDA.** While studying text and talk in a socio-politically conscious way (van Dijk, 1995), there are certain criteria that must be fulfilled. In “Aims of Critical Discourse Analysis” (1995), van Dijk provides these ways to evaluate CDA work:

- It must be problem or issue-oriented, rather than merely paradigm-oriented. While I bring theories of space and race to the project, still there must be a specific social problem under study that involves inequity. In this project, that problem has to do with how working-class neighborhoods of color are affected by the urban
restructuring that is occurring in North Denver because of actions by CSU and other institutions.

- CDA should be interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary. In addition to higher education scholarship, I also draw upon Geography and Urban Planning as well as other professional fields of study.

- “CDA especially focuses on (group) relations of power, dominance and inequality and the ways these are reproduced or resisted by social group members through text and talk” (van Dijk, 1995, p. 18).

- This CDA project ought to trace how there are “discursively enacted or legitimated structures and strategies of dominance and resistance in social relationships” that pertain to race (ibid). My study must examine the way that ideology is underlying the emergence of this dominance and resistance, in order to be deemed CDA.

- The project should uncover, reveal, or disclose what is hidden or implicit. “CDA specifically focuses on the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, the manufacture of consent, and other discursive ways to influence” (ibid). The project should search for, catalog, and analyze discursive means of social influence.

- The work should identify “counter-power and counter-ideologies in practices of challenge and resistance” (ibid).

- It must be critical. Gee talks about further criteria for assuring that one is not just doing discourse analysis, but Critical Discourse Analysis. According to Gee’s piece, “Discourse Analysis: What Makes it Critical?” (2004), CDA must involve
specific empirical analyses of how form and function correlate with each other,
and how that correlates with specific social practices. “CDA is part of a broad
spectrum of critical studies in the humanities and the social sciences” (van Dijk,

I determined at the outset that if my project manages to fulfill all of these criteria, it may
be positively evaluated as successful.

From the vantage point of one who has now taken the steps outlined within this
research design overview, I can say that I deem the CDA project to be successful because
it does pertain to a social problem of in/equity. In each subsequent chapter, I follow the
problem of institutional racism around in administrative processes. George Lipsitz writes,
“White power secures its dominance by seeming not to be anything in particular”
(Lipsitz, 2006, p. 1). He calls white power “the unmarked category against which
difference is constructed” (ibid). Whiteness is an organizing principle in social relations
that I speak about throughout Chapters Five and Six. I attend to a social problem, rather
than merely a paradigm. My use of Critical Discourse Analysis is interdisciplinary since I
stray beyond the literature from the study of higher education and borrow concepts from
law, urban planning, and history, as well as regional environmental studies, Native
American studies, and the study of class and race in the United States. In Chapter Four in
which I situate the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods, I draw upon these
disciplines as I bring together contextual information on GES that exceeds the analysis of
the CAC meetings and the discourses within them. My study keeps a close eye on
dominance and inequality in the relationships among group members and it centers the
ways that claims to power are discursively enacted, revealing what is hidden. In Chapter
Four, I spend much time and attention identifying counter-power as a form of resistance to the dominant discourse by institutional actors – especially when I analyze the discourse around the tour and counter-tour. Finally, my study is certainly critical. In Chapter Five, I problematize the way the white spatial imaginary orders our institutional and social lives as I discuss how Lipsitz’ theories are exemplified through the redevelopment of North Denver.

**Generating Data.** I consider the publicly available archives representing the six-year process of meetings with the GES community about the redevelopment of the NWC. This process is still under way and monthly meetings continue taking place at the National Western Complex on Humboldt Street in Denver. Meeting transcripts dating back to October 1, 2013 are available from this web site, http://www.nwc-cac.com/documents.html and maintained and updated by Liz Adams, an Account Executive from CRL Associates (up until June 28, 2019). CRL is a consulting firm describing themselves as “experts in public decision-making and experts in the world where communities, public servants, and organizations meet” (CRL, 2018). They are “currently working alongside the project stakeholders and the Mayor’s Office ... to identify the governance structure and partnership agreements that will ensure the success of the [CSU/NWC] project well into the future” (CRL, 2018). I believe scrutinizing this process by performing a close reading of the archives reveals both the dominant discourse by CSU, the mayor’s office staff, multiple developers and subcontractors and CRL facilitators, as well as the marginalized discourse of resistance to gentrification. By reading the proceedings at more than 60 meetings of the NWCCAC and listening to audio...
from one meeting, I have seen themes and patterns that reflect the literature on George
Lipsitz’ theory.

Analyzing Data. Upon entering the world of the word, I engage in a process of
interpretation. I search the data for predominant images, themes and patterns that either
exemplify or defy the major points that George Lipsitz and education researchers have
made about theories of the spatialization of race and the racialization of space. I code and
categorize certain words, phrases, images, and moments between meeting participants. I
find the theoretical framework embedded in the sense-making processes of urban
developers. Cheryl Harris says property is “contingent on, intertwined with, and conflated
with race. Through this entangled relationship between race and property, historical
forms of domination have evolved to reproduce subordination in the present” (Harris,

Gordon, Iverson, and Allan (2010) describe discourses as dynamic constellations
of words and images that legitimate and produce a given reality. By searching in the data,
I interpret what meeting participants make of the physical and social aspects of their
world, as well as their sense of self, and perhaps their ideas or feelings about the
relationships between themselves and their physical surroundings in North Denver. I
investigate how the histories of race relations are enacted through discourse in the United
States, as well as contestations and refutations that are discursive representations of a
desire for fairness, social justice, racial justice and equity in Denver and beyond. I try to
show what the dominant discourse is achieving, as well as what the resistant discourse is
achieving, vis-à-vis broader social dynamics – especially those concerning higher
education and its role in racializing cities and society.
In addition to what I hear, there are also absences and silences. Allan, Iverson, and Ropers-Huilman (2010) instruct researchers who plunge into discourse analysis to listen for silences. At times, these are as instructive as the words and phrases that are spoken aloud. I ask, how does the discourse make gentrification seem inevitable? How do the CSU administration and the city, with their desires already spelled out before they ever formed the NWCCAC and sought neighbors’ input, represent desire as fact, in order to gain the blessing of GES neighbors? How do they represent their own interests as foregone conclusions or present the results they hope to achieve as the way the world actually is? Fairclough (2003) suggests, these are the kinds of questions that researchers can ask the data. The questions above emerge from his suggestions, overlapping with my own consideration of this particular case and with theories about race/space. What I find will end up relating to the conceptual framework that guides my looking (Allan, Iverson, and Ropers-Huilman, 2010).

Another thing I try to achieve through this study is to show that individuals have multiple, overlapping, potentially conflicting identities, loyalties, and allegiances. According to Weedon (1997) there may be a range of conflicting discourses, creating a “double bind” (qtd. in Alan, Iverson and Ropers-Huilman, p. 134). I often find in the text excerpts that are challenging to code or categorize because they complicate identity labels. For example, there are some GES neighbors who support CSU’s expansion into their neighborhood, and some who did not at first but over time, they change their minds. The discourse reveals that conflicting opinions exist about higher education institutions’ roles in society as sometimes-saviors, sometimes-culprits, sometimes-allies in a non-linear process. I look and listen in the data for patterns that help me answer my research
question. Wrestling with conflicts arising in the data has been my leaping off point. Subtle meeting disruptions are the crux of my inquiry. My project emanates from the places where there are tensions among CAC members.

**Representing Data.** Representation of my findings occasionally becomes tricky. Given that this project has had me swimming in word soup, questioning what expressions and turns of phrase mean to people I do not know and cannot see, as I listen through hours of meeting transcripts for instances of institutional racism and strategies of resistance to gentrification, I occasionally feel tongue-tied, when the time comes to represent my findings. This is particularly so because of the nature of the relationship between word and world: as stated above, like a Mobius strip, word makes world and world makes word. If we have to assume there is a primary reality out there to be found, accurately representing it without distorting what we’ve discovered can be a challenge (St. Pierre, 2013). Slipping back out from behind the magnifying glass in order to summarize and articulate my findings has been confounding at times. I have tried to bring great care and attention to how I am representing my findings, in the chapters that follow.

**Summation.** In this research study, theories about race and space, together with Critical Discourse Analysis, will aid me in examining power relations within administrative systems that shape a city. Consistent with Lipsitz’ theories, Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological approach has the potential to unearth values that are hidden because they are so deeply embedded. Racial and social reality are dynamically constituted through discourse, since language is the site for both the construction and the contestation of social meaning (Allan, 2010). Social reality is *produced.* Because it has been made, it can also be unmade. I search for the racial
dimensions of the relationships between Colorado State University and the North Denver neighborhoods, Globeville and Elyria-Swansea.

I take inspiration from The Chronicle of Higher Education, where five scholars on urban campuses were asked, what responsibility do their universities have to the cities in which they reside? Robert K. Nelson, Director of the Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Richmond provides the following reply:

Universities have an obligation to analyze the policies and actions that produced the significant inequalities of wealth and race that define the contours of American cities. We also need to be critical about how our institutions have been complicit or willing agents of those policies and actions, whether slavery, Jim Crow, redlining, urban renewal, or gentrification. Finally, we need to continue to try to animate that critique by embracing initiatives -- e.g., access and affordability, humbly and openly engaging with our local communities through community-based learning, etc. -- that help redress inequalities for which our institutions bear some measure of responsibility. (Chronicle of Higher Education Editors, 2017)

I offer higher education researchers a study that sheds light on how one particular university is engaging in shaping and renewing a city. Ultimately, I hope it plays a role in shifting academe toward spatial justice, social justice, and racial equity.

Researcher Positionality

As a researcher, I must state my positionality within the inquiry. I cannot be adequately understood as an individual apart from the particular social context in which I was raised and reared. I will address this through a personal narrative that will shed light on what brings me to this research project and how I am personally positioned within it. Robert McRuer defines composition this way: “to form by putting together ... to create by mental or artistic labor ... to deal with or act on so as to reduce to a minimum ... to
arrange in proper or orderly form ... to free from agitation” (2004, p. 47). My composition of self is a collage of memories from home.

Just about a year after my mom married a nice White man from Baltimore County, I found myself in the back seat of his car, headed the wrong way over a bridge near the bay. Mom fiddled with the GPS in the passenger seat but she really didn’t know how to use it. Her husband drove while shades of red crept from his collar, up his neck and face.

“We don’t like to come into the city any more except for work. It’s rare that we come to this area. Once a year we see the clipper ships at the Inner Harbor.”

And with that, I wondered what wasn’t being said, in between the things that were.

When white people from my family say they fear “bad” neighborhoods in Baltimore, they really mean they fear the neighborhoods where Black people live. They merge the residents of the neighborhood with the place itself. Harris writes that property is “contingent on, intertwined with, and conflated with race” (1995, p. 277). Had I understood theories about space/race, I may have had a different perspective when we drove through “good” and “bad” neighborhoods. My white family members sometimes say, in an oversimplification that is limited and limiting, that people living in “bad” neighborhoods are there because of their own choices. They are young Black men killing each other with guns and drugs or the mothers of too many babies, raising them on welfare. These racist essentializations have been restated to me over the past 18 years, in a tone that suggests I don’t really know about race any more since I moved to Colorado, but they, as people living in Baltimore, are the white experts on Black neighborhoods.
Valorized and treasured white people, in all our innocence, should drive ourselves quickly out of danger. This spin on reality racializes and socializes the speakers and listeners -- as well as the neighborhoods through which we drive -- through word choice. This language turns on its head historical actions that have actually institutionalized racialized hierarchies: the slave trade; the American eugenics movement that caused the sterilization of people who were deemed racially inferior; school segregation by race, where separate was not equal; the racialized achievement gap, reinforcing high expectations for white and some Asian students and low expectations for other youth of color (Douglass Horsford, 2014). Pointing to deficiencies in Black neighborhoods is a way that my family members have tended to prove to ourselves that Black people are deserving of what they have, and at the same time, we as whites deserve everything we have. Space is used to justify racial and social inequities. But all that is proven is that “property rights in the United States are rooted in racial domination,” as Harris says (1995, p. 277).

In white neighborhoods, families have drawn value from the things they possessed (Harris, 1995). This can be seen in Baltimore. It can be seen in Denver as well. “Everywhere we look, we see our own racial image reflected back to us” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 62). I used to go on Sunday afternoon drives with my aunt and uncle through rolling hills and farm country, out into wealthy neighborhoods on the edges of Baltimore County. We would talk about which features I might want in a home some day -- a wrap-around porch or a pond. This was an exercise in both the race and class aspirations I was being socialized to prefer. The neighborhoods, Remington and Hampden, where my aunt and uncle actually lived would go through a process of gentrification in the late 1990s.
that replaced working-class and poor whites with wealthier whites affiliated with Johns Hopkins University. I am invested in this study because I want to understand more deeply how I myself have been racialized, and I want to see more clearly how higher education has played a role while this presentation of social reality has been spoken into existence.

bell hooks sometimes feels ambivalence about calling out the people who reared her, naming their wrongdoings and bringing their flaws to light (hooks, 1988). I feel that now. Positioning myself in this inquiry is about tracing the lineage of some of my own unexamined beliefs, long ago embedded under my skin, whether consciously or not. I admit that I learned classism, racism, and white superiority from my upbringing. I learned that race and its problems are what “they” have, not “us” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 55). I need to do this inquiry so that I can come to understand how racial, social, and spatial realities have been constituted in part through discourse. “White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress,” says DiAngelo, who writes on white fragility (2011, p. 54). “Whiteness gets itself surrounded by protective pillows of resources” (Fine, 1997, qtd. in DiAngelo, 2011, p. 59). More than pleasant Sunday afternoon drives, my whiteness has also granted me access to a college education, followed by a career in higher education leadership, teaching, and academic administration. All are examples of spaces I can access, in part because of my race. While my skin color is not the only identity that defines me, it is the most salient identity that positions me inside this particular inquiry.

Sinking into theories about race and space is an exercise in asking, in what ways has my learning thus far been partial? What am I not noticing? Whose perspectives do I exclude? I recognize how in-process I am as a learner, and certainly as a teacher and a
higher education leader. “All knowledge creates other ignorances,” writes Mayo, an
LGBTQ history researcher (Mayo, 2013, p. 19). Rehashing memories of my own
racialization assists me in framing my research interests. My life experiences inform the
way I have designed my inquiry.

I was socialized as white and middle-class. In part what this means is that I was
told on multiple occasions that I was destined for college. The child of an immigrant who
moved 5,000 miles from his birth place, I was also told that I could go to any school,
provided I received a scholarship. In search of economic opportunity, quality of life, and
the chance to find myself on my own terms, I was supported in attending college. I am
now a white university student attending one PWI while working at another. I value and
desire diversity. Yet I am also surrounded by whiteness and I benefit from its resources
constantly. Leigh Patel writes about the intertwined desires for racial diversity and white
entitlement to property (2015). There is a tension between what I learned from my family
and what I realize whiteness has granted me access to. While I seek systemic and
institutional change as a critical race scholar, I also benefit from the system as it is and
has been. Patel helps explain, “College campuses ... offer a productive focus precisely
because of their visible position in the nation’s discourses of meritocracy, upward
mobility, and multiculturalism” (Patel, 2015, p. 658). In other words, education is and
represents property. My family always told me that as the daughter of an immigrant, I
should get a college education because this would be my ticket to a better life than my
dad had. Yet I was unaware of the extent to which this ticket was accessible to me not
just because I was a U.S. citizen but even more, because of whiteness.
Chapter 4, Situating GES

Introduction

In this chapter, I seek to understand and describe the race and class backgrounds of the specific neighborhoods under study. A city often has contested historical origins, because differing stories about it have been told and retold. As a result, concepts, practices, and values that have developed over time come to constitute the particular geographical region, but there is dissonance cooked into the DNA of the place. This is different than if the normative institutions and the ideologies with which they correlate define the essence of a city, fixing its character in a way that can be conveyed universally, to any reader. There is a tension that exists between the one and the other. Historicity is the historical actuality or specificity of persons, groups of people, and events. It is the quality of being part of history as its maker, as opposed to featuring into stories only as a character who is acted upon by powerful others. The specifics that can be known about the past have value, as we try to understand contested space in the present tense. Tension emerges as different story-tellers paint contrasting pictures of the same places or moments, and that friction helps us know what the story-tellers value; what from our shared past has been worth fighting over; and which stories have been worth re-telling.
In an effort to assert the uniqueness and value of Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea, I have searched in my data for stories that tell the race and class histories of the area. I have sought perspectives from within the CAC meeting transcripts on the encounters between white and non-white immigrants in North Denver. I also have been digging down to the roots of environmental racism. Situating my study against this backdrop will help me make meaning of the things that community members in CAC meetings say, as agents who are acting upon Denver, changing it, and continuing to play roles that were also played in the past by Denver’s community leaders.

In the following chapter, I review what some others have written about the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods, describing phases of change GES has already undergone. I also explore the phenomenon of higher education institutions having relationships with the cities in which they are operating, looking particularly at the Auraria and Anschutz campuses in Denver. I am choosing to confine the scope of this chapter to Denver’s history since that narrow focus will support my analysis of the data and assist me in discussing and drawing conclusions about the discursive strategies employed in CAC meetings. This part of the story explores the roles universities played in Colorado’s racial and spatial past. What is shared below will better position me to later explain CSU’s role as it acts upon GES and brings a new wave of changes to North Denver.

Instances of Urban Development by Higher Education Institutions

The Anschutz Medical Campus. Considering how the physical campuses of other higher education institutions were expanded in areas of Denver is instructive. The University of Colorado Denver’s Anschutz Medical Campus covers 230 acres in the City
of Aurora, located in the Denver metropolitan area. The University of Colorado approved a spending plan of $465 million to build new facilities, adding 20% more square footage in order to accommodate a projected 30% increase in the campus population between 2013-2022. In a September 5, 2013 letter to the University of Colorado Regents, race-neutral language about economic progress was used by Lilly Marks, who was the Vice President of Health Affairs at the University of Colorado as well as the Executive Vice Chancellor of the Anschutz Medical Campus. Marks used a cover letter to introduce the Facilities Master Plan with carefully chosen words. The Anschutz Medical Campus was charged with “educating future health care providers, providing the best possible clinical care, conducting ground-breaking … science and … research and improving the health of our community.” These aspects of the mission would “combine to provide a critical role in society,” Marks promised. Her words cast CU in a flattering light, positioning the institution as acting in the best interests of all of society. Marks also touted the contributions to our state by the Anschutz Medical Campus, which “has created a thriving economic engine for the state of Colorado” (Office of Institutional Planning, 2013, p. iii). Her words positioned CU as acting upon Colorado. But what her letter omitted was the impact of the Anschutz Medical Campus on the City of Aurora, a diverse city near Denver where 19.6% of the population is foreign born and 40.7% of the population is non-white, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (City of Aurora Government, 2018). On two occasions, Marks used the word “emerge” to describe how the new campus came to be. “The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus has emerged from the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Base,” Marks wrote, and “just over 10 years have passed since the rest of the University’s new campus buildings emerged” (Office of
Institutional Planning, 2013, p. iii). Marks downplayed the process the institution went through in order to physically expand while she embellished language about the university’s positive impact on the Colorado economy and society in general.

The Master Plan was intended as “a vision and guide for future development” that would “enable the best in health sciences education … to continue to flourish at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus” (p. iii). Marks drew the readers’ attention to the University of Colorado’s past and future success fulfilling its educational mission. She drew attention away from the material and social impacts on the surrounding community in the present tense. CSU’s new development in GES is not the first time the Colorado State Legislature has supported a higher education institution with state funding, compelled by the economic promise that the new institution represented. The introduction to the Master Plan for the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus suggests that sidestepping the impacts on the surrounding community is acceptable, and shows that successful institutional leaders make their case to lawmakers by speaking in financial terms.

**Auraria.** While no research has been published by higher education scholars on the process by which the University of Colorado Denver’s Anschutz Medical Campus was built in Aurora, much has been written about how the Auraria campus was built in the heart of downtown Denver. Two articles present contrasting versions of the same story. In “Legacies of a Contested Campus: Urban Renewal, Community Resistance, and the Origins of Gentrification in Denver,” Page and Ross (2016) describe how the creation of the Auraria campus involved an urban renewal process that displaced an entire neighborhood of people against their will. In “Auraria Higher Education Center and
Denver Inner-City Development” by Robert Kronewitter (2005), the author reaches a different conclusion, arguing that developers were skillful and successful at integrating neighbors’ opinions and perspectives because of an inclusive process of community-based decision making. In this section, I will review both versions of the story, beginning with Page and Ross and then turning to Kronewitter.

**Despite Community Resistance, Higher Education Removed Neighbors in the 1960s.**

Located in the heart of downtown Denver, Auraria is Colorado’s largest college campus by population. It serves 48,000 students and houses 3 separate institutions: the University of Colorado Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and the Community College of Denver (Page and Ross, 2016). The Auraria campus was created through a process of urban renewal that displaced an entire neighborhood of people against their will, according to Page and Ross’s conclusions, although Kronewitter differs. The old Auraria neighborhood was partly African American and largely Hispanic and the urban renewal process that displaced them was actually the impetus for Chicano activism in Denver in the 1960s, say Page and Ross (2016).

The Auraria campus is so unique that architect Richard P. Dober featured it in his well-known book *Campus Design* (1992). The campus features physical remnants of the old residential neighborhood. The former St. Cajetan’s church is a lecture hall, while St. Elizabeth’s church still houses an active Catholic parish. The former Tivoli brewery—the campus’s most identifiable landmark—is currently the student union. Preserved turn-of-the-century houses along 9th Street, built in the 1870s, serve as faculty offices and academic departments (Page and Ross, 2016; Dober, 1992). The 14 former residences that were saved from demolition “straddle a Victorian street that was converted into a
linear landscape, with the buildings adapted for university offices and support services….They help give the campus a unique image” (Dober, 1992, p. 121). Dober beams: “The Auraria Higher Education Center campus is an instructive example of enlightened campus design since historic buildings dating to the city’s earliest days managed to be saved, adapted to university uses, and integrated into the campus design” (p. 122). But while Dober praises the architects who managed to achieve such “enlightened” urban renewal, Page and Ross tell how vigorously the community fought to prevent neighborhoods of color from being removed. Activists in the city’s Chicano Movement and advocates for historic preservation engaged in “an intense political struggle over the fate of the neighborhood” (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1295).

