Cultural Capital in the Classroom: The Significance of Debriefing as a Pedagogical Tool in Simulation-based Learning

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Although social inequality is critical to the study of sociology, it is particularly challenging to teach about race, class and gender inequality to students who belong to privileged social groups. Simulation games are often used successfully to address this pedagogical challenge. While debriefing is a critical component of simulation exercises that focus on teaching about social inequality, empirical assessments of the significance and effectiveness of this tool is virtually non-existent in sociology and other social sciences. This paper analyzes the significance of debriefing in a simulation game called "Cultural Capital in the Classroom" in order to address this lacunae in the pedagogy literature. The analyses reveal that the simulation contributed to students developing a greater degree of empathy for the working class and that the individual debriefing was a crucial step in developing students' critical thinking skills. Students gain even deeper insights during the collective debriefing session, which influenced them to question the validity of the ideology of meritocracy.

The exploration of social inequality is a cornerstone of Introduction to Sociology courses. Students often grasp the influence of economic capital on constructions of social inequality (Coghlan & Huggins, 2004; Simpson & Elias, 2011) but fail to understand the influence of non-financial assets as clearly. Similarly, students study how inequality manifests itself in particular social institutions yet often fail to recognize the extent to which these institutions participate in the reproduction of social inequality. This paper's analysis of a simulation game called "Cultural Capital in the Classroom" addresses the challenge of teaching about social inequality to students from privileged social class backgrounds, and it highlights the central role of the post-simulation reflection—debriefing—in developing critical thinking. While debriefing is acknowledged as an important element of simulation-based learning (Cantrell, 2008; Fanning & Gaba, 2007; Wickers, 2010), it remains virtually ignored within the sociology pedagogy literature.

Review of the Literature

Teaching About Social Inequality with Simulation Games

Though social inequality is critical to the study of sociology, it is particularly challenging to teach about race, class and gender inequality to students who belong to privileged social groups because they are often resistant to the idea that their advantages are not attributed to merit and may feel that their group is being targeted unfairly (Bohmer & Briggs, 1991; Davis, 1992). American undergraduates tend to believe that the United States is a meritocratic society where one's position in the class structure is largely influenced by innate intelligence and hard work (Coghlan & Huggins,

2004; Davis, 1992). Students from privileged social class backgrounds rarely encounter barriers or constraints that challenge this point of view, and this limits their ability to understand and accept structural explanations for social inequality (Bohmer & Briggs, 1991). Even when students acknowledge that some individuals start out with more advantages than others, they are still likely to see these differences as less consequential to social mobility. Thus, students often perceive schools as neutral entities that transmit objective knowledge, rewarding one's efforts, talents, and abilities regardless of student's social class background.

Bourdieu's theory of social and cultural reproduction provides students with an alternative perspective to this perception (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). Bourdieu argues that schools are key mechanisms for reproducing class-based power and privilege. He refers to the class-based experiences, values, beliefs, behaviors, and predispositions of the dominant group as cultural capital. Children acquire this cultural capital from their families and for their entire lives; for children from privileged social groups, communication styles and types of social interactions within their families resemble those used to transmit knowledge in schools. Bourdieu's (1977, 1984) work allows students to better understand the impact of social class on students' educational outcomes and prospects for social mobility because he turns the common perception of schools as equalizing agents on its head.

Many scholars address how to teach about social inequality in the sociology pedagogy literature (Coghlan & Huggins, 2004; Simpson & Elias, 2011). However, few of these studies focus on how to teach about cultural capital (Griffith, 2012; Isserles & Dalmage 2000; Norris, 2013; Wright & Ransom 2005). Similarly, while most of these studies include a discussion about the use of

debriefing following the simulation, it is an understudied area of inquiry. "Cultural Capital in the Classroom," the assignment used in the course instructor's Introduction to Sociology courses, contributes to the teaching pedagogy literature in sociology by drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) concept of cultural capital to show how schools are implicated in reinforcing social inequality and in assessing the significance of debriefing as a pedagogical tool that enhances students' learning. While there are many ways to assess student learning following a simulation, such as improvement in test or paper grades on an assignment, a significant finding from this study is that the group dynamic and reflection aspect of debriefing, which cannot be easily captured by other methods, contribute to the cognitive and emotional development of students.

The Significance of Debriefing

Debriefing refers to the follow-up discussion and/or reflection that take place after a simulation or experiential learning exercise (Cantrell, 2008). This discussion can be used to provide critique (Neil & Wotton, 2011), to assess the impact of the simulation on students' learning (Mariani, Meakim, Prieto, & Dreifuerst, 2013), to encourage reflection and critical thinking, to ensure that students arrive at a shared understanding of course content, or as a mechanism for processing emotions (Cantrell, 2008), particularly when teaching about social inequality to privileged students. Debriefing can take place in written or oral form, and it can be done individually, with a facilitator, or as part of a group discussion (Kriz, 2010). While debriefing is a critical component of simulation exercises that focus on teaching about social inequality, empirical assessments of the significance and effectiveness of this tool are not central concerns in sociology (Griffith, 2013; Norris, 2013; Wright & Ransom, 2005).

For example, Norris (2013) described a study where she used an innovative teaching tool in her introductory sociology courses at a research university and a liberal arts school. The participants were students with a similar demographic. The author used a simulation game called "Beat the Bourgeoisie" where she divided students into two social class groups, a small group representing the economically privileged bourgeoisie and the other representing the exploited proletariat. She then gave them a quiz based on the material taught in the course. All the members of the winning team received extra points. She then treated students differently depending on the social class to which they were assigned.

The simulation used a pre-test post-test design, which included a questionnaire administered after readings, lecture, and discussion before the simulation. The same questionnaire was used to assess students'

beliefs and understanding of stratification after the simulation. In addition, the author used an oral debriefing session both to capture students' immediate reactions to the game and to draw out broader implications of what students had learned about social class and meritocracy. Like many articles on sociological simulations (Coghlan & Huggins, 2004; Griffith, 2012), however, debriefing is acknowledged as important but not as the primary focus of scholarly attention. In Cultural Capital in the Classroom, the focus is on the impact of debriefing as a pedagogical intervention designed to deepen students' understanding of how cultural capital fosters social inequality.

Empirical articles on post-simulation debriefing are more common in nursing literature than in sociology due in part to their effectiveness as pedagogical tools for enhancing clinical training and professional development (Cant & Cooper, 2011; Cantrell, 2008; Peters & Vissers, 2004; Wickers, 2010). In particular, debriefing helps nursing students reflect upon errors they have made in specific situations and on how to improve their future practice with actual patients. These studies help us understand how debriefing "works" in sociology and other social sciences where the focus is not on honing technical skills. While there is strong consensus within the nursing literature that debriefing enhances students' learning (Cantrell, 2008; Fanning & Gaba, 2007; Wickers, 2010), a limited number of studies empirically addressed the significance of debriefing as a post-simulation pedagogical tool (Neill & Wotton, 2011; Mariani, Cantrell, Meakim, & Dreifuerst, 2013). These gaps in knowledge underscore the need for more studies about debriefing in the sociology pedagogy literature. This article addresses these lacunae in the pedagogy literature in sociology in regard to the significance of post-simulation debriefing and point to potential contributions outside of sociology.

The Context of the Course

The course instructor conducted "Cultural Capital in the Classroom" in two different sections of an Introduction to Sociology course at a small liberal arts university located on the East Coast with a population of approximately 3500 students. Seventeen students were enrolled in the first section and eight students were enrolled in the second section; twenty-two students participated across both sections. As Table 1 indicates, the majority of the students were White (64%) and female (73%). Most students came from families where their fathers (82%) and mothers (68%) had at least a bachelor's degree and where family incomes were $100,000 or higher (68%). As such, the students enrolled in this course represent the types of students who often resist the study of social inequality (Bohmer and Briggs; Cantrell, 2008; Davis, 1993).