Kronewitter concludes that the Auraria campus was constructed through collaboration, but Page and Ross contest that version of history. Page and Ross say the social process that eradicated a community of color and gave birth to the campus relied on a federally sponsored urban renewal program implemented by city leaders. The Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) provided the financing for the project, backed by political and business elites who comprised the central business district, just blocks away. The Auraria urban renewal project was developed by DURA in concert with state education officials in the mid-1960s. The intent of the project was to provide a site for a new college campus that could meet the rapidly increasing demand for higher education in metropolitan Denver. Wielding policy tools enabled by The American Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954, political and business elites used federal funds and eminent domain to condemn “blighted” areas of the city, tearing down old buildings to make way for higher education, as well as new private housing and commercial projects, parks, a convention
center, and public transportation to connect all of these with each other. Their goals were to revitalize downtown, boost city tax revenue, attract the white middle class back from the suburbs, and restore pride in place (Page and Ross, 2016).

While development solved the problem of insufficient higher education capacity in Colorado, particularly in the fast-growing Denver metropolitan area, it created new social, economic, and racial problems, according to Page and Ross: the demolition of working-class neighborhoods, the displacement of low-income and minority communities, and an administrative process of rehousing people in ways that reinforced entrenched patterns of racial segregation (Page and Ross, 2016).

The federal legislation that helped cities acquire and clear land for redevelopment left key decision-making to local redevelopment authorities (Friedman, 1968; Kaplan, 1963), even if opponents resisted the redevelopment. Hartman (1974, 1984) and Mollenkopf (1983)’s scholarship on community-based resistance to urban renewal identifies these resisters as central actors in a process of transformation rather than as powerless victims pushed aside by bureaucrats, politicians, and private business interests (Page and Ross, 2016). As a result of the research by Hartman, Mollenkopf, Page, and Ross, we know that the story of Auraria’s redevelopment was marked by conflict and tension in the community. The power dynamics that I will trace in the CAC meetings in the next chapter echo events of the past. “In Denver, the legacies of the contest over Auraria urban renewal ramify into the present to shape both physical form and social relationships in the city” (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1296).

Kronewitter and Page and Ross do not agree that race was a central item for discussion within the administrative process of deliberating over and ultimately creating
the Auraria campus. While architect Kronewitter makes no mention of the races of those who moved away from the area, Page and Ross state that race was blatantly put forth as a reason why the redevelopment should occur. A series of reports featured the use of the word “blight,” noting that 64% of the city’s “Spanish American population” lived in substandard housing, compared to 21% of white people who lived in substandard housing. Thus in Denver, just as The American Housing Act (P.L. 81-171) ushered in a period of federally-funded urban redevelopment beginning in 1949, the term “blight” was applied to Auraria, a poor and deteriorating part of Denver where a majority of non-white people lived. Page and Ross go on to explain how the city’s problems get linked with race discursively when they say,

A 1954 report was the source of a rhetorical strategy. It suggested blighted areas near downtown were the source of 50% of crimes, 70% of fire emergency calls, 80% of juvenile delinquency, 80% of drug-related arrests or stops by police, 50% of Denver General Hospital cases, 50% of families receiving welfare assistance, and 50% of Visiting Nurse Service calls (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1300)

This all causes a drain on the city’s budget and poses a danger to public welfare, since blight could spread to other parts of the city, suggests the 1954 report.

But “finding blight merely means defining a neighborhood that cannot effectively fight back,” said Lawrence Friedman (1968, p. 159) in his book, The Government and Slum Housing: A Century of Frustration. And “racial discrimination in housing imposes undeserved burdens on minorities while channeling unjust enrichment to whites,” says George Lipsitz in The Possessive Investment in Whiteness (2006, p. 109). What Page and Ross point out in their telling of the history of the Auraria campus is that non-white people were discursively positioned as the cause of blight by the leaders of the downtown business district; the Black and “Spanish American population” were blamed for urban
problems that posed a danger and discomfort to others throughout the city. This contradicts researchers and scholars including Friedman (1968), Massey and Denton (1993), Sugrue (1996), Gordon (2008), Lipsitz (2006, 2007, 2011) and others who have argued that the urban problems result from housing segregation and they afflict people of color disproportionately, limiting their life opportunities as they are confined to blighted areas. As non-white people in the United States are relegated to certain neighborhoods by housing and lending discrimination, school district boundaries, policing practices, zoning regulations, and by the design of transit systems (Lipsitz, 2011), segregation concentrates poverty and builds “a set of mutually-reinforcing and self-feeding spirals of decline” (Massey and Denton, 1993, p. 2). These authors explain that urban problems result from structures that have segregated cities, whereas the 1954 report cited above blames individuals of color for urban problems. Still, residents of Auraria resisted being removed from a place they called home, as Page and Ross go on to recount.

Enter: the resistant discourse. In the fall of 1969, as politicians and private business interests worked to remove them, according to Page and Ross, Auraria residents appealed to the wider community to save their neighborhood at the same time as the Chicano Movement was growing in Denver. With a message of cultural pride and self-determination, the movement was already concerned about persistent discrimination in employment, housing, and education. Led by “Corky” Gonzales, the Chicano Movement emerged in Denver and gained national prominence, hosting the landmark 1969 Chicano Youth Liberation Conference. Activist groups opposed the displacement of Auraria residents and stated their concern that a new campus would bring in a large student
population, alter the character of the area, and drive up the price of housing (Page and Ross, 2016). Page and Ross further explain the resistance:

Auraria residents and their activist allies held public meetings, wrote to the newspapers, and sought out the help of local, state, and national politicians, using the Movement’s central message of Chicano self-determination, emphasizing that (1) it was wrong that people in the neighborhood had never been asked if they wanted to move, or consulted in any way on the urban renewal plan—a situation that reflected the longstanding political marginalization of Denver’s Hispanic community; (2) despite being labeled “blighted,” the residents valued their neighborhood, and in particular, St. Cajetan’s church, a vital and thriving focal point of Hispanic social life; and (3) it was unjust to destroy this deeply held sense of community. Displaced people might find a house somewhere else but could not recreate their community. (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1305)

The passage above summarizes findings by Page and Ross. I will show in the following chapters that I find similarities in the power dynamics at play today. GES residents, like the past residents of Auraria, value GES as a focal point of Latinx social life in Denver (GES People’s Survey, 2017). GES residents also complain that they are not being adequately included in the redevelopment process that is being created in the CAC meetings (Meeting Transcript, December 18, 2014; Vernon Hill’s letter, Figure 26 in the Appendix).

A message in the 1960s that was frequently repeated was that the community of color that was being removed from their own neighborhood for the creation of the Auraria campus would benefit from the new campus. Page and Ross use 1969 issues of The Denver Post to recreate the conversations that took place. Speaking to residents who were facing displacement, one person stated that the campus was “an opportunity for a fine education complex for you, your children, and your children’s children.” Another speaker went further: “If blacks and Hispanics of Denver—and of the whole nation—are
ever going to gain an equal footing in this society, they will need doctors, lawyers, businessmen and other professionals to enrich and serve their community” (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1306). This argument ultimately split the resistance in two. Some community leaders of color abandoned their efforts to save their neighborhood from demolition: “This is a tremendous opportunity for my people. I don’t want the college to go anywhere else. My young people will be within walking distance of the college, in the heart of the city, only blocks from their homes. I am for it. You cannot replace education” (Page and Ross, 2016, p. 1306). This dimension of the struggle over building the Auraria campus demonstrates the role that higher education can play in a contentious urban transformation process. Given the promise of higher education, it is difficult for members of a community to argue that a campus should not be built.

Page and Ross conclude that resistance to the Auraria development, although it did not stop a neighborhood from being dispersed, did have a lasting effect on the city. First, Hispanic neighborhoods developed experience with community organizing and collective action. Even though they lost a fight, they were activated. Vocal community leaders became watchdogs for former Auraria residents during their relocation process, resisted evictions throughout the city, and fought for renters’ rights. They helped gain landmark status for St. Cajetan’s church, a culturally important gathering place that was preserved. They sought to build low-income housing, subsidize home purchases, and rehabilitate deteriorating homes. They established a neighborhood health clinic and contested zoning policies that favored high-rise apartments and commercial buildings in places where low-income single-family homes already existed. They fought against transportation plans that directed heavy traffic through their neighborhoods. They
advocated for the fair treatment of youth of color by police. And, Hispanic leaders formed an affordable housing agency called NEWSED and began to run for office, eventually forming the Chicano Caucus at the Colorado State Legislature in the late 1970s, and electing Federico Peña as Mayor in 1983 (Page and Ross, 2016).

Even still, in Auraria in 1974, ultimately neighborhood removal displaced 250 businesses, 330 households, and several social institutions. “Many years later, a large number of former Auraria residents expressed a clear sense of grief for the loss of their homes and neighborhood” (Gallegos, 1991). Although Kronewitter languages it differently, Page and Ross conclude that the construction of the Auraria campus initiated a long-term process of gentrification in Denver. They define gentrification as a “class-based transformation of urban space involving (a) reinvestment of capital, (b) social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups, (c) urban landscape change, and (d) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups” (Page and Ross, 2016, pp. 1314-1315).

**Higher Education Capacity Increased in Denver with AHEC.** Another author disagrees with the ultimate findings and assertions of Page and Ross. Kronewitter (2005) tells the same story in a very different way. He agrees that from its inception the redevelopment plans for the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) were a strategy to revitalize the central business district of Denver, but Kronewitter seeks to prove that “third-party collaboration, community interests, and inner-city values” all contributed to the development of the new campus (Kronewitter, 2005, p. 98). Unlike Page and Ross, he paints a picture of a harmonious decision-making process that adequately involved the community and resulted in a win-win situation.
Kronewitter’s account is useful in situating the changes that are coming to GES against a backdrop of state involvement in the expansion of a higher education campus. In 1965, the General Assembly created the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) to make sure the state would wisely use resources for higher learning, and in 1968 its executive director proposed a single space for all three campuses. AHEC would act as the developer as well as the property manager of the Auraria campus.

In 1969, CCHE hired a project manager who determined that initially, funding would emanate from three sources: DURA, private donations, and state appropriations. In 1969, voters lent their approval to the project. It was the first time the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development had financed a project with a multi-institutional management structure. In 1971, Historic Denver, Inc. was founded as a private non-profit organization. They raised funds for historic preservation and associated renovation. A bill establishing the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) was signed by the governor in 1971. The initial construction budget of $40 million was the largest capital construction appropriation in Colorado at the time, with a goal to acquire land, then plan, design, and build almost 1 million square feet of academic space between 1972-1976. A consortium of five architecture firms were hired; planning meetings with the community and institutional leaders commenced; and – as Kronewitter tells the story – “the few residents still living in the Auraria community were relocated to their choice of new neighborhoods and were paid generous allowances made possible by the Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970” (Kronewitter, 2005, p. 100).

The author describes a smooth process and attributes this to “public input, public scrutiny, and an understanding of community needs….The process was designed to be
morally right and to serve not only the teaching institutions but also the community at large….The process was representative” (Kronewitter, 2005, p. 104). Once it was built, the Auraria campus provided more than 30,000 new customers per day to businesses in the core of downtown such as restaurants and cafes, Kronewitter writes. AHEC became a leader in the city-wide movement for urban beautification, playing a role in improving many of the city’s parks. Tivoli Brewery and Turnhalle Opera House – two places where Denver residents liked to have a night out – were both preserved as recreation, entertainment, and income generating opportunities for AHEC. This was a service that AHEC provided to the city. Kronewitter even credits AHEC with paving the way for public transit in between the Auraria campus and the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, the 16th Street Mall which is a shopping district, and the nearby sports stadium.

One result of Kronewitter’s research that might have enriched Page and Ross’s, had they included Kronewitter’s work in their own, is the attention he pays to how college students were involved in the decision-making regarding redevelopment. Students from the University of Colorado, Metropolitan State University, and the Community College of Denver had multiple opportunities to meet with the team of architects. Conversely, CSU has yet to involve many students in CAC meetings; Zach Lewis, a graduate student, attended only one time on July 31, 2014 (CAC Meeting Transcript). No other CSU students have attended CAC meetings. (Please see Figure 31 in the Appendix, depicting the affiliations of all CAC meeting attendees.)

While creating the Auraria campus, students had the chance to lend their perspectives to everything from the design of student lounges and gathering places, to the availability of childcare on campus. They also pressed planners for bike lanes that would
connect campus with the external community (Kronewitter, 2005). Another thing Kronewitter shows through historical research is that the planning process was only able to be so inclusive because it took over ten years. It is possible that CSU and other MOU partners still have plenty of time to involve GES residents more authentically. Lastly, Kronewitter devotes attention to the cost savings to postsecondary students and taxpayers, once a shared campus was constructed where three different institutions’ needs could be met in one space. In 2005, one in five of Colorado’s postsecondary students attended school on the Auraria campus (Kronewitter, 2005). The work of Kronewitter, a campus architect, provides an opportunity to think about the efficiency that was gained when the city added capacity to provide such a large number of learners in our state with a higher education. Page and Ross sidestepped that aspect of the case for the Auraria campus.

These are Kronewitter’s conclusions about the value of the Auraria campus for the city of Denver:

Auraria has had a major positive impact on Denver’s inner city, including development of community functions, historic landmarks, access to the Denver central business district, and beautiful parks and parkways….The Auraria campus also has been a catalyst for the development of neighboring housing, retail, and cultural facilities….Decision makers learned when to place emphasis on institutional interests, when to emphasize community interests, and when to compromise…. Faculty, students, neighbors, and most of all professional consultants were valuable contributors to Auraria’s planning process, especially when they were given time and provided with the pertinent information and resources to make decisions. (2005, p. 113)

Kronewitter’s conclusions are race-neutral and his appraisal of the impact that the construction of the Auraria campus had on the city of Denver is resoundingly positive.
Brief History of the National Western Center. The National Western Center attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors to North Denver every January for entertainment that showcases animal husbandry. Founded in 1881 as the Denver Union Stock Yard Company, the stock yards are located near rail lines and the South Platte River. Almost 140 years ago, these factors made the site an ideal place for ranchers from across the U.S. West to bring herds of cattle to be shown, sold, or processed into food in nearby meat packing plants. Denver was a hub for livestock exchange. The facilities that were located at this site provided the brick and mortar from which the livestock and agricultural industries could grow in wealth and stature. Animal pens, an exposition hall, and a stadium, as well as horse barns and an arena stretched across approximately 46 acres. The region attracted primarily Polish immigrants who came to work in the meat packing plants, as well as the smelting and mining companies and refineries (NWC Master Plan, 2015). Immigrant workers settled in surrounding neighborhoods including Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea.

Globeville in Focus. In “The Globeville Neighborhood in Denver,” Daniel F. Doeppers (1967), traced the white ethnic history of the neighborhood. Doeppers was a geographer who spent the majority of his career studying Asian cities and teaching at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. He is best known for a book on how commodities flowed into and out of Manila during times of peace and war.

Globeville was a residential area where mostly German and Polish workers lived. They were employed in the packing-house district. Doeppers studied their religious and social patterns and affinities with each other but his account is useful only to a point. His blatant racism against African Americans and Mexican Americans makes his article
uncomfortable to read. Doeppers’ historical account ends abruptly, failing to help the reader understand any of the social dynamics that neighbors of color experienced, since Doeppers was unconcerned with their lives. He did not interview newcomers of color between 1965-1967, nor did he survey them about their quality of life. Instead, he painted a picture of a thriving multi-ethnic community of working-class white European immigrants that was ruined as soon as people of color arrived.

Flawed as his work was, Doeppers sought to assess the communal inclinations of people in Globeville. What he catalogues actually is echoed later by CAC members who live in GES, when they beam with pride as they describe how close-knit their community is. Doeppers’ work helps to expound upon the historical context of the region where CSU will construct a new campus. Doeppers studied processes and events that he thought constituted the “personality” of Globeville.

Established on ranch land purchased by the Globe Smelter Company, Slavic workers first settled in Globeville in 1885. Additional smelters attracted more workers to live in the neighborhood. Jobs were available in meat packing houses, railroad yards, and in shops built near the train lines as well (Doeppers, 1967). Small businesses also grew up around the exchange of cattle (Cram, 2013). More than 90 per cent of residents were German, Polish, Slovenian, Croatian, and Serbian. These immigrants preferred to congregate and chose which churches to attend according to the languages they spoke with each other. In addition, there were lodges where they deepened social bonds. By 1950, ethnic groups lived in pockets, with homes clustered together in different parts of Globeville according to ethnicity. The community developed more personality and stronger social ties when a new public school was built to accommodate the workers’
children. It was a quiet and peaceful neighborhood. The community “peaked” just before World War II, according to Doeppers, for whom Globeville felt like a small town with “clean, hard-working, self-reliant” occupants (1967, p. 517). This racially coded language from Doeppers suggests that people of color who will not be clean, hard-working, or self-reliant will soon arrive in the area.

In time, white ethnic groups were dispersed by various social and economic dynamics. The children of European immigrants grew up speaking English instead of the language of their parents, since they experienced an American education. While older adults sought each other out in Globeville’s ethnic clubs and churches, young adults and professionals began to leave the neighborhood, which lacked a theatre, library, or supermarket. Around this time, cars became more affordable for the working class. With their own vehicles, they no longer needed to live so close to their workplace. People under the age of 45 began to move away. Most residents who remained were either very young or very old. After World War II, Globeville had a small percentage of its population between ages 25-45. Some workers could afford a larger home than what was available in Globeville so they moved to Northglenn, Arvada, and other suburbs of Denver. Taverns, gas stations, and barber shops in Globeville remained open for business, but the closure of a blacksmith, bakery, and corner grocery store all were signs of the neighborhood’s decline, in Doeppers’ estimation. Eventually, older residents had no one to speak with in any language other than English. Older people who were widowed remained living alone in their homes, owning them for an average of 37 years, according to Doeppers’ surveys and interviews. As people passed away, more businesses and ethnic churches closed. Houses went on sale and became available to rent.
Then, Doeppers claimed Globeville changed “almost overnight” because of race and class. He wrote that there were two events in Globeville that proved “epochal” (Doeppers, 1967, p. 514)—the building of a public housing project North of 51st Avenue, as well as the construction of Interstate-70 in the mid-1950s. The housing project …

brought a large group of low-income Mexican-Americans and Negroes to the fringe of Globeville and almost overnight made Davaning [the German area] a less-desirable place to live, a place where residents now felt they had to lock their doors at night. The building of the highway was even more serious. Thirty-one of the best-kept homes in Globeville were demolished and replaced with a ‘Chinese Wall’ that literally separates friends and truncates the community (1967, p. 514).

The wall that he speaks of can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9. A home in Globeville on a street that ends abruptly in a wall, built at the time when I-70 was constructed. The Purina Dog Chow factory and Interstate-70 can also be seen in the background. Untitled photograph. Retrieved on 17 March 2019 from Denver Public Library Genealogy, African American and Western History Resources, https://history.denverlibrary.org/globeville-swansea-and-elyria.
Doeppers gives us an overly simplistic appraisal of community change that was actually occurring for more than two reasons, not just two: already, the neighborhood was split into sections by the rail lines. Social movement was partly dictated by the way the neighborhood was physically cut into pieces. But Doeppers was correct when he said city planners sought the most expedient route when building I-70. They failed to consider how the path of the highway would interrupt social clusters in the neighborhood (1967, p. 514). Bettie Cram’s oral history shows that Elyria neighbors on the other side of I-70 experienced the same social fracturing. These claims by Cram and Doeppers are corroborated by Fullilove’s work, described Chapter Two. Highway construction disrupts social bonds and destroys a neighborhood’s relational ecosystem (Fullilove, 2004).

“Certainly, Globevillians feel that an impersonal bureaucracy ran roughshod over their desire to preserve the community” (Doeppers, 1967, p. 514). This sentiment is echoed later by CAC members when they say GES neighbors have been ignored by the city for five decades. They are marking the highway construction in time as the beginning of their loss of agency.

Doeppers construes the highway construction as the second “epochal” event that hastened the ruin of Globeville. When Interstate-70 was built, seven blocks in Globeville were removed from residential use in the early 1960s. What I find interesting in the passage above from Doeppers is, he credits these seven blocks as the best-kept homes in Globeville. The homes he refers to were occupied by African-American residents who were displaced when I-70 was initially built. It is the one moment in Doeppers’ article where he paints people of color as good neighbors. He says their neighborhood was “rudely cleft by a linear mound of dirt and concrete” (Doeppers, 1967, p. 506). Churches,
clubs, and taverns were scattered and separated by I-70, whose construction “had a
demoralizing effect” (1967, p. 522). The construction of the highway “through the very
heart of the community” caused additional waves of out-migration (1967, p. 506). A
church that was relegated to the wrong side of the highway was functionally severed from
Globeville. There was just a narrow pedestrian passage that went under the highway so
that neighbors could physically move from north to south, in order to access their friends
and churches.

Doeppers is not the only one who laments the way the highway cleft the
community. According to an oral history archive at the Denver Public Library, Bettie
Cram, a CAC member and former livestock exchange employee and one of the oldest
residents of the Elyria-Swansea neighborhood said, “In the 1960s is when they built the
first elevated highway, I-70. And it devastated, pretty much devastated, a lot of the town.
They took out several houses. But it was a needed highway. It took about four years to
build, and it caused a lot of chaos in the neighborhood” (Cram, 2013). Cram shows that
Elyria-Swansea was socially devastated by highway construction just as Globeville was.

Another thing Cram and Doeppers share is the disparaging language they use to
describe immigrants of color who began to move into the three neighborhoods. This
excerpt from Bettie Cram’s oral history provides an example:

We had—I’ve raised the two girls here—it was a very delightful time,
raising my children here. Elyria had their own little swimming pool; local
people were the—Don Easter was his name, and he was our lifeguard all
the time. We ALL took swimming lessons there. It was the place to go—
except, the children got to where they destroyed it. We have—we have
hard time in this neighborhood, because there IS a group of children that
are just, a little destructive. Well, when we started building Swansea, and
it started building up in the 1940s, it was a very low income, and nice
homes that were affordable. And because of that, then in about 2000, we
started having an influx of the people from Mexico. And it was very hard
on the neighborhood. They started moving in, and they would buy a home—put in three or four families in there—and the word went out that they were going to make a “little Mexico” out of it. The neighborhood fought back. And, I’m very proud of them, that they did. We’ve assimilated now, and it’s working out fine. We see no clothes hanging on the fences and on the trees, as we had before, as it would be in Mexico. So, they have assimilated, and I think it’s because the children have gotten—grown up in this area, and realize that this has to be. I have a hard time with the people that refuse to assimilate and learn English. This IS the United States, and we want to work with them as much as they can, but I feel that they have to work with us, also. So that has been … But it IS working out. (Cram, 2013)

When Cram says that “having an influx of the people from Mexico” was “hard on the neighborhood,” and when she says, “there IS a group of [Mexican] children that are just, a little destructive” but “the neighborhood fought back,” she is personifying the neighborhood and giving it a race: white. Cram’s words serve to claim the neighborhood as a white space and paint Mexicans as unwelcome invaders. Cram and Doeppers have different timelines in mind but in their own way, they each describe how Mexican Americans began moving to Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea. Doeppers wrote that 12 people of Mexican descent lived in Globeville in 1950 and by 1965, there were 123 people of Mexican descent. This made Mexicans and Mexican Americans the second-largest ethnic group in Globeville.