Table 1
Demographic Information

Demographics (N=22)	Number	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	6	27.3
Female	16	72.7
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American (non-Hispanic)	3	13.6
White (non-Hispanic)	14	63.6
Hispanic/Latino	2	9.1
Asian	1	4.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0
Multiracial	2	9.1
Educational Attainment (Father)		
Less than high school	0	0
High School	2	9.1
Associates	2	9.1
Bachelors	9	40.9
Masters/Professional	7	31.8
Ph.D.	2	9.1
Educational Attainment (Mother)		
Less than high school	1	4.6
High School	2	9.1
Associates	3	13.6
Bachelors	8	36.4
Masters/Professional	6	27.3
Ph.D.	1	4.6
Family Social Class (Class Segments)		
Privileged Class (~20%)		
Superclass (1-2% of population)	2	9.1
Credentialed Class (top 13-15%)	9	40.9
Professionals (4-5%)	4	18.2
(New) Working Class (~80%)		
Comfort Class (10%)	2	9.1
Contingent Class (50%)	4	18.2
Self-employed (3-4%)	1	4.6
Excluded Class (10-15%)	0	0

Note: For a description of Family Social Class Segments see Wysong & Perrucci, 2010.

The simulation was conducted during the second half of the semester when students had received multiple opportunities to engage with issues of inequality through lectures and course readings. Specifically, the course instructor presented social class as having multiple dimensions and introduced students to the concepts of economic capital, human capital, social capital and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977; Coleman, 1988; Marx, 1848). Students also learned about Marx's (1848) perspective of society as stemming from an individual's relationship to the means of production and the separation of society into a privileged elite class and an economically exploited wage earning class. Students' understanding of social class as a multidimensional construct was further developed with lessons on social capital where students learned about the valuable resources available to individuals depending on the social networks to which they belong. Students also learned about cultural capital through a lecture that included reference to Lareau's (2011) work, which describes the child rearing practices that middle class parents utilize to equip their children with skills to interact with authority figures and prepare them to be future leaders.

In the weeks leading up to the simulation, students were primed for discussions of social inequality with an exercise that allowed them to share their perspectives on social inequality in small groups. They were also asked to complete a survey originally constructed by Mindelyn Buford II, PhD at Northeastern University in Boston, MA (see Appendix A). The students then

discussed the results of their surveys with their classmates. We acknowledge that the timing of the survey was a limitation of the study, as distributing this survey at the beginning of the semester would have yielded more accurate information about students' pre-course attitudes. However, the survey would not have fit well at the beginning of the semester with the planned sequence of the course.

Procedure

The simulation required that each student draw from one of the identity cards listed in Table 2. Since Bourdieu's (1977) theoretical framework posits that the cultural capital of middle class families is more valuable than those of individuals from the working class, we created educational and occupational categories that we thought would be consistent with each character's class identity. Students were asked to assume the role of a child corresponding to the individual whose identity card they had selected and to play the role of that student in a simulated classroom environment where they would be given an exam. The goal of this exercise was for students to reflect on the value of cultural capital in the classroom by providing students in the middle class group with an educational advantage relative to students who played the role of a working class student. Accordingly, all of the students received a worksheet comprised of Chinese symbols. However, students who assumed the role of middle class students also received the English translation cheat sheet so that they could easily do well on the quiz. Students who assumed a working class identity received a cheat sheet with pictures of cartoon characters such as Sponge Bob.

The cheat sheet distributed to middle class children was a physical representation of dominant cultural capital acquired through previous educational or cultural experiences. The cheat sheet with popular TV characters was distributed to working class students to reflect the reality that parents of working class families often do not have the time or resources to invest in the kinds of cultural or educational experiences that would produce familiarity with Chinese symbols (or other forms of dominant cultural capital that it represents). It also reflects the reality that working class youth are more likely to spend their leisure time in informal activities such as watching television than students from more privileged backgrounds (Lareau, 1987).