Cram’s narrative already suggested there was racial animosity between white occupants like herself and newcomers who were Spanish-speaking immigrants of color. Doeppers goes farther in a number of ways: he claims that “while most people care for their homes and yards, on the North edge of Globeville are the Mexican-Americans who do not do so” (1967, p. 517). He says, their homes “exhibit a marked decline in the standard of upkeep.” But where he really misjudges GES neighbors of color is when he writes, “the close-knit community life” is a memory. In 15 years, it probably will have
given way to “a Spanish-surname community” (1967, p. 522), he says. Doeppers was wrong and right. The CAC meeting transcripts will show that one of his predictions was far from what actually came to pass: in Globeville, as well as Elyria-Swansea, neighbors have close social bonds. Just as Doeppers suggests that being immigrants from the same European ethnic groups and being working class tended to bond people to each other, the first- and second-generation immigrants of color from Mexico and other Central American countries who share class commonalities turn their North Denver neighborhoods into spaces of mutuality, community, and solidarity. Later, I will use George Lipsitz’ work to expound, showing how people of color “turned segregation into congregation” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 51; Lewis, 1991).

Next, I will briefly turn my attention to colonization, as I continue to situate Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea by re-telling the history of the region. Doeppers and Cram painted Mexicans as the unwelcome invaders. In the following sections, I will show that the story can be told another way: re-telling the Colorado history of Native American slaughter paints white people as the invaders.

**Conquest, Colonization, Slavery, and Higher Education.** The historical specificity of persons, groups of people, and events is being explored in this chapter in order to lay the groundwork for later observations and theorizations. Striving to understand the past practices and values that constituted a particular geographical region is important in a process of coming to learn more about an institution and its ideologies, which will later arrive in GES.

Early American colleges had racist capitalism in their genetic material. As Wilder shows,
The European invasion of the Americas and the modern slave trade pulled peoples throughout the Atlantic world into each other’s lives, and colleges were among the colonial institutions that braided their histories. The academy never stood apart from American slavery—indeed, it stood beside church and state as the third pillar of a civilization built on bondage (Wilder, 2013, p. 11).

European settlers founded higher education institutions while they were securing their claims to Native land. They used these early institutions to stabilize the Atlantic colonies, exploit the decline of Indian nations and contemporaneously, the rise of African slavery.

When Harvard was established in 1636 and Yale in 1701, they helped make permanent the European invasion of the New World (Wilder, 2013, p. 18), solidifying white power and supremacy over Turtle Island. Not long after the first European settlers entered the United States in the late 1400s, colonists began stripping Native Americans of land, which led to conflict and ultimately resulted in the mass genocide of Native populations across the United States, as well as efforts to eradicate their culture and utilize education to force them to assimilate into European-American society (Museus et al., 2015; Lomawaima and McCarty, 2006; Prucha, 1995; Tinker, 1993). White Europeans invaded, conquered, raped, and killed the vast majority of indigenous people, although euphemisms for genocide, like “an encounter between two peoples,” “the great decline” and “depopulation” are frequently used, both in the teaching of American history and the origin stories of colleges that are told and re-told until they become legend. People want to feel a part of a place that has a positive story that binds them to each other and makes them feel good about their participation with the organization (Clark, 1972).

Land and higher education helped lure settler-colonizers to the United States, and then continued to lure Whites further out West. The academy was a tool that fostered exploitation (Tuck and Yang, 2012). In the “Great Dying,” more than 4 million people
were exterminated in the greater Mississippi River valley alone, by microbes introduced by Europeans, forced migrations that interrupted diet, severed the socioeconomic order of indigenous societies, and destabilized human populations (Wilder, 2013, p. 6). White invaders also discovered, extracted, appropriated, commodified, and distributed knowledge about the indigenous “other” in a process of buttressing their autonomy from England (Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith, 2008). As Linda T. Smith writes, “They came. They saw. They named. They claimed” (1999, p. 80).

Wilder, a historian, examines documents from university archives, scrutinizes ledgers, letters, speeches and other historical documents that show how higher education institutions emerged and grew. Education in the North was paid for by merchants and manufacturers who were profiting from cotton and sugar plantations in the South and the Caribbean (2013). Wilder traces the ways in which the ivory tower hides its secrets: Northeast universities used profits from human slavery to galvanize an industrial age, so that they could sustain their democratic project independently from Britain. These are “central themes in the history of the American college,” says Wilder (2013, p. 8).

**The Sand Creek Massacre and the Founder of Two Universities.** Sharon Stein explains in her piece, “A Colonial History of the Higher Education Present: Rethinking Land-Grant Institutions through Processes of Accumulation and Relations of Conquest,” in order to create land-grant institutions, the U.S. government had to first assert and secure its title over lands that rightfully belonged to indigenous people (2017). This process was at times bloody and brutal. But the specifics that can be known about the past will have value, when we pivot to an analysis of the new CSU campus and try to understand contested space in the present tense. It is useful to pause to consider an
institution’s relationship to the land, and to remember those who were here before white settlers. It becomes more difficult to use euphemisms for genocide after facing the history of what occurred in Colorado.

The University of Denver (DU) was founded by John Evans who originally named it the Colorado Seminary. Evans “wanted to bring education to the citizens of the territory” (Fisher, 2014). He served as Chairman of DU’s Board of Trustees until his death. Evans is also the founder of Northwestern University where he served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for 40 years. He is the namesake of the town of Evanston, Illinois (where Northwestern University is located) and in Colorado, Evans Avenue in Denver, the town of Evans, and Mount Evans are all named after him.

In November 2014, the John Evans Study Committee published a report after a year-long study of the role of DU’s founder in the Sand Creek Massacre of November 29, 1864. The committee was made up of descendant community representatives, as well as historians, DU faculty, DU students, and alumni representing DU’s Native American community. 150 years after the Sand Creek Massacre, the committee wanted to “assess a legacy” that the university had not previously tried to understand. The committee examined “the decisions and actions that John Evans undertook” and situated them “in the context of the ideas, policies, expectations, and principles of territorial leadership evident in the mid-nineteenth century American West” (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. iii), according to a report co-authored by multiple scholars, including many Native American and Indigenous authors. By examining the violent actions of white settlers, the committee could understand more about DU’s institutional origins and the values upon which the institution was built.
John Evans lived from 1814-1897. From 1862-1865, he was the second governor of the Colorado Territory, appointed by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln. At the same time, he was also the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. In an evaluation of his fulfillment of these leadership roles, the John Evans Study Committee reviews his character and leadership style, his failure to broker peace with tribal leaders, the treaties he broke with Native Americans, the proclamations he issued as Colorado’s governor, and his level of culpability for the Sand Creek Massacre which occurred during his governorship and resulted in his being forced to resign from that position. DU’s Study Committee concludes that

Evans’s culpability is comparable in degree to that of Colonel John Chivington, the military commander who personally planned and carried out the massacre. Evans’s actions and influence … created the conditions in which the massacre was highly likely…. Evans abrogated his duties as superintendent, fanned the flames of war when he could have dampened them, cultivated an unusually interdependent relationship with the military, and rejected clear opportunities to engage with the Native peoples under his jurisdiction (ibid).

Evans “helped create a situation that made the Sand Creek Massacre possible” (Northwestern Magazine Editors, 2014). In addition to building up DU, the City of Denver, and the state of Colorado, his destructive role in a catastrophic event is also part of Colorado’s history. The report by the John Evans Study Committee weighs all sides of this complex legacy. In Colorado, these are the roots of the spatialization of race and the racialization of space.

The Sand Creek Massacre occurred when the Cheyenne and Arapahoe people, who had been promised peace and protection under the U.S. government, were brutally murdered at the hands of the 1st and 3rd regiments of the U.S. Colorado Volunteers. The tragedy on the plains of southeastern Colorado began after the first light of early morning
on a clear and cold day. On the east bank of the Sand Creek, chiefs were encamped and women, children, orphans, and the elderly were gathered with them in family groups since the chiefs provided for their basic needs. Very few men of fighting age were present (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 3). There were herds of ponies grazing nearby while people began to stir, gather water, and mothers fed their children and tended fires. No one expected an attack from the U.S. Army since a truce had recently been negotiated. (Please see Figure 10.)

![A delegation of Arapaho and Cheyenne leaders met with the U.S. military on Sept. 28, 1864, at Camp Weld, Colo., to seek peace on the plains east of Denver, almost two months before the Sand Creek Massacre. Denver Public Library, Western History Collection.](https://history.denverlibrary.org/western-history-collection)

**Figure 10.** Photo from Denver Public Library archives Retrieved on 27 March 2019 from [https://history.denverlibrary.org/western-history-collection](https://history.denverlibrary.org/western-history-collection)

When women heard rumbling, they thought it was the sound of a herd of buffalo and they felt hopeful, since the camp was in need of fresh food. But the rumble came from soldiers on horseback. The U.S. Army attacked the Cheyenne and Arapahoe with rifles and cannon fire. Defenseless people attempted to flee on foot (p. 9) and then soldiers shot them dead. There were very few young men at the camp and even fewer who had rifles or pistols; some had bows and arrows, shields, and lances. They defended themselves and
their people to the best of their ability but tipis made of buffalo hide and flat prairie left
no place to hide from flying bullets. Chief Black Kettle raised a U.S. flag and a white flag
(Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 5) as he had been instructed, to indicate
that it was a peaceful settlement, but the troops went on murdering for nine hours.
Colonel John Chivington commanded the men of the 3rd regiment to take no prisoners (p.
6). “The killing frenzy moved up stream” (p. 7). Almost 200 Cheyenne and Arapahoe
people were murdered. Another 200 were badly wounded, then they walked through the
cold to a village 50 miles away where they sought support. All had witnessed the atrocity
and almost all had suffered the loss of their kin in the massacre. They wailed while they
walked. “At Fort Lyon, Colorado … Colonel Chivington destroyed a large Indian village,
and all its inhabitants” (p. 8) despite the fact that it was under the protection of the U.S.
government at the time (p. 9).

In the Treaty of the Little Arkansas, ratified in 1865, the U.S. expressed its
condemnation of the violent and savage attack on peaceful people and granted reparations
1). 320 acres of land were granted to each surviving chief of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe
tribes, and 160 acres of land were granted to each person who lost a relative in the
massacre. These leases, directed by the Secretary of the Interior, were to last for 50 years
without taxation (p. 1). The victims were also promised compensation for property that
had been destroyed or taken from them by U.S. troops. The presentation of these
reparations concluded in these words: “We all feel disgraced and ashamed when we see
our officers or soldiers oppressing the weak, or making war on those that are at peace
with us” (p. 2). This historical account was corroborated by John M. Carroll in his book
The Sand Creek Massacre: A Documentary History (1973) as well as the Report of the John Evans Study Committee issued in 2014 by Blackhawk, Fowler, Hayes, et al of Northwestern University. Native American scholars from two different universities where John Evans participated in the institution’s origins corroborate this historical account. “Strong words, certainly. Yet, the reparations promised by the Treaty of the Little Arkansas remain unpaid. Today, Sand Creek remains an open wound for the Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples” (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 3).

While John Evans was not present at the massacre (he was in Washington, D.C. when it occurred) and he was not culpable for the tragedy according to a definition of culpability that includes premeditating or conspiring to execute a massacre, it was determined that he did create the political and military environment in which this massacre could occur. For this reason, he was relieved of the governorship after it was found that he abrogated his duties (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 12). Instead of protecting Native peoples like he was supposed to as Superintendent, he let them fend for themselves, knowing full well there were powerful men such as Chivington with “a willingness to systematically hunt down and murder Native peoples, ‘little and big,’ as Chivington said, wherever they were encountered” (p. 12). Evans advocated for war instead of peace; he authorized the 3rd regiment to form, knowing full well that it “was raised to kill Indians, and kill Indians it must” (Carroll, 1973, p. 5). Evans likely did not know precisely what Chivington would do with the 3rd regiment, but he did know Chivington to be gladiatorial and impulsive (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 13).
The Northwestern University study group concluded:

Evans’ conduct after the Sand Creek Massacre reveals a deep moral failure that warrants condemnation. While he denied any role in the massacre, he refused to acknowledge, let alone criticize, what had happened, even going so far as to defend and rationalize it…. Evans did not profit from the Sand Creek Massacre. On the contrary, the massacre cost him both politically and financially. He did profit in a broader sense from his policies toward Indians when he was governor, however, since in the years that followed he was a full participant, along with many others, in the effort to develop the western and national economies that was profoundly damaging to Native people and remunerative to individuals like himself…. The University should recognize that, just as Evans profited from the development of the western and national economies in the late 19th century, so did Northwestern and many other institutions.

(Northwestern Magazine Editors, 2014)

Findings by both DU and Northwestern University study groups serve to illustrate what Wilder (2013), Stein (2017), and Patel (2015) have described: the founders of still-prominent universities have shameful secrets about their links with the subjugation of people of color. This is part of the story of roles universities played in Colorado’s racial and spatial past.

The massacre is a stain on Colorado. It is an instance of race-motivated violence linked with a particular piece of land. The Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site is the only place commissioned by the U.S. National Park Service to commemorate a site of shame for the federal government (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 10). U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell from Colorado lobbyed the Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks to make this designation, which was affirmed in 2000 by U.S. President Bill Clinton. It exists in our nation’s history as a tragedy and a disgrace. At the same time, the event paved the way for growing numbers of white settlers (Beltran, Clemmer-Smith, Tinker et al, 2014, p. 19).
John Evans’ participation in the founding of both Northwestern and DU illustrates the linkage between settler colonialism and the founding of higher education institutions, which helped turn the European invasion of the New World into something permanent (Wilder, 2013). Universities certainly served positive purposes in the past, as they do today, but they also were instruments of white Christian expansionism and militarism; they were weapons used in the conquest of indigenous peoples (Wilder, 2013). As DU’s and Northwestern’s study groups concluded, the fate of the American college was intertwined with the economic and social project of dispossessing Native people. Historically, white leaders establishing predominantly white institutions have desired land because property ownership confers privileges and compounds and sustains affluence and social power. This episode that helps us understand Evans is the part of United States history that Tuck and Yang (2012, 2014) had in mind when they suggested that education institutions are complicit in the past and current racial, colonial, and genocidal crimes of this country. And this is also what compels Patel to situate universities as “white settler property established on seizure” (Patel, 2015, p. 657). When I say that space has an unresolved relationship with race in the United States, this account explains why. Many higher education institutions’ leaders have never apologized to the communities that were harmed in the past, nor to their living heirs. Including this story about a Colorado massacre can help higher education leaders, students, staff, and faculty better understand what transpired under our feet, when we stand on our campuses.

Seeking to understand the specific characteristics that make GES unique has thus far included a re-telling of the story of Native American genocide in Colorado, a consideration of the ethnic and racial history of the Globeville neighborhood, and a brief
overview of the history of animal husbandry in North Denver. All these facts help situate GES. It is not just any place. There are particular stories about GES that are worth re-telling.

Next, I will give attention to the treatment of the natural environment in this region. Communication scholar Phaedra Pezzullo in her book on the rhetoric of pollution and environmental justice considers who pays the highest price for technological expansion and who benefits the most from it; she studies environmental racism, which is the targeting of low-income communities of color for locating toxic waste facilities, poisons, and pollutants (Pezzullo, 2007). I choose to include the following information about environmental contamination in industrial North Denver because it is part of the story of how the political and social power of GES neighbors has been limited and diminished. Lipsitz explains as part of his theory on space and race that low-income communities of color suffer disproportionate proximity to environmental hazards. This is an aspect that has been central to the racialization of space (Lipsitz, 2011).

On January 26, 2017, environmental contamination that poses health risks to GES neighbors was the topic of conversation in a CAC meeting. At that point it was reported that “Colorado Trust completed a study which found that children in GES neighborhoods are five times as likely to suffer from lead poisoning than anywhere else in Denver. This is due in large part to the fact that the neighborhood exists in a Superfund site that was exposed to industrial contaminants for many years” (CAC Meeting Minutes, January 26, 2017). I am unable to state my confidence in this particular finding from Colorado Trust, since I have been unable to locate the study to which the comment refers, but it is worth noting what was said in the CAC meeting because this demonstrates the way the
community *perceives and discusses* public health concerns amongst themselves. In the next section, I will review the EPA and the CDPHE’s claims, which actually differ from the 1/26/17 comment in content, although their substance is similar.

**Environmental Contamination in 80216.** According to *The Denver Post*, the 80216 zip code which includes Globeville and Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods, is among the most polluted in the United States. Two Superfund sites and six brownfield sites are among the legacies of the industrialization that occurred in the late 1800s. “Smelters belched lead, arsenic and heavy metals and produced slag that contaminated the soil” (Svaldi, 2017). The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) confirm that there are two Superfund sites in the area: the Asarco Globe Plant and the Vasquez/I-70 site.

**Asarco Superfund Site.** The Asarco Inc. Globe Plant is an 89-acre high-purity metals refining facility located at East 51st Avenue and Washington Street in North Denver. The Globe Plant has been the processing site for various heavy metals since the 1880s. The plant produced gold and silver, operated as a lead smelter, refined arsenic, and refined cadmium from 1926-1993. The plant currently produces lead oxide and refines high-purity metals. Colorado filed a Natural Resources Damages suit in 1983 under federal Superfund law. A remedy for the site was selected and a consent decree was signed in 1993. Since then, the EPA and the CDPHE report that the site has been remediated (EPA, 2019; CDPHE, 2019; Apostolopoulos, 2019).

The concerning, hazardous chemicals are the metals cadmium, arsenic, lead, and zinc. Residents in the area may be exposed to these metals through ingestion of contaminated soil particles or by inhalation of airborne particles. There is also a
groundwater contaminant plume flowing off the site to the northeast, an unlined waste pile that contributes to groundwater contamination, and soil that has been contaminated with arsenic, cadmium, and lead. These have been identified both on and near the Asarco property. Medical monitoring that took place from 1994-1999 indicated that eight children under age seven had blood lead levels greater than or equal to 10 ug/dL. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has established 10 ug/dL as the blood lead level of concern for children (CDPHE, 2019). Long-term residents who have lived for more than 30 years in the area are approximately four times more likely to have an elevated cadmium test result when their urine is sampled, according to the EPA and the CDPHE. Of the 250 Globe area residents who were tested before and after cleanup of their yards, four showed an increase in metal exposure. A 1995 Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment study found that for areas near the Globe Plant the number of observed cancer cases for all cancers studied was similar to the number expected in the Denver metro area. During remediation, medical monitoring was provided to over 1,500 participants. This ended in 2004 (CDPHE, 2019).

Additional cleanup measures since the area was designated a Superfund cleanup site include reducing toxic air emissions from the Asarco Globe Plant, monitoring emissions from the plant, reducing contamination of the groundwater, cleaning ditches near the plant, as well as doing soil remediation at over 150 parks and vacant lots. A hazardous waste pile on the site remains; an area of contamination that is acceptable to the EPA remains as well. The EPA considers this site to be remediated, according to Fonda Apostolopoulos, an EPA employee who has been working on the Superfund sites in North Denver for the past 25 years (personal communication, 2019).
**Vasquez Boulevard and Interstate-70 Superfund Site.** The Vasquez Boulevard and Interstate-70 Superfund site is also located in northeast Denver. The site includes two industrial areas as well as residential properties in all or part of Elyria-Swansea and in the southwest part of the Globeville neighborhood (CDPHE, 2019). Vasquez was shut down in 1906 when it was bought by Asarco (Apostolopoulos, 2019).

Historically, the area was a major smelting center for the Rocky Mountain West. Two smelting plants—Omaha & Grant, and Argo—operated at the site, beginning as early as the 1870s, refining gold, silver, copper, lead, and zinc. As a result, heavy metals were deposited in the soil at levels that, in some cases, posed a health risk to people living there. The groundwater was also polluted (CDPHE, 2019).

The EPA divided the Superfund site into three units to better manage their cleanup. Operable Unit 1 (OU1) includes residential soils in more than 4,500 yards in all or part of six different neighborhoods: Cole, Clayton, Elyria-Swansea, southwest Globeville, and a small section of northern Curtis Park. The EPA is in the process of de-listing OU1 as a Superfund site since they consider the area to be remediated to satisfactory levels. However, Operable Units 2 and 3 are still in the process of being studied by the EPA with remediation plans still being determined (Apostolopoulos, 2019).

What this means for the future CSU campus is, as redevelopment of the NWC takes place, construction will have to be coordinated with the EPA and the CDPHE. This is discussed in CAC meetings because GES residents have longstanding concerns about the health of families and neighbors. Also, the ongoing federal cleanup means the costs of construction will be increased.
**Operable Unit 1.** In 1998, the EPA began studying people’s yards to determine if heavy metal residues from past operations posed a health threat to residents. The investigation showed elevated lead and arsenic concentrations in some people’s yards. A large-scale soil study ensued. In 2002, the EPA released a proposed plan outlining its cleanup strategy. In 2003, the EPA announced it would clean up yards with lead concentrations of 400 parts per million (ppm) or above and/or arsenic concentrations of 70 ppm or above. From 2003-2006, the EPA carried out this plan. One in five yards required remediation.

At these properties, the EPA removed contaminated soil, replaced it with clean soil, and re-landscaped the yard. In total, the EPA tested more than 4,500 properties and remediated about 800 yards. The EPA also provided a lead paint abatement program to ensure that exterior paint peeling from a home did not re-contaminate the new soil. The EPA also sponsored a community health program to raise awareness about lead and arsenic hazards. Designed by local, state, and federal government representatives, the program was administered by the City of Denver. Community members trained to become community health workers went door-to-door and provided education to residents on the hazards of lead and arsenic. Parents could have their children tested for lead or arsenic exposure. This community health program concluded in 2008 (CDPHE, 2019).

**Operable Units 2 and 3.** Operable Unit 2 (OU2) is the area that will be most affected by the proposed redevelopment of the National Western Center and the construction of a new CSU campus. OU2 encompasses the location of the former Omaha & Grant Smelter, which is currently the location of the Denver Coliseum, a portion of the Globeville Landing Park, and surrounding businesses. This area is bound by I-70 on the north, the
South Platte River on the west, Brighton Boulevard on the east, and the southern boundaries of the Globeville Landing Park and the Pepsi Bottling Company on the south (CDPHE, 2019). When the Denver Coliseum was built, they brought in new soil so when tested for lead, arsenic, and cadmium, the soil levels are actually low.

Nevertheless, this area is still designated as a Superfund site and the cleanup will be ongoing for many years to come (Apostolopoulos, 2019). In 1992, the Colorado Department of Public Health concluded there was widespread soil and groundwater contamination near the Omaha & Grant Smelter. In 2000, the EPA detected heavy metal contamination in the groundwater, sediments, soils, and air in the vicinity. In 2009, the EPA issued a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment Report. In 2010, they issued a Remediation Report. Both reports indicate that arsenic and lead in surface and subsurface soils were concerning (CDPHE, 2019). Apostolopoulos explains that in the past, this site was a dump for the dairy industry where waste items associated with dairy production were burned. It also was a city landfill. It is now covered in asphalt but there are underground metals including arsenic located under the asphalt.

Operable Unit 3 (OU3) includes the location of the former Argo smelter, which is now the commercial area northwest of the Interstate-70 and Interstate-25 interchange (CDPHE, 2019). Located at the intersection of Interstate-70 and Interstate-25, the Argo smelter is bordered by 48th Avenue, Interstate-70, Lincoln Street, and Huron Street. The majority of the area is paved and has been extensively redeveloped since the smelter ceased operations. It is possible that waste buried under the pavement could pose a risk to the groundwater or to future construction workers, according to the EPA, which conducted an investigation, developed a feasibility study, and presented a proposed plan.
to the public in 2007. However, groundwater data was insufficient, which required the EPA to conduct additional groundwater sampling before issuing a final cleanup decision. Operable Unit 3 is still in the process of being managed by the federal government (US EPA, 2019). This area has elevated cadmium, arsenic, and lead in the soil but it is not continuous: in some areas it is present at 12-15 feet below the surface but in other areas, heavy metals are not present in the soil (Apostolopoulos, 2019).

Apostolopoulos suggests it would be challenging for the EPA cleanup process to be coordinated with those who intend to redevelop the area in the future, including the National Western Center and CSU, while the area is still being remediated by the federal government. As the redevelopment plans become clearer through the very processes that concern the CAC, the EPA is gaining more of an idea of what is going to be built there in the future, and only with that knowledge can they begin planning the next phase of remedial sampling and planning. They will soon be putting together a Record of Decision as to what can be done at the OU3 site (Apostolopoulos, 2019).

**Ongoing Toxicity.** Alongside these polluted areas that have been or are still in the process of being remediated, there also are active polluters in the 80216 zip code. According to the U.S. EPA’s Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) index from 2017, there are 21 facilities that are actively engaged in releasing large amounts of waste into the air, water, and land in North Denver. They are being monitored by the EPA, their releases published annually. The most recent data available from the EPA shows that 815 thousand pounds of waste were released in 2017 in the 80216 zip code. According to the EPA, 88% of the waste released in 2017 ranks in the EPA’s “less preferable” waste management category, meaning it is waste that cannot be recycled but rather, its effects will go on making an
impact for a long time to come. Svaldi writes in *The Denver Post*, “No other populated area in the country carries as high an environmental risk as a few square miles just northeast of downtown Denver” (Svaldi, 2017). Given the interests of those who will study environmental sustainability at the new CSU campus, perhaps the high levels of contamination actually make North Denver an apropos site for CSU’s future research facilities.

Through a historical analysis of race, class, and the environment, this chapter on historicity is intended to explain what happened in Denver before the CAC meetings about the CSU expansion into GES. How did we get here? Hopefully this partial review of the race and class tensions that help tell the story of the city of Denver provide a historical account that sets the context, explaining how class and race function and how modern institutions relate with/in this particular city.

*Figure 11. Business slated for demolition*

*Street View of 1632 E. 47th Ave. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.*
Figure 12. Homes slated for demolition

Figure 13. Home slated for demolition
Street View of 4657 Baldwin Ct. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.

Figure 14. Homes in front of the Denver Coliseum
Street View of 4681 Baldwin Ct. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.
Figure 15. Home already demolished
Street View of 4660 Baldwin Ct. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.

Figure 16. Businesses already demolished
Street View of 4712 Baldwin Ct. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.

Figure 17. Homes already demolished
Street View of 4667 Baldwin Ct. in Denver, CO, Google Maps, 17 March 2019.
The Agriculture Innovation Triangle™ leverages existing regional research, agribusiness, and commercial assets. Colorado State University (Fort Collins), Denver International Airport (DEN), and NWC are already working and expanding their partnership—with the goal of taking an innovation from the lab to the global marketplace.

The study provides a set of priority sectors, based upon today’s conditions—and suggests several emerging sectors for focus. But equally important, global agricultural and resource management and sustainability is undergoing, and will continue to evolve to meet changing market and environmental conditions. The priority sectors will evolve and change as the world strives to meet tomorrow’s food challenges.

**Figure 18.** The Agriculture Innovation Triangle (from the NextGen Agribusiness Economic Study). From the public archive at NDCC, https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/north-denver-cornerstone-collaborative.html

![The Corridor of Opportunity and North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative Working Together to Transform a Region](image)

The Corridor of Opportunity runs from Denver Union Station to Denver International Airport. The NWC is located at the Brighton Interchange with I 70 and is the Gateway to downtown on the Corridor.

**Figure 19.** The Corridor of Opportunity is the yellow line from DIA to downtown Denver From the public archive at NDCC, https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/north-denver-cornerstone-collaborative.html
Chapter 5, Findings

Introduction

The construction of the new Colorado State University campus will require families, neighbors, and small, independently owned businesses to vacate 38 parcels of land. Together with other Interstate-70 expansion projects, the CSU development will allow the commercial activity, entertainment, and tourism that occur downtown to stretch into North Denver. At the same time, widening I-70 will ease the commute to the Denver International Airport. The new CSU campus will also form a triangle of strengthened commerce and innovation, connecting Fort Collins, where the flagship CSU campus is located with other attractions that will lure international researchers and other visitors to Colorado (see Figures 18 and 19, issued by the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative of the Denver Mayor’s Office). CSU’s participation in this project has a mandate from voters, the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Board, and as a result, many eyes are on this development process. The public expectation is that Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings provide an opportunity for GES neighbors to help shape the changes that will be coming. A close analysis of the CAC meeting transcripts shows how power moves in the meetings. In my analysis of the data, I seek to understand the racial and socioeconomic context in which the language of the CAC meetings was constructed.
I am asking the transcripts: how have social relationships been organized between CSU’s representatives, city leaders, power-holders at the NWC, and the residents of GES neighborhoods, as the meetings progress from 2013-2019.

In my research study, two competing conceptualizations of what should transpire in the CAC meetings can be detected. These animate the discourses under investigation. The dominant discourse by the institutions maintains that they are driving this change process. CSU, the NWC, two museums, and the Mayor’s office have the most unfettered access to professional expertise and channels for urban change-making. Their actions reflect their belief that CSU and other institutional and municipal leaders should bring their plans to the CAC where members can hear, ask questions about, and comment upon the plans. The resistant discourse about what should transpire in the CAC meetings is that institutions, residents, and neighbors will work together to collaboratively decide how to change North Denver. Neighborhood plans, the counter-tour, the Community Benefits Agreement, and several of the guests who are invited into the CAC meetings all help the neighbors to co-author this change process, with institutional actors. Neighbors and residents are using the best democratic process that is made available to them by the Mayor and the City to comment on these impending changes. Both discourses, the dominant and resistant, are linked to the CAC’s confidence in the eventual redevelopment of the NWC campus: one thing is for sure; this change is definitely coming. Only outside the CAC, in the GES Coalition, as well as other activist groups like Denver Homeless Out Loud and Ditch the Ditch, are North Denver residents and their allies talking about stopping this redevelopment from happening at all. That narrative is beyond the scope of my research study.
May 2018. It was the last day of May 2018 and 19 people were gathered in the Centennial Room, located inside the National Western Complex at 4655 Humboldt Street. They were attending their regular Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting that occurs on the last Thursday of every month. Power Point slides were the focal point as Jocelyn Hittle, CSU’s Director of Denver Program Development, addressed the CAC. “Imagine. Discover. Cultivate.” These words, together with the NWC’s orange wagon wheel and mountain peaks logo, introduced Hittle’s slide show as she offered the CSU update for the month. Hittle shared the themes for CSU’s new satellite campus at the redeveloped NWC: energy, environment, health, food systems, water. She showed an artist’s rendering of the proposed CSU Water Resources Center. A bird’s-eye view depicted how existing neighborhoods in black and white would host a new facility, shown in full color and promising to provide an educational space not just for use by CSU but for the community as well. In the new building, there would be:

- A water policy center where CSU and Denver Water convene fellows and visiting scholars; host their “Water in the West” symposium annually; and maintain archives
- A collaborative innovation/incubation space
- Research and teaching labs
- A commercial kitchen that would be accessible to the GES community
- A lab where Denver Water would test the city’s water quality
- Spaces for professional development and outdoor research and learning

There would be a separate building dedicated to animal health and community outreach. A clinic for small animals, a treatment facility for equine athletes, and an equine therapy
program affiliated with CSU’s esteemed Temple Grandin Center would all be located in this facility, represented on the Power Point slide as a dark green circle outlined in yellow. A CSU Center promises business incubation opportunities to grow agricultural businesses and conduct research, a performing and visual arts space, the Denver Urban Extension Center, and a Food Systems Exploration Center for local K-12 children. Hittle’s next slide offered a glimpse of what these buildings may look like on the outside. The Rocky Mountain sun rises behind them in the artist’s rendering. The buildings seem to shimmer.

Figure 20. An architect’s rendering shows a glowing, redeveloped CSU campus

Hittle’s presentation uses a discourse of future-orientation and optimism. She speaks about creating, constructing together, and possibility. Words like “innovation,” “education,” “community,” and “communication” as well as “solutions,” “collaboratory,” “convening,” and “public meeting space” all evoke a bright shared future. She suggests that the surrounding community will benefit from what transpires inside the new
buildings, together with CSU students, faculty, and affiliates. Creating a new gateway from the three surrounding neighborhoods – Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea – to the NWC, the new CSU campus will serve as a transitional space. Surrounding an NWC barn and outdoor arena will be a CSU educational garden, a facility dedicated to Pet Aid Colorado, and a Learning Commons. Hittle signals that these are intended to better the lives of GES neighbors when she says, “These will be accessible to the community, and educational for all” (CAC Meeting Notes, May 31, 2018).

Architectural drawings in Hittle’s Power Point promise that the new CSU facilities will have multiple floor-to-ceiling windows. Viewing the Power Point presentation, one can imagine being a pedestrian at street level and being able to look in and see what is happening at CSU -- to feel a part of something innovative just by having it as part of the neighborhood. The discursive logic in the normative town/gown literature resounds in Hittle’s words. The presence of a higher education institution in a community, Warfield (1995) claims, can bring distinction to the surrounding community because the campus is a bulwark of discovery and learning. Reading Hittle’s presentation through Warfield’s lens suggests that with a university in their back yard, GES residents will have something of high value in their neighborhood. Indeed, CAC members in a past meeting articulated their hope that the NWC would become “a draw for international scientists to solve worldwide problems” (CAC Meeting Notes, January 6, 2015). Based on things that have previously been stated by committee members, it is reasonable to assume that Hittle believes her presentation will please the CAC.

In another slide from Hittle, eleven youth are pictured, presumably from Bruce Randolph School. Almost all students of color, they are smiling as they engage in what
appears to be one of the existing partnerships between CSU and the Bruce Randolph School. Alongside the photograph, this list is proffered:

- Little Shop of Physics
- Temple Grandin Equine Assisted Therapy
- AP Human Geography class or AP Civic Engagement class

These are programs that CSU has created to serve local high school youth in GES. In addition to Bruce Randolph, other local organizations that are already working in partnership with CSU include Clinica Tepeyac, Focus Points Community Center, Garden Place Elementary School, Swansea Elementary School, the Valdez-Perry branch of the Denver Public Library, and the Grow Haus, a non-profit in Elyria-Swansea that focuses on food justice. Hittle describes the community outreach that has been taking place.

“CSU is introducing itself as a future neighbor to the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods in an authentic way that respects, listens to, and supports the existing community” (CAC Meeting Notes, May 31, 2018), she says. Hittle explains that forging these partnerships has been just one phase in the process of bringing the new CSU campus into existence.

Hittle is using discursive strategies that focus listeners’ attention on benevolent acts by CSU. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that CAC members will be quite pleased to hear about the partnerships that already benefit young GES residents, as well as the new facilities that will soon extend possibilities for learning to neighbors of all ages. For example, many CAC members will be glad for the business incubation opportunities and the Food Systems facility for local K-12 children. Hittle knows this because, in previous CAC meetings, the following specific requests have come from neighbors:
• Mickey Zeppelin, a CAC member, asked CSU to create an agri-business school (December 18, 2014)

• A GES neighbor asked for an outdoor event space where scientists could conduct research (March 12, 2015)

• The Bruce Randolph School expressed interest in getting involved with the NWC (October 29, 2015)

• Science-based projects for K-12 children were requested by neighbor AE and by Councilman Albus Brooks (May 26, 2016), who represents Denver District 9 which includes GES

• Neighbor Drew Dutcher was gratified to report that at an Executive Oversight Committee retreat, CSU President Tony Frank said, “climate change, sustainability, environmental stewardship and the preparedness of our youth to tackle those challenges” could occur on the new NWC site. President Frank suggested this could “add to the sense of place in GES neighborhoods.” (November 17, 2016)

• Neighbor Armando Payan asked if CSU’s equine programming could involve GES children attending Swansea Elementary School and Garden Place Elementary School (February 23, 2017)

The experience of social and material reality is produced discursively (Baxter, 2003). In her presentation, Jocelyn Hittle, on behalf of CSU, orients CAC members toward the future. Since college campuses are positioned at the heart of our nation’s discourses of meritocracy and upward mobility (Patel, 2005), Hittle’s words could potentially have the
effect of setting up the expectation that GES neighbors and their dependents are being promised a brighter future.

Higher education researcher Lori Patton Davis suggests critically thinking about what listeners will take from the speech act—both overt and subtle messages (2014). What listeners in the CAC meeting in May 2018 might take from Hittle’s Power Point presentation are these overt messages: new facilities will add value to our neighborhoods; the campus will serve our needs; the university is being responsive to our requests and ideas; CSU is collaborating with us. Even more subtle messages can also be derived from Hittle’s framing of the CSU move to North Denver: because CSU is coming to GES, our neighborhoods are finally getting the attention and amenities we have been seeking for decades; higher education is good; CSU will give GES residents the opportunity to improve our life chances; the institution is coming to save us.

When Hittle chooses the words “supports the existing community,” she insinuates that a beneficial relationship between town and gown is forming. Her words make that so. No one in the CAC meeting, either in this segment or later during questions and comments, holds her accountable for justifying the claim or further explaining the contours of the university-community relationship. CSU is not yet making promises about how access to the facilities by neighbors will be managed by the institution, nor are the neighbors in the meeting challenging Hittle to go farther and spell that out. Hittle’s characterization of the town/gown dynamic remains uncontested in the May 2018 CAC meeting. Her words help Hittle discursively enact a relationship among equals, as opposed to a relationship of dominance by the institution over neighbors. By using the words “authentic,” “respects,” and “listens to,” she engages a legitimated structure that is
broadly available for relationships between town and gown: Jocelyn Hittle’s words are “endowed with the performative power to bring into being the very realities it claims to describe” (Fairclough, 2003, pp. 203-204).

In this instance of talk during the May 2018 CAC meeting, other things that Hittle does while she speaks include showing photographs and using maps. All of this comprises text that can be analyzed with CDA. Since new CSU facilities are depicted in color against a backdrop of black and white GES neighborhoods on the map Hittle has chosen, and since the rising sun makes the new buildings glow, Hittle illuminates a discourse about how inherently positive a higher education institution is. In one of her slides, the green grass along the South Platte River seems to glow when compared with the dull lack of color depicting the neighborhoods bound by I-25 and I-70. Houses, highways, and train tracks are all colorless. Yet the vivid shade of green conveying hope like springtime is mimicked in circles that show where new CSU facilities will be erected. Then, these circles are outlined in yellow, making them even more bright and distinct from their dull backdrop. Hittle chooses to represent the CSU facilities as beacons for the entire North Denver area. Her text sheds light on the way she conceives of the world (Johnstone, 2008).

Her presentation positions the new development by CSU as good for the city -- better than what exists already. Even parts of GES that are green in reality, like the historic Riverside Cemetery and Swansea Park, don’t benefit from being rendered green in Hittle’s slides. The use of the color green goes even farther: when Hittle shows architectural drawings of the future site, there is full-grown vegetation both inside and outside, and when she summarizes themes that will guide the construction of the new
facilities (“net zero;” “restored South Platte River;” “education, demonstration, community connection;” “partnerships”) her slide is titled “Site Regeneration.” Hittle’s words reproduce the social world. Her discourse signals to the audience: this is how to interpret the university/community relationship. This is how you ought to make meaning out of the changes that are coming: CSU will bring light and life to GES. Our institution will restore and regenerate your neighborhoods. This is a legitimating discursive strategy as the word re-shapes the tangible world that already is.

Hittle’s language reframes an incursion by an outsider as a positive development for GES. She manufactures a perception that CSU is saving GES by resuscitating the area. Hittle’s discursive strategy renders the development by CSU, in institutional partnership with the NWC and the City of Denver, as a positive improvement for GES neighbors, inviting the listeners at the CAC meeting to interpret the physical world they already inhabit as lacking, as a blank canvas where something better will be built in the future. They are asked to view their spatial reality from a deficit perspective, even though this contrasts with a strengths-based view that some neighbors hold.

**Tour and Counter-Tour: Neighbors Resist the Dominant Discourse.**

Rewinding to the Fall of 2013 is the best way to hear resistant discourses by neighbors who are CAC members. They show a strengths-based view of North Denver. Theirs is another, competing perspective. “Counter-power and counter-ideologies in practices of challenge and resistance” (van Dijk, 1995, p. 18) are discernible in their assets-focused discourse that explains to outsiders what is valuable about North Denver.

A tour of the National Western complex was offered by NWC staff Paul Andrews and Ron Rohr during CAC Meeting 1. “The tour focused on … some of the hurdles that
the facility currently faces, and will face into the future” (Meeting Transcripts, October 1, 2013, p. 1). The needs of both CSU and the NWC to expand, both physically and financially, were voiced during Meeting 1 and positioned as a primary concern for the CAC. We learned that “survival of the National Western requires year-round operations and bringing in” Colorado State University, History Colorado, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science “helps with that” (Meeting Transcripts, December 19, 2013). The tour focused the CAC’s attention on making physical improvements to halls and event centers, stadiums, stock yards, animal pens, service roads in and out of the NWC property, underpasses, and associated railroad tracks. A tour of the complex was given to 35 people. Rather than conveying the CAC’s scope of work in words only, the tour punctuated the committee’s purpose: decision-making over upgrades to facilities “during the development and build-out process” (Meeting Transcripts, October 1, 2013, p. 2).

GES neighbors later organized a counter-tour that had the effect of reframing the way that space, cities, institutions in GES neighborhoods, and most importantly, people who dwell in North Denver are characterized and positioned in relation to each other. These two tours constitute the genetic makeup of the relationship between the institutions and the people who live in North Denver. At its core, the CAC meeting is a place of tension and conflict over the committee’s purpose: does the CAC exist to plan physical improvements and enhance the earning capacity of the NWC, CSU, and other MOU institutions, and are neighbors in attendance merely invited into the room while plans hatched by institutional leaders gradually unfold around them? Or is the committee’s purpose to be the democratic lever that GES residents can pull, in order to express to the institutions how the neighborhoods wish to change on their own terms?
Analysis of the language used in CAC meetings to describe the tour and counter-tour can reveal how social power moves through this administrative decision-making space. At the conclusion of the first tour guided by NWC staff, Denver City Councilwoman Judy Montero who represents District 9, where GES neighborhoods are located, pauses a discussion about financing the urban renewal project. She attempts to redirect the conversation because “our focus should be on the community aspect of this development, and the potential quality of life improvements” (Meeting Transcript, October 1, 2013, p. 2). In the next meeting, the oldest member of the CAC, Bettie Cram, an Elyria-Swansea neighbor in her nineties, notes the neighborhood’s founding back in 1883. Cram consistently brings to the attention of institutional newcomers and city leaders her pride in her neighborhood’s history (Meeting Transcript, November 12, 2013, p. 4). This is a discourse of historicity or a claim to belonging. Cram is reminding the institutional participants in the CAC meeting, we were here before you formed the CAC. 

AE says neighborhood preservation should be included in the “pillars of planning.” She also suggests community organizations in GES “that can help guide this project along.” John Zapien says the neighbors “need their own direction and that they shouldn’t have to play by the City’s politics” (Meeting Transcript, October 1, 2013, p. 3). These are “instances of discourse [that] can be considered instances of social practice” (Fairclough, 1992) because they are efforts to steer the actions of the CAC, redirecting the committee’s activity according to differing worldviews.

There are sets of beliefs about how the world works and what is natural (Johnstone, 2008). By systematically taking apart what people say in CAC meetings, in order to discover the sets of beliefs underlying their discourse, I can examine what
compels GES residents to act in certain ways and strive to manifest certain changes. I can also trace a differing set of beliefs about how the world works, which compels the institutions to try and secure different outcomes. The first tour revealed the MOU partners’ deficit-oriented view of North Denver’s physical characteristics. But neighbors argue back: while GES has real needs, they also have assets like pride in their history and local organizations with resourceful and capable leaders. AE turns her asset orientation into a counter-tour that she organizes, together with other GES neighbors. Her counter-tour can be read as a resistant discourse to influence the worldviews of the external institutional actors who are newcomers here.

Mindy Thompson Fullilove, a psychiatrist who does research on displacement, describes how we see places. People who are insiders get accustomed to seeing the things that surround them on a daily basis. They stop really seeing their place because they are able to navigate it from memory. People who are outsiders to a place tend to see it through stereotypes. Rather than seeing what is really in front of them, they sort through a mental index of familiar kinds of things that, in the past, were found in similar types of places.

On encountering a new landscape, we go through our internal slide show of landscapes we’ve seen before. When we get to a good match, we say, ‘this is that.’ Much of how we categorize landscapes depends on rather crude cultural cues, such as ‘deteriorated house’ means ‘nasty’ (Fullilove, 2004, p. 185).

But insiders can help outsiders decode what they are really seeing by explaining the historical and cultural context. AE’s counter-tour has the potential to help newcomers who are institutional leaders enrich and complicate their view of what they are seeing.
when they move through the neighborhoods of North Denver. And in the process, those who are locals will also rediscover what is most important about GES.

On December 19, 2013, AE objects to the way the head of the NDCC is portraying the CAC’s purpose (Meeting Transcript, p. 2). In the next meeting, she sets out to steer the CAC in a different direction when she says:

It would be great to have leaders of the MOU partners feel and imagine what it’s like to be in the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods. Ideally, the tour will have 5-6 intersections that will act as stops, and they will help spark the imaginations of the tour’s guests, especially the Master Planning team. This will be a great way to find common ground. (Meeting Transcript, January 27, 2014, p. 4).