Students were asked to raise their hands if they had the correct answer to each question, and the course instructor informed the class whether the response was accurate or not. Not surprisingly, all of the students who were assigned a middle class identity gave correct responses to the quiz questions; in contrast, all except one of the students assigned to the working class group gave incorrect responses to quiz questions.

Immediately following the simulation, students were asked to complete a survey and part I of a classroom activity questionnaire. They were instructed not to write their names on the survey, but to include demographic information such as age, race/ethnicity, gender, and the highest degree attained by their mothers and fathers. In addition, using the table from Wysong and Perrucci's (2010) article on the U.S. class structure that was assigned during week ten of the course, students were asked to estimate in which social class category they would place their family based on the types of jobs that their parents held (see Table 1). Part I of the debriefing questionnaire inquired about their views of social class inequality prior to enrolling in the course and how these views were impacted by the classroom simulation. Students provided written responses to questions below which allowed them to process what they had learned individually:

1. Prior to this class, did you view social class as having an impact on students' educational experiences or outcomes?
2. Prior to this class what were your views on the impact of social class on students' educational experiences and/or outcomes?
3. What is the most significant thing (if any) that you learned from participating in the cultural capital exercise/simulation?
4. Did the simulation deepen your understanding of cultural capital and how it manifests in real life beyond what you learned from course readings? If yes, how did it do so? If no, please explain why.

After students completed Part I of the debriefing questionnaire, the class engaged in a debriefing discussion about their thoughts and responses to the simulation using their written responses as a starting point for their conversation. At this point, most of the students were eager to share their views with each other. The professor played the role of facilitator by encouraging students to speak openly. Although she sometimes asked for clarification, she tried not to express judgment by interjecting her own point of view or through the use of body language. After approximately 20-30 minutes of discussion, students were asked to write responses to the two following questions on the debriefing questionnaire:

1. To what extent did class discussion further enhance your understanding of how cultural capital influences the educational experiences and outcomes of students?
2. Do you have any suggested changes that would enhance the effectiveness of this exercise?

Table 2
Possibly Identity Cards

Name	Race	Social Class	Educational Background	Occupation	Family Situation
Sallie	White	Middle	College Graduate	Stay-at-home Mom	Mother of Two
George	Black	Middle	Medical School Graduate	Orthopedic Surgeon	Father of Three
Janet	Black	Middle	Law School Graduate	Lawyer	Mother of One
Michael	White	Middle	Doctoral Graduate	College Professor	Father of Two
William	White	Middle	MBA Degree	Accountant	Father of Two
Debbie	White	Working	High School Dropout	Waitress	Single Mother of Three
Peter	White	Working	High School Graduate	UPS Delivery Man	Father of two
Rose	Black	Working	High School Graduate	Stay-at-home Mom	Mother of Four

Results

The Significance of Individual Debriefing

This section provides an analysis of the written debriefing that students provided individually immediately following the simulation regarding its impact on students' understanding of cultural capital. Eighteen students reported that the simulation deepened their understanding of cultural capital and reinforced course readings and concepts. Four of these eighteen students reported that the simulation increased their understanding only slightly. All except one of these four students belonged to one of the privileged social classes. Three students reported that the simulation did not deepen their understanding beyond course readings. One of these three students said that he had learned about cultural capital previously. These three students all belonged to the privileged classes as well. These data are consistent with prior research suggesting that students from privileged backgrounds have a more difficult time acknowledging social inequality (Bohmer & Briggs, 1991; Davis, 1992).

Among the eighteen students who reported gaining a deeper understanding of cultural capital from the simulation, we discerned three distinct types of responses: (1) concrete application and understanding of abstract concepts (2) empathy with less privileged students (3) and an oversimplification of the impact of poverty on students' backgrounds (e.g. does not account for resilience or other factors that might contribute to some working class "making it.")