In AE’s counter-tour, neighbors achieve at least two things. First, GES neighbors who serve on the CAC articulate what THEY value about their property and their community. In their own words, they show institutional leaders who have come from outside to change their lives, how these spaces are being used by GES residents. They take a turn telling their story in the first-person.

In the first tour, the potential financial gains that would result from improvements to property were the emphasis. What AE creates is a counter-tour that will emphasize what places mean to people. The counter-story she will tell will exemplify the Black spatial imaginary (Lipsitz, 2007). One story of place focuses on the cash value of property while the counter-story calls attention to how people use and enjoy places, and how value comes from that as well. AE does not use the language that Lipsitz chooses when he articulates his racialized theories of space. Nevertheless, new policies, practices,
and institutional futures could stem from the alternative worldview that is given expression at this crucial stage in the CAC meetings. AE’s counter-tour provides another way of making meaning. Her words and her reframing do work on the foundations of everyone’s thinking about what places are worth.

Second, the counter-tour can be read as an experiential alternative to the Globeville neighborhood plan and the Elyria-Swansea neighborhood plan, after those have failed to gain traction in the first three CAC meetings. John Zapien, AE, and Tom Anthony each express their strong feelings that all urban renewal decision-making ought to emanate from the neighborhood plans they already had. Tom Anthony says, “The Elyria neighborhood had a plan in 2006 …. We also had over 500 signatures to this plan …. We did a lot of this planning, and it appears that our concern is secondary to the National Western – not primary” (Meeting Transcripts, December 19, 2013, p. 1). John Zapien says, “I see the 5 partners listed but why not 6 – the neighborhoods? I’m concerned that this is just another page in the way this part of the city is treated” (ibid). In this instance of intertextuality (Gee, 2011), Zapien is referring to things that have happened before and outside the text of this particular CAC meeting. He is alluding to the logos for the MOU partner institutions that are always printed at the top of the monthly CAC meeting agendas. They include the NWC, the City of Denver, DMNS, History Colorado, and CSU. One can picture him at the committee meeting, holding the paper agenda in his hands, fluttering it as he focuses his gaze at the masthead, where five institutional logos are emblazoned in full color. Zapien makes a plea for representation.
AE picks up where her neighbors left off:

There is a real need for a transparent process; we need to know why certain things are happening. We haven’t had a conversation about our weight in this Advisory Committee, I’m feeling marginalized, and this doesn’t feel participatory ... This feels very “puppet mastery” and so how will we track accountability? We don’t want to be treated like we’re just another item on the checklist. … It’s important to understand how we live in these neighborhoods and connect with one another. (Meeting Transcript, December 19, 2013, p. 2)

The third CAC meeting in December 2013 is marked by heightened tension over who will have power and control of North Denver’s redevelopment process, and at the same time, it is a meeting in which AE’s counter-tour continues to take shape. The words from neighbors convey frustration that the priorities and desires of GES neighbors will be eclipsed by those of the MOU partners, so GES neighbors try another way to re-assert *their* worldview, their projection of possible worlds or plausible states of affairs. To do so, they create the counter-tour.
In March and April 2014, the counter-tour continues to take shape. AE gathers feedback from her neighbors over several months by distributing a survey to ascertain what they find most important for her to convey. She works with the city staff to build Geographic Information Systems maps that show how Interstate-70, Interstate-25, train tracks, the South Platte River, and the National Western property cut the neighborhoods into isolated segments, creating connectivity and access problems for local residents. (Please see Figure 22 which is the ultimate result of AE’s work.) The tour is intended to show the MOU partners and Master Planning team how difficult it is for GES neighbors to move about their place. The Stock Show draws large crowds every January, clogging the neighborhoods with thousands of visitors and their large pickup trucks, and daily, heavy train traffic freezes locals in place as they try to pass through their own neighborhoods. AE also plans to “highlight the parks in the community, as well as the scientific school-community partnerships” that have value for neighbors, and she will highlight the Elyria-Swansea-Globeville Business Association boundaries and point out small, independently owned businesses that cater mostly to Latinx clientele. (Again, please see Figure 22.) AE’s counter-tour asserts the value that GES neighborhoods already have, in spite of the struggles that residents experience because of the heavy industry and highway traffic that slice up the neighborhoods into isolated pieces (Meeting Transcript, March 27, 2014, p. 1). On April 24, 2014, in the final CAC meeting before the counter-tour, AE says the tour will also demonstrate “how residents interact and relate with the National Western” (Meeting Transcript, April 24, 2014, p. 1).

The tour is finally held on May 8, 2014, with 30 people pausing at “7 different disembarkation points to point out the value of each stop” and learn about GES from the
perspectives of its inhabitants. Afterward, AE expresses that she is hopeful the institutional leaders developing the Master Plan are now “on the same level” with GES residents “as to what this organism is” (Meeting Transcript, May 29, 2014, p. 1). AE’s use of the phrase “on the same level” reiterates points that she has made elsewhere throughout the meeting transcripts about the way power is unevenly distributed. She seeks an equal playing field with institutional leaders from CSU, the NWC, and the City, where she and her neighbors have their urgent needs, desires, and preferences honored and included in the redevelopment that will soon commence. For John Zapien, another outspoken neighbor on the CAC, the counter-tour created for him a sense of urgency regarding the planning process, which he hopes will be “as inclusive as possible” now that planners have bonded with GES neighbors “from different walks of life” (Meeting Transcript, May 29, 2014, p. 1).

Words that are used in association with the initial tour and the counter-tour do not overtly name race as a factor in the process of neighborhood change. But the phrases highlighted above—“as inclusive as possible” and “different walks of life”—suggest the spatial imaginaries at play for different CAC members. The neighbors on the CAC use the counter-tour to challenge the imaginary that has been articulated by the MOU partners, whose discourse has been steadily shaping the phenomenal, experienced world, “as people bring worlds into being by talking” (Johnstone, 2008, p. 73). Inside the meetings, institutional leaders and CRL facilitators dominate, shape the agenda, and determine what kind of change will be coming to GES. The counter-tour is an effort to step outside the meeting where GES neighbors can present a reality where a feeling of home, a multicultural celebration, and an honoring of the history of GES are prioritized.
as well; they are ranked as equal concerns alongside financial security and organizational
growth for CSU and the NWC, increased tourism, and commerce that will benefit the
city. Realities are produced through the discursive shaping of materiality (Allan, 2010).
The counter-tour contests the social meaning and the racial/spatial meanings of material
things, their worth, and their purpose for existing.

In meetings where committee members are still evaluating their own and others’
power positions in and on the committee, the initial tour and the counter-tour are
critically important discursive artifacts. What emanates from them is a host of discursive
practices that will carry through all six years of CAC meetings. These various discourses
that will end up being at play comprise the complex landscape against which Jocelyn
Hittle will later, in May 2018, make CSU’s Power Point presentation.

The counter-tour reasserts the neighbors’ own fitness to do urban planning. The
difference between institutional newcomers and longstanding residents is not always skin
color. Not all GES neighbors on the CAC are working-class immigrants who are people
of color. Not all institutional leaders who are planning the construction of the new CSU
campus are white. (Please see Figure 31 in the Appendix, which lists the affiliations of all
CAC meeting attendees from 2013-2019). In fact, by virtue of his leadership role in the
city, Denver’s mayor, an African-American man, is ultimately the power-holder who
presides over not just the construction of the new CSU campus, but all the projects
related to the I-70 expansion that will impact the lives of North Denver residents.
Nonetheless, racialized imaginaries are in place and they impact what people say in CAC
meetings. From Allan, Iverson, and Ropers-Huilman (2010), we learn that discourse
constructs reality; discourse constructs perceptions; discourse shapes lived experience.
Our racial and spatial realities can be explained in words. During the explaining, they become more visible and more real to us and to others. The counter-tour ends up being a way for AE to show what she had previously said: “I want people to understand that people want to live here” (Meeting Transcript, December 19, 2013, p. 2). Please see Figure 22 of the counter-tour.
There are four designated disembarkation points for discussion labeled “A-D” on the Route map:

A. **Northern Overlook**: After driving through the center of the Western Center Complex footprint; from this vantage point we'll get oriented to the overview of the three linked neighborhoods surrounding and most impacted by the Western Center development.

B. **Globeville Landing Park**: Well see the potential integration of the Western Center development with the linking park and river access amenities of the neighborhoods.

C. **47th and Vine adjacent to the Elyria Library**: We'll get the feel of the residential heart of the neighborhood adjacent to the Western Complex, including the historic Valdez-Perry Library, 4590 Vine Street - which is important to all three neighborhoods.

D. **Western Center Interior and Post Office Intersection on N. Brighton Blvd**: We'll get a sense of the interface between the interior of the Western Center foot-print and the intertwined residential and industrial elements of Elyria & Swansea.

The final loop of the Tour takes us up past the Riverside Cemetery and through the concentrated industrial section of Swansea, Elyria and back through the residential blocks and to the Tour Finish point at the National Western Hall of Education.

*Figure 22.* Map of GES made by AE and the NDCC, together with descriptions of disembarkation points. Accessed from the public archive at https://www.nwccac.com/documents.html on 1 March 2019.

**Process Improvements.** During deliberations, people and their ideas are positioned into and out of power (Pasque, 2010). Tension between dominant and resistant
worldviews is evident in CAC discussions about the committee’s composition over time. To begin with, those who I classify as MOU partners far outnumber those who I classify as GES residents as far as who attends the meetings when I compile all attendance records over the six years. Please see Figure 27 in the Appendix. However, if you look at Figure 28 in the Appendix, it is evident that although those who consistently attend meetings more on a monthly basis are the GES residents, those who speak more in meetings are MOU partners. Over the six years of CAC meetings, roughly 28-30 people attend each month. In each committee meeting, there are 1-3 facilitators from CRL Associates, a property development and lobbying firm. Between 6-14 people represent the MOU partners including CSU. Between 0-10 people each month are guests who are invited by CRL, NDCC, or CSU to come one time in order to present on a topic that relates to their professional expertise. About 10-15 people who attend monthly are from the GES neighborhoods. Figures 27-28 show that the meeting facilitators and MOU partner institutions more consistently represent their worldview during the CAC meetings than GES neighbors, even though GES neighbors outnumber MOU partners in the room.

Maria Garcia Berry, the primary meeting facilitator, brings up NWCAC membership on June 26, 2014. She proposes officially removing inactive members from the membership list. CRL facilitators will broach the topic of changing membership guidelines in at least four more CAC meetings (Jan. 2014, June 2014, Feb. 2016, Aug. 2016, and Dec. 2017). But the proximity of the June 26 event to other recent events begs the question: are membership rules being changed in order to quiet GES neighbor noncompliance?
The six previous meetings were characterized by conflict and tension over the power to decide, participation, and approaches to decision-making in CAC meetings. On December 19, 2013, Kelly Leid who is lead staff for the NWC, provided an overview of the process he would use to identify and select a Master Planning team. AE voiced her vehement opposition to having this process presented as if it were already a foregone conclusion: “There is a real need for a transparent process. … We haven’t had a conversation about our weight … and this doesn’t feel participatory … and so how will we track accountability” (Meeting Transcripts, December 19, 2013, p. 2)? John Zapien added his enmity as he pointed out that the proposed selection process was to be managed by nine NWC staff but no neighbors. Then AE said, “I would have loved to hear from my peers on this Committee about the selection of this firm” (ibid). John Zapien then says, “the neighbors should be the starting place and the developers ought to build their plans from the neighbors’ needs, not the other way around” (p. 3). Another GES neighbor, Tangier Barnes, pressures institutional leaders to select a firm to do the Master Planning who will "get" them (NWCAC Meeting Transcript, January 27, 2014, p. 4). For Tangier Barnes, AE, John Zapien, Drew Dutcher, and other GES residents, “get” them means making sure neighborhood needs including food security, improved education facilities, environmental remediation, connectivity with the rest of the city, and economic opportunity, as well as their multicultural character, agricultural history, and working-class culture are all represented in the Master Plan and in the eventual construction of a new CSU campus.

In the weeks that follow, institutional leaders select and hire a firm without the input of GES neighbors, bringing their decision to the CAC via email only after it has
been reached. The transcripts prevent one from knowing whether the neighbors on the CAC were angry, since the notes simply read, “Discussion regarding the committee process” (Meeting Transcript, January 27, 2014, p. 1). It is impossible to know why the note-taker chose not to record verbatim comments, giving only those five words instead. What is clear is that the facilitator “acknowledged that conversations have gone all over the place … There are many divergent views on the NWCAC. The committee now has clear guidelines to operate under, and moving forward, we will always leave time at the end of meetings to discuss other topics of interest to members." But committee members seem unsatisfied with these fixes.

Next, AE proposes using consensus decision-making on the CAC for the duration. AE says, "This whole process needs to be a consensus-based process. … The purpose of the CAC is for neighbors to be made aware of everything that is happening" (Meeting Transcript, January 27, 2014, p. 1). But consensus is never adopted as the decision-making approach of the CAC. Instead, the facilitator concludes this segment of the meeting by saying, "we will automatically start forwarding all communications" (ibid). This is how CRL Associates, together with the institutional actors, manage to elide a commitment to collaborating more deeply with neighbors. Forwarding on email communications after they occur is not the same as co-creating with the community, power-sharing, or deep collaboration within CAC meetings.

Henceforth, what does change is that a time at the end of each CAC meeting is dedicated to discussing topics of interest to members. Thus, a new meeting format is adopted. This choice has the effect of relegating neighbors’ questions, direction, and advice to the final moments of each month’s meeting. As I show in Figures 24, 27, and
28, it is this segment at the end of the monthly meeting where the majority of words spoken by GES residents will end up being uttered. This is the vocal participation equivalent of being forced to sit at the back of the bus. Meeting facilitators, institutional staff, and invited guest experts dominate the first two-thirds of almost every CAC meeting after January 2014. Together with changing membership guidelines five different times to expunge those inconsistent members who are not being paid by an institution to attend CAC meetings, this ends up being one of the significant ways neighbor speaking power is diminished. These actions have the effect of limiting the discursive power neighbors have to influence the redevelopment planning process taking place in the CAC.

The consequences are significant. Since negotiations regarding how the campus will be built and for whom occur in a way that systematically restricts and lessens neighbor power, the accountability that CSU will have to the public once the facilities have actually been constructed could potentially be limited as well. What is occurring in these committee meetings impacts people’s future life chances (Spade, 2011) yet institutional actors make moves that minimize, rather than amplifying, the voices of GES residents who are members on the CAC.

Meeting 1. Rewinding yet again to Meeting 1 is the best way to further examine the relationship between the meeting facilitator from CRL Associates and the institutional MOU partners on whose behalf they speak and act. Participants in the earliest CAC meetings are evaluating their social positions vis-à-vis one another. This is evident in the inaugural meeting of the National Western Center Advisory Committee (NWCAC) on October 1, 2013. Meeting facilitator Terrance Carroll opens the proceedings by
discussing the committee’s purpose. Carroll states the goals that ought to be achieved by the CAC, then National Western Chair Ron Williams says, “this group is 14 months in the making” and “we’re ready to get moving” (NWCAC Meeting Transcript, October 1, 2013, p. 1). This immediately sets up a power dynamic where GES neighbors are being invited into a pre-ordained set of tasks. What will be able to be achieved has already been determined by institutional actors. The neighbors are asked to join a decision-making process that has already been outlined by CSU, the mayor’s office, the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (NDCC), History Colorado, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS), and the NWC. This power dynamic will be openly contested by GES neighbors throughout the six years of CAC meetings. The conflict relayed above stemmed from the selection of the Master Planning firm in the first half of 2014; in April 2015, a similar conflict over “process improvements” will result from a rushed zoning application (Vernon L. Hill letter, April 16, 2015). Please see Figure 26 in the Appendix for Mister Hill’s letter.

**Speaking Power in Meeting 1.** Figures 23, 27, 28, and 31 show who attended Meeting 1, how many words are spoken by each class of attendees, and how the researcher is choosing to classify each attendee according to the roles they play on the CAC. It is significant that in Meeting 1, 485 words are spoken by the MOU partners before any GES neighbor utters their first comment. That means the first 39% of the words uttered at Meeting 1 belong to MOU partners. Only 22% of the words uttered at the entire meeting were from GES neighbors (274 words out of 1,245 total). MOU partners, the NWC, and the mayor’s office dominate Meeting 1. What this does is convey to all participants that social power will need to be wrestled out of the hands of the allied developers. This
dynamic is firmly established in Meeting 1. I depict this in Figure 23. Using Figure 28, I show how this trajectory continues in subsequent CAC meetings.

**Social Languages.** James Paul Gee suggests using the social languages tool as one of many ways to do discourse analysis (2011). To understand what a speaker says, the listener needs to know who is doing the speaking and in what social context. Terrance Carroll, the meeting facilitator, uses a style of language that is associated with community deliberation and task orientation in meetings where groups of people will be working together to make decisions. Grammar and vocabulary combine “to enact specific socially-situated identities” (Gee, 2011, p. 162). To know a particular social language is to be able to do a certain kind of social participation successfully, according to Gee. However subtle or tentative, as people settle in for Meeting 1, they know something about what a facilitator does in meetings, in general. They have a sense of what to expect from a person playing such a role. The speaker is acting out a particular socially-situated identity. “The speaker must also make clear what he or she is doing, what action or activity, appropriate to that identity, he or she is carrying out. Listeners need to know not only who is talking but what they are seeking to accomplish” (p. 163). Carroll is not just any person, speaking conversationally. Other meeting participants know that Carroll is fulfilling a social role and his words carry weight because of that role.

Gee describes two different kinds of grammar. In addition to how words follow rules as they are pieced together into phrases and sentences (Grammar 1), speakers design their utterances “to create patterns which signal or index characteristic social identities and social activities” (p. 164). Listeners attribute certain rights and liberties to speakers because of the roles they play (Grammar 2). Several things are being achieved at once by
the meeting facilitators, Terrance Carroll, Maria Garcia Berry, and Liz Adams. Occasionally, they establish rapport and achieve solidarity with all meeting participants by making jokes and chatting casually about shared human experiences such as taking a 10-year-old-boy to a little league game as an excuse for needing to leave early from the meeting (Meeting Transcript, April 27, 2017, audio recording).

At the same time, Carroll, Berry, and Adams also take up a style of meeting facilitation in which they get to control when a conversation begins or ends and which conversations can and cannot be had in the shared space of the committee meeting. Just as a surgeon would assemble her uniform and the tools of her trade before performing surgery, donning her scrubs, covering her hair and shoes and putting on a face mask, then sterilizing her hands and gathering instruments, meeting facilitators use words and phrases to signal to others what their rights will be as they fulfill their role in the group. Patients and other hospital staff would automatically concede to the surgeon, granting her license to do certain things with or to them, as she fulfills her duties. The same is true in the CAC meetings where Carroll, Berry, and Adams’ ways of communicating signal and enact a given social language. Meeting facilitation is a distinctive social language because it allows Carroll, Berry, and Adams to both act like they are part of the group, social equals to the GES residents, and to assert power over all meeting participants. Facilitators are imbued with the power to determine what will never be able to be discussed in these meetings.

The impact is that institutional leaders get to shape and steer the conversation, via the meeting facilitators. They – as opposed to GES neighbors – take up more space and have more power during the process of establishing the criteria by which the property
development in GES will take place. The MOU partner institutions have more time in meetings and more authority to engage in “the stabilization of meanings” (Massey, 1994, p. 5) by saying what North Denver currently is and what it will become. Since this urban planning process is a verbal, social, racial, economic, and political process, others who are involved will make their own attempts to fix the meaning of the contested space. But the MOU partners including CSU, the mayor’s office, two museums, and the National Western Center ultimately manage to more effectively use the CAC meetings to shape the way North Denver neighborhoods are perceived, re-defined, and ultimately, redeveloped into a new global campus for CSU.

“The core of our commitment is to our neighborhood.” The month of April 2015 saw a lot of activity in and in between CAC meetings. Vernon L. Hill wrote a letter (please see Figure 26 in the Appendix) to the National Western, the City of Denver, the Planning Board, and the City Council on April 16. The letter was co-signed by Mickey Zeppelin, Katie McKenna, Dave Oletski, and Steven Moss, all CAC members and/or property owners in GES. The letter conveys “a lack of confidence in the record keeping of the NWCAC” and its goal is to make sure the undersigned are heard “in our own words.” The letter is sent to all CAC members via email as well as entered into the public archive of meeting minutes at https://www.nwc-cac.com/documents.html. The signers request “an agreement in writing … that provides reassurances we need as neighborhoods with several billion dollar projects on the horizon.” The co-authors write,

In the history of Globeville Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods, a lot of promises have been made and not kept. We would like to see commitments to the neighborhood outlined and written down so that
future generations of leaders in the neighborhood will know what the intentional benefits are to them, and that the neighborhood residents and business owners will continue to have a significant place at the table. The letter uses resistant discourse, placing under scrutiny the relationship between the institutions and the community. “Promises … made and not kept” speaks to the history of economic neglect and infrastructural disempowerment faced by residents of North Denver. These words echo John Zapien, who spoke in both April 2014 and December 2014 of the “poverty pimps that want to take advantage of people in this neighborhood” (Meeting Transcripts, December 18, 2014, p. 1).

No longer content to trust the process or wait for meeting facilitators to carve out enough meeting time for a frank discussion on how power moves in and through the CAC, the letter is a discursive artifact that interrupts the status quo. It demands a “process improvement” whereby neighbors become the co-authors of the change process, with institutional actors. “The core of our commitment is to our neighborhood and we need time to more directly involved [sic] in determining our own agenda, and developing what we know will ensure a cohesive partnership.” GES neighbors have been systematically quieted. The April 2014 letter tries to stop institutional leaders from dampening, subduing, softening, and concealing the appeals of GES families and neighbors.

The timing of the letter is significant. When it was distributed, the Master Plan had just been released to the public, ratcheting up media attention and interest in the CSU expansion. Additional people began attending monthly CAC meetings – some with political ambitions to run for City Council, some neighbors who were compelled to bring their perspectives and opinions to the public forum, and perhaps some who wanted to
take advantage of people in GES and bring their own self-interests into the meeting process. City Council had just held a public hearing to adopt the Master Plan for the new CSU campus. At the end of April 2015, about two weeks after Hill’s letter, the Colorado State Legislature would hold the second reading of House Bill 15-1344 that would grant $250 million to fund CSU’s portion of the new campus. “The region will be watching how this site develops,” says Jose Consejo, Associate City Planner (Planning Meeting Transcripts, March 9, 2015). And after gaining the support of the legislature, the CAC will be under pressure to move rapidly through a re-zoning process. Above, I reviewed the antipathy that was caused through the Master Planning process. Some of the same social power dynamics prevent Vernon Hill from being willing to consent to re-zoning on such a rapid timeline.

When the co-authors of the letter write, “we need time to [be] more directly involved in determining our own agenda,” they are referring to being rushed by NWC staff into a set of decisions that had already been reached by institutional members of the CAC who better understood how local zoning laws would apply to this particular development. The institutions’ discursive practices and the desires from which they emanate are in tension with the residents’ discursive practices and their correlating desires. That is most clearly illustrated in the Hill letter. Importantly, his letter concludes with a request to outline a Community Benefits Agreement, in lieu of the Globeville neighborhood plan and the Elyria-Swansea neighborhood plan, which were never integrated into the CAC process to Mister Hill’s liking.

**Silicon Valley of Agriculture.** Despite tension at the neighborhood level, CSU is garnering support and gathering resources to fund higher education at the state level.
Jocelyn Hittle makes “a big announcement” that is met with a round of applause on April 30, 2015. With 32 co-sponsors from urban, rural, and suburban areas, this was the day of the final vote on House Bill 1344. Having passed with both Democratic and Republican support, it will go to the Governor for his signature, Hittle shares, eliciting a room full of cheers.

Together with Maria Garcia Berry, Hittle explained to CAC members that the passage of this bill offers CSU what amounts to a $250 million line of credit from the state, in order to build the facilities that will be needed. “The funding mechanism will be a Certificate of Participation,” Kelly Leid of the NWC explains. This is a funding mechanism the state can use to fund assets. The idea came from the CU Denver medical facility at Anschutz, which used the same philosophy, added Leid. The NWC and CSU will have to start issuing reports to the state annually. The new buildings will be state-owned facilities. “All the spaces are collaborative but the facilities we will build will be the CSU facilities,” says Hittle. Leid adds, regarding the dollar amount, “This was what we asked for and we got it. They never balked at the number. Everything we asked for never got removed from the bill” (CAC Meeting Minutes, April 30, 2015).

Both Leid and Hittle describe what the State Legislature liked about the proposed NWC expansion in partnership with CSU. Passage of the bill was “not a shoe-in,” Leid says. “We had to show we are worthy of the investment,” says Hittle. Things “got dicey during the second reading for a moment,” she says, but Hittle always had “confidence [that] we landed on a vision that resonated with a lot of people. People really saw value in what we developed in the Master Planning process. I applaud the group for all that we have been through to develop that together” (Audio Recording, CAC Meeting, April 30, 2015).
Berry underscores Hittle’s words in her own way, and she recaps the proposal put forward in the Master Plan when she says: “Creating the Silicon Valley of agriculture in the heart of an urban area – what vision!”

CSU is engaged in building a new learning facility that provokes enthusiasm from Fort Collins to the State Capitol to 4655 Humboldt Street, where the CAC meets on the last Thursday of every month. As the Associate City Planner stated, “The region will be watching how this site develops.” Being embedded in the community is one aspect that makes the new campus innovative, attracting attention and broad support. But CSU’s ongoing actions will need to reflect their rhetorical stance on serving the public good.

Public is “listening to communities and creating new and more localized knowledge through those relationships.” It involves “meeting the world on its terms, not ours” (Fretz, Cutforth, Nicotera, and Thompson, 2009, p. 99). When institutional leaders encounter a mix of competing worldviews in heterogeneous, multicultural spaces, “educational leaders and policy makers must take time to listen to others in the room” (Pasque, 2010, p. xii). Dissonance is to be held in high esteem. Deliberation, dialogue across difference, and deepening understanding through slow discussion, storytelling, and explanation could be occurring in CAC meetings as institutional leaders and neighbors share social power.

**Performing Inclusion.** I notice that both on April 2015 and May 2018, two meeting transcripts that I analyze with care in this chapter, in the same meeting when CSU representatives make “a big announcement” (April 30, 2015, Recorded CAC Meeting), a leader from another MOU institution also delivers information or a plan of action that is likely to provoke a strong, negative reaction by GES neighbors. The MOU
partner institutions are likely to elicit neighbor resistance, or, they are discussing ways of managing neighbor resistance that already has been expressed to the committee. In the Appendix, there is a lengthy excerpt from a recorded CAC meeting that offers a specific example of what I mean. I have transcribed the excerpt in full because the meeting summary by CRL Associates for this particular meeting lacked the detail that I wanted to explore here. I include the full transcription, which I typed after listening to the audio, as Figure 25.

In the passage, Leid makes promises as a result of Vernon Hill’s call for more time and ability for neighbors to determine “our own agenda.” Leid lays out a plan for addressing the problematic power dynamic to which Hill has drawn people’s attention. Leid, together with the Mayor, has reached some decisions about a new structure that will aid the NWCAC in moving forward more rapidly, lay the groundwork for a later governance structure that will have authority over the expanded CSU/NWC campus, and also guarantee that the Globeville neighborhood plan and the Elyria-Swansea neighborhood plan will be more thoughtfully integrated into the urban development process. This is intended to result in “GES communities [being] actively … integrated into … investments that are being made to improve this part of the city – both physical, social and economic,” according to Kelly Leid, Executive Director of the City of Denver's Office of the National Western Center (CAC Meeting Minutes, April 30, 2015, Retrieved from http://youtu.be/7AqiAVAh1Rg and transcribed by the author).

Allow me to present in detail some of the words that are exchanged on April 30, 2015. Meeting facilitator Maria Garcia Berry said: “I also know from correspondence and from emails and from all of that that there’s some of you who have some concerns about
the role we play.” In this instance, “we” means the facilitators from CRL Associates. Berry continues: “And so uh, as I told Vern, I’m a big girl, we can talk about all these issues and put them on the table and try to resolve them.” Berry then introduced Kelly Leid, presumably to guide the group in seeking that resolution. In order to do so, Leid begins by addressing Vernon Hill’s letter and proposing the solutions that Leid and Mayor Michael Hancock have devised together. Leid says,

I’ve been doing big project work for almost 20 years now, and um … of all stripes and shapes, and there’s no blueprint to what we’re doing…. We are one of the largest urban redevelopment efforts in the entire country with six massive projects converging on a part of the city that needs investment. … But this is bigger than just the physical improvements, the bricks and mortar, this is about the soft infrastructure, reconnecting, uh, three historic neighborhoods to the rest of the city and there is a whole ‘nother effort that has to marry the physical improvements, um, of this region of the city. The other piece of this is, you know, a long history of of a lack of fulfillment, of promises made and promises not delivered by a variety of of folks and so um you know, we have to continue to build um structures and organizational systems that allow that trust to happen in um in a meaningful and real way. By agreements and MOUs and letters of intent …

[Audible side talk begins between CAC members.]
… that holds people accountable, right? To deliver. What we’re recommending, the City is recommending, is that we stand up, for lack of a better term, implementation committees, for the two neighborhood plans.

[At this point, side conversations and throat clearing by other meeting attendees occurs while Leid continues to talk. Audible sighs are detected by the recording device. This continues for the next couple minutes.]

Leid goes on to recommend, at the behest of the Mayor, the creation of two new neighborhood plan implementation committees – one that will be made up of Globeville residents and business owners, and another for Elyria-Swansea residents and business owners, where neighbors “can have and can help lead an active voice of implementing your neighborhood plans.” Leid said these would be the new committees where “we work through the issues of implementing your plan,” separate and apart from the CAC.

Leid’s idea is that this will enable the CAC to more rapidly and efficiently focus on campus creation. Leid says, “I mean, we have an enormous amount of work to do, and so this body needs to really focus, we have a lot of work to do between now and the election in November, we have a whole series of things that we need to get your input on. But the core emphasis of this group should be about advising us on the National Western Center plan, so getting kinda back to the core mission of this group.”

With these speech acts, Kelly Leid simultaneously affirms Vernon Hill and shows that the concerns in his letter have been heard, acknowledging that “soft infrastructure” has not yet been sufficiently built to connect neighbors’ requests directly with the promises and plans of multiple institutions; and, at the same time, Leid also moves neighborhood concerns out of the CAC meetings. When separate neighborhood
implementation committees are proposed by the Mayor and Kelly Leid, the audible sighs and throat clearing from the audience constitute resistance. But Leid forges ahead.

He goes on to explain that two new sub-committees are being created: the Executive Oversight Committee, “an interim structure that we’re establishing to kindof govern the National Western” and an “Event/Program Advisory subcommittee and that is all about, how do you create a year-round active place?” What is happening here is, GES neighbors are losing the CAC meetings as the monthly opportunity to come and lend their perspectives to the planning process. The sighs, the side chatter, and the throat clearing from the audience -- audible in the recording posted on You Tube and linked from the public archive but not represented by the CRL Associates note taker in her typed meeting summary -- represent the frustration of neighbors who, even after Vernon Hill’s letter, are being managed by an institutional representative rather than authentically included in a democratic decision-making process. Leid suggests to the CAC that the sub-committees will be a positive development in the planning process when he says, “But it allows you to self-select, right?, on what your interests are.” He reiterates two times that CAC members will have more choice over how their interests will be better aligned with the topic of the meetings they will be attending. But what is done ends up being more important than what Leid says will be done.

Two GES neighbors, AE and Vernon Hill, are acknowledged by the facilitator and they speak after Leid. AE tries to establish that composition of the new neighborhood implementation committees will be representative of who lives in each neighborhood when she says, “I wish that each of the MOU partners could have a community member
associated with them as part of this Executive Committee.” But Leid replies, “Can you table that for a minute? Because that’s not how it’s structured.” He goes on to explain that the Executive Oversight Committee will have only one member who is a GES neighbor, and the event or program advisory subcommittee will have only one (Recorded CAC Meeting, April 30, 2015).

What actually ends up happening in subsequent CAC meetings is the opposite of increased neighbor ability to determine their own agenda. In ensuing committee meetings, Vernon Hill and his fellow residents do not gain power over the physical, social, and economic investments being made in North Denver, like Hill’s letter requested and Leid acknowledged. In fact, the Executive Oversight Committee and the other subcommittee end up diminishing neighbor power in the CAC, not enhancing it. From 23 voices, the neighbor representation on these two subcommittees that go on to be powerful and persuasive over the CAC, is reduced to only two voices. As I show using bold lettering in Figure 31 in the Appendix, from October 2013 until this meeting, 23 GES neighbors have been active CAC members. As the new CSU campus takes shape, the subcommittees created by Leid and Mayor Hancock reduce the number of neighbors who are permitted to voice their perspectives, to only two.

Leid’s words are a performance. I use the word with intention: what Leid says compared to what his words achieve is an injustice, given the mandate of the CAC. The very purpose of Hill’s letter was to point out the inadequacy of how inclusion has been made manifest on the CAC. Sara Ahmed helps us conceive of words as performances when she reflects upon the “politics of admission,” where institutions as well as individuals representing institutions “admit” to forms of bad practice, and where such
“admissions” are valued as a form of good practice. Ahmed uses Austin’s (1975) term when she explains: “an utterance is performative when it does what it says: ‘the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action’ (Austin, 1975, p. 6).” Ahmed uses her book, On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life (2012) to discuss examples of university leaders who say they value diversity and hope that just by saying so, the work of diversity will be accomplished. In her talk, “The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism,” presented at the University of Kent in England, Ahmed argues that admitting to one’s own racism is not an anti-racist action, nor do these kinds of utterances “commit a state, institution or person to a form of action that we could describe as anti-racist.” Utterances alone are insufficient. Institutional actors must be held accountable to act, consistent with their utterances. Ahmed suggests that “texts” are not ‘finished’ as forms of action, as what they ‘do’ depends on how they are ‘taken up’ …. To track what texts do, we need to follow them around” (Ahmed, 2004, p.1). Upon following around Leid’s words in the CAC meetings, I hear him and other institutional partners saying they intend to include neighbors as they make plans for the new CSU campus, but the actions that are taken by institutional leaders are inadequate. Their actions resist rather than obliging Vernon Hill’s demands. The actions of CSU, the NWC, the Mayor, and other institutions are not sufficiently inclusive of GES neighbor demands.

Vernon Hill’s letter is an attempt to work on the CAC, to push the committee past a performance of inclusion and collaboration, into actual deliberation and deep dialogue across difference. Hill’s letter indicates that he wants slow discussion and shared power between CSU, the NWC, and the families and neighbors living in GES. Hill’s discourse of resistance and refusal is an attempt to interrupt the institutional leaders from running
roughshod over low-income communities of color, as city officials and representatives of the central business district have been doing since Auraria was built in spite of organizing by Latinx community leaders, according to Page and Ross (2016).

But CSU makes strangers of the people who live in the three contested neighborhoods: they are made into strangers in their own homes by the racialized administrative process in the CAC. Sara Ahmed acknowledges that it was Frantz Fanon (1952, 1986) who “taught us to watch out for what lurks … the stranger … the one who is always lurking in the shadows … at the edge of social experience” (Ahmed, 2012, p. 3). CSU, the NWC, and CRL estrange neighbors from the process of building the new campus. They make Hill and his racially minoritized neighbors seem incapable of doing urban planning, when placed side by side with CSU leaders, consultants, and construction firms. The failure to actually respond to Hill’s demands serves to naturalize the relegation of different races to different places (Lipsitz, 2011): while PWIs and the city’s institutional leaders are entitled to accumulate property and trusted to redevelop it, neighbors of color cannot seem to garner the same clout as they participate in this administrative process.

On May 28, 2015, in the next CAC meeting, Leid announces that the EOC would meet bi-monthly from 1:30-3 pm in the Denver City Attorney’s Office and would be attended by staff from CSU, the NWC, the City and one member of the NWCCAC. The total number of members would be 9-11. He also explained the formation of the subcommittees; they would also be attended by staff from CSU, the NWC, the City and one member of the NWCCAC, at a total size of 9-11 members per subcommittee. In the same meeting, Leid “explained the neighborhood implementation committees were being
scrapped because of feedback that it disproportionately empowered a select few individuals to make decisions for the neighborhoods” (CAC Meeting Transcript, May 28, 2015, p. 3). He went on to suggest that already existing neighborhood advocacy groups could fulfill the same purpose. He named the Globeville Civic Association and the Elyria Swansea Globeville Business Association as well as various non-profits working in the area.

This moment in the CAC meeting exposes how unevenly power is distributed, and illustrates how administrative practices that are presented as unremarkable are actually having the effect of shrinking the voice of neighbors and families on the very committee – the only committee – that was created by the Mayor to gather neighbor input on the redevelopment of GES. Hill’s letter did not manage to force Leid and other institutional leaders to grant more power and voice to neighbors. On the contrary, the formation of the EOC created a new structure where the decisions about what would actually transpire in the new facilities once they were built, and the financing mechanisms that would be chosen so that they could be built, were taken out of the hands of neighbors and GES families.

And with that, the discursive act of refusal led by Hill in the form of his letter “got buried …. The document thus acquires no force” (Ahmed, 2012, p. 6). Institutional leaders will go on telling the story of GES neighbor inclusion in the CAC. But in fact, this moment in the CAC meetings marks the occasion when the CAC ceases to be the place where neighbors can impact CSU’s new campus as it takes shape. The EOC and the other new subcommittee will eventually give way to an NWC Authority that will govern
the new campus and its relationship with the city, becoming the next entity where power will lie.

It is worth noting, in the same transcript, the moment before Leid reviewed how the EOC would proceed, this occurred:

Maria noted plans were in the works to invite new City Council members over to the NWC campus for a tour. It was noted that CRL would not be the one to lead the tour – it should be neighborhood community representatives showcasing “ownership” of the project. (quotation marks appear in the public record; CAC Meeting Transcript, May 28, 2015, p. 1)

On the CAC, having neighbors present in the meeting room on the last Thursday of every month becomes a substitute for authentically including them. Their presence is used by institutional leaders to conceal abuses of power from those external to the committee process. Even after Vernon Hill names this dynamic and demands to become a co-author of the change process with institutional actors, neighbor inclusion is a performative (Ahmed, 2012).

Briefly returning to my point about how frequently CSU announces good news in the same meeting where another institutional leader announces news that is likely to trouble the neighbors: this pattern can also be observed on May 31, 2018. After Jocelyn Hittle’s Power Point presentation, described at the start of Chapter Five, Bruce Fifer and Brendan Lynch of Saunders Construction present a demolition plan. (Please see Figures 11 - 17). Despite the mirage of neighbor inclusion that NWC, CRL, and CSU leaders try to bring to life through words spoken in meetings, social relationships between institutional representatives and residents of GES neighborhoods are unequal. At the end
of the day, it will be homes, businesses, and social spaces for assembly that will be leveled in order to make room for the new CSU campus.

**Conclusion of Findings Chapter**

By moving into North Denver, CSU preserves their white privilege and erects barriers to asset accumulation for communities of color (Lipsitz, 2006). As time moves on, it is likely to become harder for GES neighbors to afford the cost of living. The GES area is one of a few places in Denver where housing is affordable enough for low-income families to enjoy the financial benefits of home ownership (Vilsack, 2017). Already, housing costs have risen dramatically in GES. Svaldi writes in *The Denver Post* that North Denver is “experiencing some of the strongest developer interest and home price gains along the Front Range. … In the 80216 zip code, an index of home values is up 30.1 percent the past year and 250 percent the past five years, handily beating U.S. and Denver averages” (Svaldi, 2017). Candi CdeBaca, a CAC member, candidate for City Council in 2019, and long-time resident in the area describes the real estate industry’s piqued interests in GES as “a hot mess” (Svaldi, 2017). Rapid GES home price gains provoke a fearful response from those families who wish to remain in their neighborhoods.

Yadira Sanchez, a single mom with three kids, has lived in the GES area for more than 15 years, reports Michael E. Sakas from Colorado Public Radio (2019). The Sanchez family owns a restaurant and bakery, but they fear business will suffer during I-70’s expansion and the years of construction due to the CSU/NWC growth. The GES Coalition member said it is depressing. Sakas reports,
“This is our happy place, which is not very happy anymore,” Sanchez says. She realizes GES will soon look very different, and that there’s no stopping that. What Sanchez and the GES Coalition are fighting for, she says, is what that future will look like. Sanchez asks, “Why does better mean move? Why does better mean it’s not for you? Why is it not for the people in this community already? Like, why? Why can’t it be?” (Sakas, 2019)

Sanchez and CdeBaca both fear the amenities that CSU will bring to GES will also cause the costs of housing to rise and attract wealthier, whiter people to live in the area. Their expressions of anxiety typify expressions from GES residents who fear being pushed out of their place. They worry that amenities and assets described by Jocelyn Hittle will never actually benefit them, because they will be displaced.

Hittle’s May 2018 presentation evokes a discourse about postsecondary education’s public value in a general sense. She uses a discourse of belief in a stable and positive future, but where does CSU get this confidence and does it extend to folks like Sanchez, CdeBaca, and their families? While Sanchez is depressed and unhappy because she fears the current residents of GES will have to move, Hittle’s presentation suggests faith in a secure future. Hittle seems unwilling to reckon with something that Sanchez seems to know.

CSU textures texts to communicate in a way that paints higher education as a savior in a general sense, but all the while in this very specific, localized instantiation, CSU is engaged in a process of accumulation even as they use discursive strategies to make what they are doing sound like it will benefit everyone equally. CSU is in an institutional partnership to create new frontiers for economic development that will ultimately benefit their own institution, other institutions, the state, and the municipality.
But in the long run, there is no guarantee that families and neighbors like Sanchez and CdeBaca will benefit equally.

In my analysis of the CAC meeting transcripts, I have sought to understand the racial and socioeconomic context in which language was constructed. I have sought to learn how social relationships have been organized amongst CSU leaders, city staff, the NWC, and GES neighbors. The institutions have the most unfettered access to resources and channels for urban planning. This is illustrated by Meeting 1 and the tour of the NWC when MOU partner institutions speak with confidence about a future in which an expanded physical campus will generate year-round economic activity. Hittle from CSU uses a discourse of future-orientation and optimism as she describes plans to use money raised from the State Legislature to build facilities where sustainability and water in the U.S. West will be researched by CSU students and faculty, as well as scientists who will come from all over the world. Words like “community,” “communication,” “collaboratory,” and “convening” all evoke a bright shared future. Hittle suggests that the GES community will benefit from what transpires inside the new buildings. Meanwhile, the language in Hill’s letter interrupts the status quo in CAC meetings and the counter-tour reveals that GES neighbors have counter-power as they challenge and resist the dominant discourse.
Chapter 6, Discussion

Introduction

People of different races in the United States are relegated to different physical locations. “It takes places for racism to take place” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 5). The factors that cause this are historical, structural, administrative, institutional, and legislative. In many U.S. cities, low-income communities of color spend generations ingesting the burdens of industrial activity in the city. The economy may grow around them while in their own households, they keep struggling. They absorb the impacts of transportation changes including highway construction and expansion, without benefiting from associated gains. Social, economic, and political systems and administrative processes withhold profits from Black and brown communities, limiting their life chances. An example of how racism takes place is federally funded highway construction which frequently destroys neighborhoods of color by blazing concrete trails through them: the Interstate Highway Act of 1956 dedicated federal government funds to stimulate deconcentration, moving those who could afford their own automobiles out of the city to predominantly white suburbs (Massey and Denton, 1993; Sugrue, 1996; Thomas, 1997). The use of public funds to subsidize the affluent in moving to more affluent places, while physically interrupting low-income, inner-city areas by building highways through them is an
example of how racism takes place. People are exposed to a socially-shared system of exclusion and inclusion according to the racial demography of the places where they live, work, and play. Lipsitz calls this a “public pedagogy” about who belongs where (2011). The lived experience of race has a spatial dimension. The lived experience of space has a racial dimension.

To better understand the Community Advisory Committee meetings, theories about the racialization of space and the spatialization of race (Lipsitz, 2006, 2007, & 2011) can be applied to this instance of a predominantly white higher education institution expanding into neighborhoods of color. Most town/gown studies by higher education researchers are colorblind; they fail to acknowledge the role that race plays in relationships between the university and the community.

But not talking about race does not make racism in institutions cease to exist. On the contrary -- not talking about it protects whiteness, perpetuates white supremacy, and enshrines white property rights (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Patel, 2015; Harris, 1995). In this study, I have been exploring space’s relationship with race, as well as the class identities of the “town” that is being changed while CSU expands. In this chapter, I put theories by George Lipsitz, as well as Melissa Hargrove, Sharon Stein, Leigh Patel, and Margaret P. O’Mara to work as I discuss how GES neighborhoods have been affected by the university’s move into this working-class area that has been home to people of color for the past 50 years.

Close analysis of the CAC meetings where the expansion of the NWC is being planned reveals that normative institutions are running roughshod over low-income communities of color. Consistent with a history of racialized processes of displacement
and disempowerment that remake the face of a city or region within a city, the discursive
events that transpire during the CAC meetings can be read through a theoretical lens, and
better understood by bringing to bear the historical information I have shared in Chapter
Four on situating GES, examining setting and historicity. Doing so has revealed the CSU
expansion to be an instance of a Predominantly White Institution for higher learning
lending itself to downtown business interests and city leaders. Together, these
institutional actors are removing people of color from land so that it can be used to better
fulfill the economic ambitions that the allied institutions share.

In this brief chapter, I discuss how discursive instances accumulate into practices
by CSU and their institutional collaborators. After exploring the discursive legitimation
of administrative moves that place a PWI in the midst of the removal of people of color
from their place, I turn to a discussion of the missed opportunities to deeply collaborate
with families and neighbors, democratize the decision-making process, and solve
entrenched public problems.

While CSU leadership view the NWC expansion as a growth opportunity and a
sustainability strategy for their institution, I wish to hold the university accountable for
opportunities it is – as of yet – failing to seize. CSU is missing its chance to do deep
collaborative work to tackle public problems like entrenched racism and economic
inopportunity. While it is doing surface-level community engagement and outreach, the
university is not partnering deeply with aggrieved communities to transform social and
economic injustice.

The Roles Universities Play in Urban Economies. Examining the CSU
expansion in North Denver sheds light on the roles that universities play in urban
economies. CSU is shoring up its own financial standing and aiding other organizations – the National Western Center, two museums, and the City and County – in shoring up theirs, while economically fortifying Denver. Bringing CSU to the area is part of a strategy to recreate GES as a more lucrative region of Colorado with a revived economy (CAC Meeting Minutes, October 1, 2013; National Western Center Master Plan, 2015; Figure 18, NextGen Agribusiness). This represents a pattern that has borne itself out -- especially since the urban redevelopment of U.S. cities that occurred frequently from 1949 through the 1960s. This university-community partnership has been established unevenly, with the university benefiting more than families and neighborhoods thus far.

CSU is using prevailing land use practices to coordinate the racial exclusion of people of color as a mechanism for inflating the value of property that is moving under the control of a PWI (Lipsitz, 2011). CSU is protected in doing so – they are aided and funded, in fact, by legally constituted authorities. Moving into North Denver serves to preserve and extend CSU’s white privilege because it provides them with an innovative approach to solving the financial restraints of an educational institution (Lipsitz, 2011; Source, 2017). We know from *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development*, the Master Plan by the CCHE, that the state of Colorado hopes to prepare its citizenry for changing workforce demands, while maintaining a vibrant economy. The CSU expansion will certainly help more people obtain credentials in STEM fields (CCHE, 2017). Moving CSU to Denver helps secure the university as well as meeting state-wide higher education goals.

Hittle’s language suggests the facilities that will be built will benefit the public, which would be appropriate since CSU is using funding from the state legislature. But
why, then, does she also language the neighbors as the recipients of CSU’s benevolent acts of service? “Instead of recognizing themselves accurately as recipients of collective public largesse” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 27), CSU’s discourse suggests to GES neighbors, *we are sharing what we have earned from the state with you.* Lipsitz helps us understand that a white spatial imaginary forms the foundational logic behind the social and spatial policies governing cities today (2011). The white spatial imaginary deploys state funding, channeling resources to a PWI that will be erected upon a place that has been the domain of people of color. There will be social costs to us all, resulting when the affordable housing in GES becomes unaffordable. Where will those who currently reside in GES go, if they are unable to remain in their homes? The white spatial imaginary “seeks to hide social problems rather than solve them, … rather than encouraging democratic deliberation about the social problems and contradictory social relations that affect us all” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 28).

CSU leaders miss an opportunity to focus their resources on remediying complex social problems regarding race, class, and space, passing those challenges on to populations with fewer resources. Rather than being taken up inside the CAC meetings, dealing with the ramifications of gentrification is left to groups like Project VOYCE and the GES Coalition Organizing for Health and Housing Justice. (These organizations will be discussed in the final chapter). Meanwhile, CSU stands to benefit from the coordinated manipulation of real estate markets, since they are well-connected with allies in local and state government (Page and Ross, 2016; O’Mara, 2012). There is a political economy of racism. In the social field of whiteness (Hargrove, 2009), institutions distribute and redistribute capital. It is the power struggle over the distribution, and the
outcomes of those struggles, that influence subsequent strategies for domination and control of capital.

Those in institutional leadership roles know the laws of finance and real estate, the stakes associated with putting so much money on the line to cut expensive property deals, and the risks inherent in partnering with the city, county, and state to do so. Participating in these activities can only be done by those who have “a collection of techniques, references, and a set of beliefs,” writes Hargrove. Within the social field of whiteness there exists an unspoken collective agreement of allegiance to the power dynamic that facilitates the distribution of capital and property. The economic, political, social, and cultural stakes are high for those who ignore the rules (Hargrove, 2009; Hurtado, Stewart, Fine et al, 1997; Lipsitz, 2011). Therefore, in the CAC meetings, there must be an agreed-upon "collection of techniques" that maintain the field of dominance. Said another way, the institutional leaders of CSU and the NWC, together with the CRL meeting facilitators, speak a common language. They support each other in moving capital and property into institutional control. Although GES neighbors are present in the room where CAC meetings happen, without being fluent in the languages of real estate, DURA financing, and cutting multi-million-dollar property deals, they have less power to control how property will change hands.

White knowledge and logic are centered in the CAC meetings. The institutional leaders keep surrounding themselves with more white knowledge and logic. White elites rely on consultants and contractors, master planning firms, professional facilitators, and even hired artists. Surrounding themselves with experts, with those who know the techniques to distribute capital, fosters a myth in the white mind that it knows things.
What white elite minds know is perpetuated as truth (Hargrove, 2009; Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva, 2008; Lipsitz, 2011). White settler logic about the fitness of white people to do urban planning better than people of color (Patel, 2016) is on display. In CAC meeting spaces, whiteness is deployed as a resource.

Economic neglect and infrastructural disempowerment, followed by displacement of low-income residents of color, is business as usual in racially minoritized neighborhoods (Fullilove, 2004; Haymes, 1995). White institutionalized practices destroy the homeplaces of people of color in the city through a collection of ideological and social techniques that have been perfected by white developers and their allies (Lipsitz, 2009). This constitutes the enactment of the white spatial imaginary. These instantiations of white racism are not being recognized as violence (Hargrove, 2009), but rather, they are passing as mundane, harmless administrative process.

The CAC represents a missed opportunity. CSU leaders could have taken advantage of six years of committee meetings to do deep collaborative work with neighbors and community-based groups that advocate for GES. More than learning to coexist in the space in mutually beneficial ways, they could have also learned how to work together to terminate economic inequality and dismantle oppression. According to Fretz, Cutforth, Nicotera, and Thompson,

*Good … when placed alongside public, creates an interesting tension: … if public refers to a heterogeneous mix of competing worldviews, and good refers to what is right, desirable, and harmonious, then public good becomes a search for harmony and understanding within contested and dissonant cultural spaces (2009, p. 92).*

While Jocelyn Hittle’s discourse signals to neighbors on the CAC that CSU will restore and regenerate their neighborhoods, more than new buildings that gleam and shimmer,
what GES residents need are capable and committed partners in dismantling entrenched racial and economic structures of oppression.

**Re-Imagining Higher Education’s Public Purpose.** A society attuned to social justice principles and values could serve the highest needs of humanity (Ulmer, 2017). A university must take responsibility for accommodating generational change and the articulation of new social responsibilities (Austin and Barnes, 2005; Rorty, 1996). The academy could lead on leveling anti-racist critiques of capitalism. The love of learning, and related, our shared process of becoming human will not be fostered by CSU as the Silicon Valley of sustainability studies if that means being perched atop the places that used to belong to others.

CSU would do better to develop a social change orientation, work to redistribute power, and develop authentic relationships (Mitchell, 2012) in GES. Universities can encourage individuals to examine how power has operated upon them and upon others who resemble them based on their particular socioeconomic status, race, or cultural identity. Institutions like CSU ought to encourage learners and educators to reflect upon the world that has been and is, and to act to create the world anew. We have the ability to envision a different and better community and country, if only our post-secondary institutions could help fulfill their public purpose and participate with the community in a transformative racial and social justice process.

The university does not have to sacrifice North Denver’s low-income neighborhoods of color in order to make a space where researchers can learn how to help people. Higher education can disrupt the notion that communities of color are there for the taking. CSU and other higher education institutions must participate in deep
democratic processes; generate, preserve, and share knowledge in service to the local community; and help the public think through common concerns and solve persistent problems (Austin and Barnes, 2005). They could better do this if the process by which they expanded into Denver was accountable to neighbors. Disrupting the instincts of institutions that operate within the white spatial imaginary, suggesting that they resist racist capitalist and neo-colonial expansion, and demanding deeper collaboration with the surrounding community would be critical public service (Mitchell, 2018). Institutions of higher education have the opportunity to continue to be incredibly successful at fulfilling their public purposes while they also make commitments to becoming anti-racist critics of urban development.
Chapter 7, Conclusion

**Significant Outcomes as a Result of the Inquiry**

Rather than slavery, vigilante violence, and Jim Crow racism, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2013) says a new ideology has emerged. It keeps in place the racial hierarchy but allows it to blend into the background instead of existing on the surface. Bonilla-Silva calls this color-blind racism. Racism has shape-shifted. It has not gone away.

In this study of a process of the racialization of higher education’s relationships with cities, I use the Community Advisory Committee’s meeting transcripts to show that racism is difficult to see, hear, and follow around, but it is still alive and well. In the most ordinary administrative spaces, in meeting rooms and on committees, “the ideologies of the powerful are central in the production and reinforcement of the status quo” (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, p. 74). The processes used to grant valuable urban property to a PWI could easily go unnoticed. There was no *one* meeting of the CAC that deserved to make headlines in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. No single quote from Jocelyn Hittle or President Tony Frank was worthy of being telegraphed to every other U.S. higher education leader for how blatantly it discriminated or exploited. But white privilege materializes in these meetings. It does so quietly enough to be overlooked. After digging into CAC meetings that took place unremarkably, tediously, drawing very little external
scrutiny, after exposing how white privilege materialized in the CAC, I have used Critical Discourse Analysis to reveal that institutions are overpowering low-income neighborhoods of color in North Denver. The discursive events that transpire during CAC meetings can be read through a theoretical lens, and better understood by bringing to bear information that situates GES in a historical context. Doing so reveals the CSU expansion to be an instance of a Predominantly White Institution lending itself to business interests and municipal leaders. Together, these institutional actors are removing low-income people of color from land so that it can be used to better fulfill the economic ambitions that the allied institutions share. By using Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the CAC meeting minutes, I have shown how this exemplifies theories about the racialization of space and the spatialization of race. This regional study of racialization in an administrative decision-making process is worthwhile because university involvement in urban change is a phenomenon that reaches beyond Denver.

**Displacement Caused by University Expansion**

In Baltimore, Maryland, my family lived in three different neighborhoods. A university sat between two of them, Hampden and Remington, both working-class white neighborhoods. When I left for college in 1996, my aunts, uncles, cousins, and my grandmother paid between $330 - $470 per month per household to rent their homes. As the years passed, when I called home I would hear story after story.

“Jean had to move. Her asshole landlord raised the rent.”

“Why?” I asked my mom.

“They’re trying to push my sisters out because they can get twice as much from Hopkins students.”
The neighborhoods that raised my family stopped being affordable or welcoming to them in the early 2000s as Hampden morphed into a trendy and expensive area that catered to Johns Hopkins.

University expansion that causes displacement is certainly not unique to Baltimore, or Denver. Columbia University in New York used eminent domain to remove people from their property and bulldoze part of Harlem in order to build a $6.3 billion expansion (Moore, 2013). Cooper, Kotval-K, Kotval, and Mullin (2014) write about the area between Columbus Avenue and Tremont Street, at the edge of Roxbury, an area in Boston that was razed by Northeastern University, just as the rise of the knowledge economy enhanced the value of universities to the cities hosting them. In “The Downside of Durham’s Rebirth,” White (2016) describes Duke University’s role in remaking the Southern city. Although unsightly vacancies were removed, so was affordable housing for Latinx and low-income families who had been long-time residents. In Philadelphia, Temple University is in the midst of a growth spurt now. What comes with it is an increase in the size of the university police force; there is a positive correlation between the presence of college students and increased surveillance of Black and brown communities (Ferman, 2019).

Sometimes, the university’s expansion into the city is perceived as a rescue mission. Pittsburgh was reckoning with the collapse of the steel industry when Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pittsburgh became major players in the city’s rebirth as a high-tech city, through a partnership with government, business, and the philanthropic sector (Ferman, 1996). In Boston, through a partnership between university staff and neighbor representatives, a harmonious town/gown relationship was created through a
50/50 split of the land that had been cleared for redevelopment: half the new units were built for university students and the rest were owner-occupied affordable housing for Roxbury residents, helping all parties to thrive (Cooper et al, 2014). And as he and his institution participate in a new wave of reshaping Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University President Ron Daniels says,

> You can make the moral case of why, given the bounty of resources that we have, it’s incumbent on us to share with the city. But the other thing is to make clear that this is an enlightened form of self-interest. It is inconceivable that Hopkins would remain a pre-eminent institution in a city that continues to suffer decline (Mitter, 2018).

What some call gentrification, Daniels considers the transformation of an 88-acre zone in East Baltimore to be a gift to the city and its diverse families and neighbors. The campus expansion that is currently underway will create, along with new research facilities, a new public school for the surrounding neighborhood, a restored park, job training programs, and over 700 homes for mixed-income families, while attempting to breathe life back into an area of Baltimore that has suffered high crime rates and disinvestment (Mitter, 2018).

From the extant literature on town/gown relationships, we know colleges and universities can be assets to their communities, given proper planning with the community (Fox, 2014). If mechanisms are established to review and monitor social, economic, cultural, and physical changes in the community, the university and community can thrive together in a shared space (Fox, 2014). However, this will not be easy. If six years of CAC meetings attended by multiple stakeholders failed to produce effective mechanisms in Denver, higher education researchers must continue to explore how to monitor changes in ways that better honor the neighborhoods. Higher education
leaders and researchers ought to keep exploring and experimenting with creating deeply democratic, anti-racist meeting processes. Accepting that industry, government, and the university will join with each other as allies in a pro-growth coalition to rebuild a city or region, while shoring up their own institutions (O’Mara, 2012), further studies could extend whether and how they could do so without changing the ethnic and cultural character of urban neighborhoods.

**Implications for Further Research**

There is more research to be done into the complex topic of university expansion into cities. In future studies, research questions on the racialization of relationships between universities and cities could be answered using a different data set. The letter by Vernon Hill conveyed “a lack of confidence in the record keeping of the NWCAC.” (Please see Figure 26.) One of the limitations of this study has been, the CAC members are not always able to be heard in their own words. Rather, they are filtered through the note taker who is paid by CRL Associates. The impact of this was apparent when the neighbors were angry and the note taker wrote down only five words: “Discussion regarding the committee process” (Meeting Transcript, January 27, 2014, p. 1).

Had a researcher examined the same research question using a different data set, such as interviews with GES neighbors, they certainly might have arrived at different conclusions, or arrived at the same conclusions differently. In a next step, higher education researchers could conduct interviews with some of the neighbors from CAC meetings to learn more about the limits to their power that they faced. How did they see race operating in the CAC, or did they? How do they see race operating in the city as it
changes? My data and methodological approach did not allow for engaging CAC members directly, but a researcher could take that step in a future project.

Further research could consist of interviews with university personnel. Specifically, a future study could seek the insights of a focus group comprising diversity and inclusion professionals. It would be particularly fascinating to seek their thoughts on Sarah Ahmed’s work on utterances that commit an institution or university leader to a course of action that would be anti-racist. Beyond utterances, as universities expand into cities, what do campus diversity and inclusion staff believe ought to guide organizational growth and change processes? Researchers could pursue projects with universities in other cities that have not yet begun to expand their campuses but are planning to do so in the future.

Since Darren P. Smith warns that concentrations of students can undermine the sustainability of neighborhoods and reconstitute urban areas (Smith, 2009), a long-term research project in North Denver could return with surveys or other tools to see whether social exclusion, the marginalization of low-income families, the fragmentation of the community, deepening segregation, or a decrease in the availability of affordable housing end up being results from CSU’s presence (Smith, 2009). That same research study could also consider the advantages of the facilities, programs, and services that Hittle describes above, examining whether regeneration, increased spending power in the local economy, workforce readiness training, infrastructural improvements, access to the South Platte River, environmental education and remediation, art, and enhanced cultural vibrancy have truly come to GES as neighborhood improvements. Researchers could measure the
degree to which long-term residents have remained in the area, as well as quantify their quality of life, compared with pre-CSU levels.

**Critical Participatory Action Research.** While it has been appropriate for the publicly available CAC meeting minutes to be the data set for this research study, given my positionality as a white researcher who lives outside Globeville and Eyria-Swansea, in the future, another step that could be taken would be a Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) project with residents who belong to the GES Coalition Organizing for Health and Housing Justice.

CPAR is a form of community-based research that is accountable to those who have the most at stake. CPAR is about epistemic justice, counterhegemony, and decoloniality. It is for understanding stories from the underground and working for justice with/in community. CPAR is inquiry driven by the people on the ground, and it can be collaborative, interactive, and even improvisational. CPAR assumes those who know the most about a social phenomenon or community problem such as displacement are those who are living through it (Fine, 2018, 2008, 2007). Researchers like Leigh Patel, Eve Tuck, Monique Guishard, Brett Stoudt, Maria Elena Torre, Barbara A. Israel, Ben Kirshner, and Michelle Fine help to make a critical case for choosing CPAR in this context.

CPAR as an approach to research “helps researchers and the community integrate research with practice; enhance community involvement and control; and increase competence and sensitivity in working within diverse cultures” (Israel et al, 1998, p. 174). Through interviews collaboratively developed and data collaboratively collected, analyzed, and presented back to GES, this project could be taken beyond analysis to anti-
racist action. Both the GES Coalition and Project VOYCE have used community-based research already to develop surveys and gather data on displacement. Playing a role in their future work, should they have a role for a higher education researcher to play, would grow new knowledge about the racialization of relationships between universities and cities, for our field. CPAR projects attempt to change institutions by critically gazing at them, seeking knowledge about social problems and their root causes, as well as potential solutions and key players who can take solutionary steps (Boggs, 2011). CPAR is not a method but “a radical epistemological challenge to the traditions of social science” (Fine, 2008, p. 215). Critical Participatory Action Research projects seek to investigate and interrupt a social power dynamic where hegemony by privileged groups overpowers and subordinates other social groups (ibid).

My Own Next Steps. In my next project, I hope to partner with the Affordable Housing Research Initiative to gather information about the experiences of individuals living in and seeking affordable housing in the Denver Metro area. By joining with the Geography Department and INVST, an interdisciplinary academic program for undergraduates who focus on social justice at the University of Colorado Boulder, I plan to create a research collaboration that will use CPAR to help ask two questions that a Denver advocacy organization would like answered.

In a community partner-driven, action-oriented process led by Denver Homeless Out Loud, I would like to help examine this problem: public money is received for affordable housing, but there is not adequate, sufficient, or inclusive public oversight as to how that money is actually spent, leaving the community of homeless and housing-
insecure people feeling skeptical of municipal government. The specific questions that Denver Homeless Out Loud has asked us to investigate are:

1. When people are pushed out of low-income housing in Denver, where do they go? How many of them become homeless, and then need the support of Denver Homeless Out Loud?

2. When property developers build new dwellings, by law, there is a requirement that a percentage will be affordable housing. Yet, it is unclear to Denver Homeless Out Loud where those affordable units are actually built. To the naked eye, at street level, these units are not visible. Denver Homeless Out Loud has asked University of Colorado Boulder researchers from INVST and Geography to map it.

Denver Homeless Out Loud has a highly democratic governance structure and they are familiar with partnering with nearby universities to answer research questions and solve community problems. They hope for a collaborative study that will ultimately result in the strengthened capacity and power of community organizations to pressure elected officials to create public policy that offers opportunity to low-income and housing insecure people in the Denver region.

In future studies, higher education researchers could follow a line of flight regarding democratic processes at the municipal level: how does white privilege impact community advisory committees and their decision-making processes and outcomes? What would happen if those who serve on committees and advisory boards demand more power, using strategies like the counter-tour or Vernon Hill’s letter? What conditions on
committees and advisory boards, or what discursive strategies, could move more power into the hands of neighbors and families as opposed to normative institutions?

In each of these lines of flight that a researcher could possibly follow, the gaze is focused on white supremacy. More study of how to dismantle white supremacy in institutions and cities is urgently needed. As higher education leaders, we must keep focusing attention on whiteness in order to learn more about administrative tendencies that reify white supremacy and re-entrench white power and perspectives. We must continue to investigate how to point to whiteness, make it visible, challenge and contest it, and choose deeper democratic and public processes that are anti-racist.

**Critical Race Spatial Analysis.** Another implication for a methodological approach is, a future project could use Critical Race Spatial Analysis (CRSA). CRSA is a method that is emerging as a way to study educational inequities, integrating critical cartography with an interrogation of white supremacy. The unjust geographies surrounding schools result in racialized inequities, Morrison, Annamma, and Jackson say in their book on CRSA (2017). Scholars such as William F. Tate IV, Subini Ancy Annamma, Darrell D. Jackson, Deb Morrison, Federico R. Waitoller, Veronica N. Vélez, and Daniel Solórzano are establishing pathways for how mapping can be used to understand and address racism in education institutions. At the University of Missouri, Amalia Dache is also using mapping to reveal that cities and higher education institutions continue to be racially segregated. She studies how geography and post-colonial racialization impact the college-going choices of Black individuals and communities.

Spatial analysis can be used to highlight educational inequities and search for solutions and new discourses that defy the racial hierarchy embedded in “common-sense”
language about how cities grow, how neighborhoods change hands, and how institutions expand. Morrison, Annamma, and Jackson suggest the search for ways to achieve spatial justice and educational equity are “multiscalar,” meaning there are “macro-geographical (global), meso-geographical (regional), and micro-geographical (local) scales which are not ‘discrete layers detached from one another ... they are interconnected and, like spatiality itself, are ... socially produced’” (Soja, 2010, p. 213, qtd. in Morrison, Annamma, and Jackson, 2017, p. 5). In this project, I have argued that what is happening in North Denver is relevant to other communities where college campuses, as they grow, begin to see their relationships with their host cities change. As a next phase, inspired by Dache and others who use CRSA, I could develop a visualization tool to help show the role that CSU ends up playing in impacting North Denver.

For this future phase of the project, I could take inspiration from those who use maps to analyze the racial hierarchy that affects or afflicts a space. In two of Rebecca Solnit’s books, *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas* and *Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas*, Solnit re-creates maps that depict the same city in multiple ways, searching out multiple discourses but always from the bottom-up. In *Unfathomable City*, she tells the stories of prisons and sweets, time traveling to weave tales of sugar plantations and penitentiaries, bakeries and beignets, cataloging the incarceration rates and racial disparities that help make New Orleans what it is. A layered map places differing topics on top of each other in order to represent relationships that did not overtly exist before. A layered map of various community groups in the city of Denver who work on racial justice in education contexts could be created, following in the CRSA tradition and contributing to the development of this methodological approach to research.
Implications for Policy and Practice by Higher Education Leaders

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) has a guide called “Principles for Managing Gentrification” (Myerson, 2006). Established in 1936, ULI “has long been recognized as one of the world’s most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development” (p. ii). Its top-line recommendations from this widely-circulated guide include recognizing that gentrification is about more than housing, seeking to maintain affordability in the community, and supporting income and asset creation. But how? Given the racialized power dynamics I have described, how could community leaders approach these three tasks in GES and expect receptivity from predominantly white institutions? And what role in “managing gentrification” would higher education leaders from CSU conceivably play? As Jocelyn Hittle once said, CSU has introduced itself “as a future neighbor to the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods” (CAC Meeting Notes, May 31, 2018). As a good neighbor, how will CSU pick up and carry some of the weight of facing gentrification? Rather than seeking guidance on how to be a good neighbor exclusively from professional consultants hired by CSU, the NWC, and the NDCC, the university could seek guidance from ULI. Or better yet, they could turn to organizations in GES.

In “The People’s Survey,” created by the GES Coalition, in collaboration with Project VOYCE, Focus Points, Groundwork, FRES: Good Jobs/Strong Communities, Clinica Tepeyac, and the Grow Haus, there were five key conclusions reached after surveying over 500 people in May and August 2016 using door-to-door canvasing (with over 1,500 doors knocked) and bilingual interviewing. These conclusions can inform higher education policy and practice in Denver. The People’s Survey found that over
80% of residents want to stay in GES. Renters are highly vulnerable, as changes come to North Denver. 51% of renters who participated in The People’s Survey have no lease at all and 61% earn less than $25,000 per year. 58% of home owners had already been approached to sell their homes, as of The People’s Survey’s time of publication. The GES Coalition also found that “residents have called GES home for multiple generations and decades, with strong relationships between neighbors.” Based on this data, the GES Coalition has developed a plan of action that envisions a community-directed land trust. Their goal is to collectively purchase land in GES and create a land bank with the aim of keeping the cost of living low, in perpetuity. This will allow residents to remain in the neighborhood. The GES Coalition wants to see investment that stays in the GES community, and they wish to build resident capacity to engage in community organizing and make informed real estate decisions.

CSU needs to look no further for an agenda for collaborative anti-racist action with GES neighbors. If the university is willing to meet the local community on its own terms, the GES Coalition and other community-based organizations have already spelled out exactly what neighbors and families want and need. In the coming years, CSU could be a partner in the implementation of this vision.

Elsewhere, the activities of universities must be in sync with the needs and expectations of society, or else public trust in those institutions will be lost (Tierney, 2006). Institutions of higher education will have to oblige the requests of the communities in which they are located if they wish to strengthen town/gown relationships, taking care so that external constituencies view the university in a positive light. For it is one of the responsibilities of university leaders to attend to the way others
view their organization (Gioia and Thomas, 1996). The institution’s identity hinges on
this (Kezar, 2001).

Fox (2014), Kemp (2013), and White (1991) have all examined relationships
between institutions of higher education and the communities where they are located,
searching for ways the town and gown could forge a symbiotic relationship. Overall, the
normative literature on town/gown relationships falls short because it fails to consider
race as a factor influencing university/community relationships. Most town/gown studies
by higher education researchers have been colorblind. In my study, I have explored new
dimensions of the town/gown relationship. I have tried to extend the literature by asking:
in North Denver, in what ways are town/gown relationships affected when the university
is predominantly white and the surrounding “town” consists of low-income people of
color? While O’Mara made inroads, the time period she studied was 1949 - 1980. My
study extends her work by considering a contemporary instance of urban redevelopment
involving higher education.

**Implications for Theory**

In *The State Universities and Democracy* by Nevin (1962), we learn about the
aspirations of land-grant institutions:

> Ever since the founding of the University of Georgia in 1785 as the first
state university, our public institutions of higher learning have been
imbued by a spirit of liberalism and democracy. In a large and healthy
sense, they have been political institutions. As they spread westward, grew
in numbers, and throve in vigor, they lent support to the abiding doctrines
of democracy. (Nevin, 1962, p. v.)

The state university has played an important role in the story of the United States: these
institutions help make us distinct as a nation. Nevin declares, they make democracy
“freer, more adaptable, and more kinetic” (p. vi). He believes this to be so because the

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son of the poorest laborer can find a place in a land-grant institution “to broaden his options in life” (ibid), he says. According to Nevin, the Morrill Act made the United States ever-more democratic. “Higher education safeguarded the social mobility of the nation, and that was the heart of democracy” (p. 71).

Indeed, the Morrill and Hatch Acts helped extend higher education to broader segments of the U.S. population (National Academy Press, 1995). But this effort to democratize higher education by supporting a shift away from elite liberal arts colleges, toward a more practical curriculum that would be less expensive and more accessible to a larger segment of the citizenry created some problems while it solved others.

Nostalgic notions from the normative literature on land-grant institutions are insufficient because they fail to consider race. They omit from history the subjugation and dispossession of people of color which also has been part of the history of the land-grant college (Stein, 2017). Both on a macro level, considering higher education across our nation, and on a micro level, considering higher education in Denver, I hope this project has succeeded in examining how CSU and other land-grant institutions have succumbed to “imperatives of accumulation” (Stein, 2017, p. 1). Alongside theory on space and race, I hope that in a small way this research study has amended the literature on land-grant institutions.

“The Black spatial imaginary has vitally important creative and constructive things to offer this society” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 69). Learning from Lipsitz, the urban university could strive to turn spaces that have been marred by racial stratification and oppression into rehumanizing places for congregation, improvisation, community making, mutuality, solidarity, and inclusion rather than exclusion. Generating new
democratic imaginations and aspirations (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 57), embracing the Black spatial imaginary would bring to the university a new emphasis on use value, rather than exchange value. Members of the CSU community could learn to see the worth of places and people as they are in North Denver. The Black spatial imaginary can teach a model of deep acceptance, authentic inclusion, democratic engagement, and public participation to everyone. Therefore, land-grant universities are political institutions, as Nevin says. They provide opportunities to deepen democracy in society.

Struggles for racial justice are not just about inviting people of color into a place where white logic determines its organization and administration, but rather, creating spaces with fundamentally different values and emphases than the white spatial imaginary has permitted (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 54). What is taking place in North Denver is relevant to other communities where college campuses, as they grow, begin to see their relationships with cities change. I hope this research study will play a role in illuminating a public pedagogy of shared power, spatial justice, social justice, and racial equity.
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## Tables

Table 1

### List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHEC</td>
<td>Auraria Higher Education Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCHE</td>
<td>Colorado Commission on Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDOT</td>
<td>Colorado Department of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDPHE</td>
<td>Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRL</td>
<td>CRL Associates, providing professional meeting facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Colorado State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIA</td>
<td>Denver International Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td>DURA</td>
<td>Denver Urban Renewal Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>United States Environmental Protection Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>GES</td>
<td>Globeville and Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDCC</td>
<td>North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>National Western Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAC, NWCAC, or NWCCAC</td>
<td>National Western Center Citizens Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>NWSS</td>
<td>National Western Stock Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWI</td>
<td>Predominantly White Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RiNo</td>
<td>The River North neighborhood</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

Figure 23. Meeting One, Infographic by Sabrina C. Sideris
1. Welcome and Introductions

Maria Garcia Berry welcomed those in attendance before introducing herself and beginning the meeting.

2. NWC-CAC Member Updates and Announcements

Maria began updates promptly. She noted the National Western Center zoning text and map amendments final adoption and public hearing is scheduled before Denver City Council July 6th and she encouraged attendance from as many NWCAC members as possible. She further noted there were no plans at the time to have a public hearing on the ordinance to put the tourism tax extension on the ballot which goes before the Council for final consideration on July 29th. It was explained that the ordinance was voted on unanimously at first reading and Maria had no expectation of any amendments or changes to it moving forward. Upon the Mayor’s signature, the tourism tax extension will be on the ballot and the campaign will officially begin.

Maria took a moment to explain that a few of the newly elected City Council members had requested a number of important issues (NWC, DIA, I-70 IGA) be delayed until after they take office on July 20th. Maria explained the three issues were being lumped together when they should be looked at separately – National Western Center isn’t new, as it has been within the realm of discussion and public eye for quite some time.

AE noted for the last two and a half years the NWC-CAC has been working to meet deadlines and create awareness. She suggested that the NWC-CAC put together a timeline of the milestones that have been achieved and to showcase the great work that has been done for the new city council. Maria and Terrance agreed with AE’s suggestion. Maria noted plans were in the works to invite new City Council members over to the NWC campus for a tour. It was noted that CRL would not be the one to lead the tour – it should be neighborhood community representatives showcasing “ownership” of the project with the MOU partners.
Maria Garcia Berry:

If you all remember, this is actually brought up, what three months ago, AE, that we were going to talk about this? Ah, about the role and mission of the National Western Citizens Advisory Committee. I think in light of a lot of occurrences of events that have occurred in the last couple months with different issues and with different projects that while may not be part of the National Western, clearly are border the NWC. We all thought about talking through what the mission and purpose of the NWCCAC. And as this project gets even more real and more real as we go through this and as we get through … now that the City, and we’ll talk about this later on today, uh as the City starts preparing for the consideration of going to the ballot in November of 2015, I think it becomes important that we all have clarity. I also know from correspondence and from emails and from all of that there’s some of you who have some concerns about the role we play [we = the CRL facilitators] um and how is it that going forward … And so uh, as I told Vern, I’m a big girl, we can talk about all these issues and put them on the table and try to resolve them. So, Kelly, why don’t you start off with some of the conversations you’ve had with people around the table, in the last couple of weeks?

Kelly Leid:

Sure, ok so I think with one … the nature of what we’re trying to do together, and I shared this with AE the other day, is, and you know I’ve been doing big project work for almost 20 years now, and um … of all stripes and shapes, and there’s no blueprint to what we’re doing, I mean there’s … We are one of the largest urban redevelopment efforts in the entire country with six massive projects converging on a part of the city that needs investment. Um and you can certainly look at individual projects and refer to what I’ll call typical project stuff … But this is bigger than just the physical improvements, the bricks and mortar, this is about the soft infrastructure, reconnecting, uh, three historic neighborhoods to the rest of the city and there is a whole ‘nother effort that has to marry the physical improvements, um, of of this region of the city. The other piece of this is, you know, a long history of of a lack of fulfillment, of promises made and promises not delivered by a variety of of folks and so um you know, we have to continue to build um structures and organizational systems that allow that trust to happen in um in a meaningful and real way. By agreements and MOUs and letters of intent

[audible side talk begins between CAC members]

that holds people accountable, right? to deliver. So with that said, I’ve talked with some of you not all of you but certainly some of you and thrown out some ideas about how we go forward so the first is … what we’re recommending, the City is recommending, is that we stand up, for lack of a better term, implementation committees, for the 2 neighborhood plans,

[At this point, side conversations and throat clearing by other meeting attendees occurs while Leid continues to talk. Audible sighs are detected by the recording device. This continues for the next couple minutes.]
so have a Globeville implementation committee, that will be made up of Globeville residents and business owners, and then have an Elyria-Swansea implementation committee that will be made up of residents and business owners from Elyria-Swansea, on the Elyria-Swansea implementation committee so that you can have and can help lead an active voice of implementing your neighborhood plans. Um, so I talked to Judy Mont… Judy and I talked the other day about getting her help. And then also the transition, whoever wins the seat for, that replaces Judy, but getting those structures up and running, using the month of May simply to get these new implementation committees up and running we’re gonna, we’ll will staff them and we will have to work with the City about how we’re going to do that. But it’ll be, the NDCC will play an active role, the City will play an active role, Public Works will play an active role, and Parks and Rec will play an active role … as we work through the issues of implementing your plan. We’ll pull whatever agencies in, as we work through the issues of implementing your plan so that’s step one.

[loud sigh is heard from one of the CAC meeting members]

So why is that important, uh… You all, many of you participated in the development of those neighborhood plans and they deserve their own set of attention, right? And what has been challenging I think it is this group has become the de facto place to talk about it because there hasn’t been structures set up to really focus on the neighborhood plans and the implementation, so our commitment is to help you guys set up these neighborhood implementation committees um, in quick order, and get, uh, get them organized, get people, representatives from each of the respective communities on them, lay out a process that you guys feel comfortable with and then go to work. And the goal here is, and this ties in to our annual budget process with the city, align those implementation committees with our annual budget process, um so that you can help inform the annual, so you would make, the committees would make recommendations through the NDCC and then we would present those to the Mayor as part of the annual budget promises. So like this 2015 budget that I went through a week or so ago, neither plan had been adopted, so we used aspects of this plan to inform ourselves about how we might fund, how we might make recommendations to the Mayor.

[audible sigh from a CAC member]

Going forward, we’ll have this very intentional process by which you are participating and helping us frame your work plans, your budgets and the implementation of your, your respective plans. So I’ll stop there … any questions?

AE:

Can you explain [inaudible] there was a committee mentioned, there was a term that you were using … ?

Maria Garcia Berry:
Executive Oversight Committee

AE:

Executive Oversight Committee. That sounds like an entry point for direct involvement of a neighborhood presence …

Kelly Leid:

So let me get to the National Western, so I’m going to make a, a jump here … So we have the neighborhood committees then obviously the National Western, the NWCCAC, needs to focus on the National Western. I mean, we have an enormous amount of work to do, and so this body needs to really focus, we have a lot of work to do between now and the election in November, we have a whole series of things that we need to get your input on and again remember, we were intentional in making sure that the Globeville plan was adopted first, the Elyria-Swansea plan was adopted second and then the Master Plan for the NWC was adopted third. Those two neighborhood plans informed the National Western plan.

[audible clearing of someone’s throat]

NWC in some respects is acting as an implementation track for the two neighborhood plans. As we talk about phasing, how does that phasing impact? As an example, in our early phases, there is a lot of infrastructure investment, those connections to Washington Street, back into the site, connections into Elyria-Swansea, Brighton Boulevard, et cetera, so this group will certainly have a role in what I’ll call aligning those all, those respective committees. But the core emphasis of this group should be about advising us on the National Western Center plan, so getting kinda back to the core mission of this group, so relative to the Executive Oversight Committee, from there, is an interim structure that we’re establishing to kindof govern the National Western, until recommendations can be made to the Mayor later this summer around a, a final formal governance structure that will oversee and maintain or operate this new campus. Um so the interim structure includes an Executive Oversight Committee: CSU has a seat at the table, the National Western has a seat at the table, the City has a seat at the table. I just met with the Mayor today and what we’re proposing is a representative from the community on that EOC, and that committee will be informed by some sub-committees and then ultimately make recommendations to the Mayor and the whole role of that EOC is just to keep the project moving forward because there are just some decision we’re gonna have to make in the interim before an election that will have to be made that will advance our planning: our title work, there is land acquisition we’re gonna start to talk about, so that’s the role of the Executive Oversight Committee and that will be seated here as early as this May as well.

AE:
So how are you selecting? I have a suggestion: ideally with a representative. I wish that each of the MOU partners could have a community member associated with them as part of this Executive Committee. I just want to throw out, I feel like we need to and I don’t want to go through with what we went through in selecting the person for the Master Plan, where it was kind of a pre-selection. It wasn’t a participatory selection. But I feel like with the MOU partners, I’m so thrilled that the first money that comes in is for education. Like, you have History Colorado, there may be somebody from the neighborhoods that sits with History. From CSU you have somebody from the neighborhoods to sit with them.

Kelly Leid:

Can you table that for a minute? Because that’s not how it’s structured.

AE:

Well I’m suggesting.

Vernon Hill:

You know uh, I don’t want to throw cold water on this whole process but I think we ought to move forward and where we find a void, at that time let’s take the time to address that. There is no question in my mind that you’re gonna get a lot of input from the community, both business community and residents and anyone else interested, so instead of spending a whole lot of time trying to build another structure, another empire, let’s move on. You have this framework you know and let’s fill it in as we go. We meet monthly and if it has to be any change, then bring it up. I’m getting to be a little anxious about time, ya know. We’re … Time is money and you know we’re running out of time to get more money. So we need to get this thing moving.

[others begin to whisper to each other in the meeting, it is audible in the recording]

Kelly Leid:

I think that’s the goal. We share your sense of urgency.

Vernon Hill:

I’m sitting here aging!

Kelly Leid:

Me too, I spent 30 days at the Capitol, I aged like 20 years.

So there are two subcommittees. So there are two subcommittees. One is called the Event/ Program Advisory subcommittee and that is all about, how do you create a year-round active place? George Sparks from the Museum of Nature and Science and Ed
Nichols from History Colorado have agreed to co-chair that committee. Then we will build a whole committee, including neighborhood representation, so if you’re just want to talk about programming and how we can make this place hum 365 days a year, then you can self-select, Programming subcommittee of the EOC, right?, based on what your interests are. The other subcommittee, we haven’t determined who the chair will be yet but it’s a Capital/Funding subcommittee, but again if you’re interested in finance then you can let us know and we would form a working group around the capital and finance around the National Western. Again, that will inform the EOC. The EOC will make recommendations. But it allows you to self-select, right?, on what your interests are, and then we can certainly use this body [the NWCCAC] because we all come back together to talk about these issues and unite … But the structure we’re laying out will last, let’s say, probably about a year and then the formal governance structure would be put in place once the Mayor makes that decision and then when the dollars start to flow into the project, then that entity has to be up and running. Make sense?

Maria Garcia Berry:

[inaudible] drafting, MOU drafting

Kelly Leid:

Oh, MOU drafting, yes, thank you, sorry: … So again. Based on a lot of feedback, I actually presented the idea, uh, when I presented the work plan but the long and short of it is, is, taking many of the concepts that came out of the letter that Vern and some of the Globeville NOW group has presented, which really gets at the heart of how do we um make sure that the GES communities are, are active participants and receivers of the benefits as these investments happen? So um I am drafting an MO … uh, some of the language that Vern gave me is helping, is putting together what I’m calling the Community Benefits MOU, that lays out a framework in topical areas um and really kinda makes commitments so that the MOU will be between the NWCCAC and directly with the implementing committees. The idea is that we would have a signed MOU with commitments basically saying here is the process we are gonna go through collectively to make sure that when we’re all done, that the GES communities have been actively uh integrated into the, the investments that are being made to improve this part of the city – both physical, social and economic. So I’ve spent a good week kinda looking at models from around the country, I’ve talked to a bunch of people, so I don’t have a draft here but maybe in about a week.

Maria Garcia Berry:

So do you think we will have that at the May meeting? An actual draft that we can go through in the May meeting?

Kelly Leid:
Sure. It’s been fun to sit down and think about how we show intent … right? … um, using your word, Vern, intent that we are gonna deliver our promise.

Vernon Hill:

Great

Kelly Leid says to Vernon Hill:

OK?

Vernon Hill:

OK

Kelly Leid:

Alright!

Excerpt ends at 27:04.

Figure 25. CAC meeting excerpt from April 30, 2015
Dear National Western, City of Denver, Denver Planning Board and Denver City Council:

As neighbors and strong supporters of the National Western we are in the process of working on our requests for process improvements and detailed community benefits that will help the neighborhood feel secure in moving forward with the zoning application. We would like an agreed upon understanding, in writing, that outlines basic process and benefit assurances which we agree to, so we can support the rapid pace of the zoning application. It is important to us to have this request as part of the official record of the National Western Center Advisory Committee.

As committee members on the National Western Center's Advisory Committee (NWCAC) we remain committed to implementation of the Master Plan that we have already invested hundreds of volunteer hours into planning and meetings. The core of our commitment, however, is to our neighborhood and we need time to more directly involved in determining our own agenda, and developing what we know will ensure a cohesive partnership.

We are interested in having commitments to a decision making around financing and governance structure that is inclusive of neighbors to the National Western for the long term roll out and success of the project.

In the history of Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods, a lot of promises have been made and not kept. We would like to see commitments to the neighborhood outlined and written down so that future generations of leaders in the neighborhood will know what the intentional benefits are to them, and that the neighborhood residents and business owners will continue to have a significant place at the table.
Due to a lack of confidence in the record keeping of the NWCAC, we want to submit an official letter to ensure our perspective is heard in our own words. Through this letter, we would like to say that we do not support moving forward with the zoning until an agreement in writing has been established that provides the reassurances we need as neighborhoods with several billion dollar projects on the horizon.

Thank you for your attention to this issue,

Vernon L. Hill

Members of the NWCAC signed below

Vernon Hill
Mickey Zeppelin
Katie McKenna as property owner
Dave Oletski
Steven Moss

Figure 26. Vernon Hill’s April 2015 letter
**Figure 27.** Table showing who attended each CAC meeting, created by the author

**Figure 28.** Table showing who did most of the speaking at CAC meetings, created by the author
Figure 29. Denver Planning Board, photo and comment taken from the public Facebook feed of Candi CdeBaca, CAC member and long-time GES resident. Retrieved on 23 April 2019 from https://www.facebook.com/candidebaca/

Figure 30. Denver Mayor Michael Hancock is pictured on the Colorado State University web site as a driving force behind institutional plans to redevelop GES neighborhoods. Reprinted with permission granted on 1 July 2019 by Jenna Espinoza-Garcia, Communications Director, Mayor’s Office of the National Western Center.
## CAC Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
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<td>Lilliana Flores</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
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<td>Kayla Birdsong</td>
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<td>Larry Burgess</td>
<td>Elyria-Swansea-Globeville Business Association</td>
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<td>Maria Campos</td>
<td>Focus Points, Grow Haus, Livewell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patricia Carmody</td>
<td>Fairmount Heritage/Riverside Cemetery</td>
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<td>Cliff Carney</td>
<td>Focus Points, Grow Haus, Livewell</td>
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<td>Marina Chotzinoff</td>
<td>Where Wood Meets Steel/Globeville</td>
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**Note:** NWACAC members are **bold**. Others attend meetings but are not committee members.
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<td>Nancy Walsh</td>
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### Figure 31. Affiliations of all CAC members

Compiled by Sabrina C. Sideris

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<td>Todd Wenskoski</td>
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<td>Bethany Gravell</td>
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<td>Spanish Language Interpreter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

GES residents

CR Associates

MOU partners; City of Denver/NDCC; Consultants & firms

Others attending CAC meetings

NWCAC members are **BOLD**

Others attend meetings but are not committee members