The most common response from approximately forty percent (9) of the students was that the simulation helped students to develop a more concrete understanding of an abstract concept:

Yes…the simulation and the concrete [cheat] sheet in particular helped to reinforce (course) concepts (Student #13, privileged class)

Yes, it deepened my understanding because it showed first hand that even if those (working class)

students wanted to know the right answers they couldn't do anything about it because they did not have the knowledge/resources. (Student #22, privileged class)

The second response by student #22 suggests that even if students from working class backgrounds want an education, they are limited by their parental resources, the primary source of this necessary knowledge. It shows this student's appreciation of structural inequality and that where one ends up in the class structure is not simply a reflection of one's personal choices and desires. For most students, this level of clarity came after the collective oral debriefing.

Perhaps the most significant benefit of the simulation was experiencing the feelings and emotions of their assumed identity. For example, some of the students reported feeling more empathy for the working class:

Yes, it forces us to not simply learn from a reader's perspective or as an onlooker but forced us to experience the inequality on our own which was definitely valuable. (Student #14, privileged class)

The excerpt above suggests that reading about social inequality positions the student in the role of a passive "onlooker" who exists outside of the experience s/he is reading about, and so can remain emotionally detached from the information. As a participant in the simulation, however, the student feels the emotional impact of belonging to a disadvantaged group that contributes to feelings of empathy. Another student built upon this perception by showing how empathy can contribute to deeper understandings of the source of educational inequality:

Those who represented the working class talked about how they did not take it seriously because they knew they weren't going to succeed. I think this sheds light on why less privileged students are less motivated and more likely to drop out [of school]. (Student #18, privileged class)

What is significant here is that students observed other privileged students exhibiting attitudes and behaviors that were inimical to academic success, simply from participating in a short classroom exercise, as opposed to working class youth who might be exposed to similar conditions in their real lives for a prolonged period of time. In addition, students often assumed that these differences in attitudes and behavior reflect inherent differences in cultural values across different ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups. Seeing the vulnerability of their classmates from similar social backgrounds allowed them to see that it was likely that the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to negative academic outcomes among working class youth are rational responses to external social forces, and that they might behave in a similar fashion under the same circumstances.

While the simulation did influence students' awareness of social inequality, a couple of students seemed to take a literal, one-dimensional interpretation of the activity that ascribed hopelessness and despair to the plight of working class students. For example:

> Yes, it showed that often there is simply nothing you can do to increase your cultural capital. The participants in the working class didn't do anything to deserve the same [inferior] cheat sheet. (Student #8, privileged class)

Although the simulation influenced a few students to think that a working class background is a death sentence, we do think the simulation and the individual debriefing that followed were effective in getting these particular students to recognize that just as the students in the simulated working class did not deserve to get the bad cheat sheet, in real life, members of the working class cannot be blamed for the circumstances into which they are born. Further, student responses during the individual debriefing suggested that the simulation was successful for most students in deepening their understanding of cultural capital beyond course readings. These data point to the strength of the individual debriefing which allowed students to put themselves in the shoes of other people with less privilege, allowing some to make abstract concepts more concrete and others to develop empathy for students from less privileged social backgrounds. That said, the response from student #8 above also points to the limitation of individual debriefing because students may still process the simulation with pre-existing biases and based on their particular understanding of the course material. In contrast, collective debriefing has the potential to counteract pre-existing biases as well as expose and redirect flawed logic that may come out during the individual debriefing because students get exposed to multiple perspectives that diverge from their own.

The Significance of Collective Debriefing

Student responses indicated that they felt even more enlightened after the collective oral debriefing than they had right after the simulation. Deeper insight from the collective debriefing session can be attributed to hearing alternative viewpoints from peers with different schooling experiences, which further enhanced students' understanding of the multiple ways that cultural capital can impact educational experiences and outcomes. For example, although students had a reading (see Cookson and Persell, 2004), that described the [social] engineering process referenced by Student #14 below, it was more impactful when students who had attended boarding schools validated the accuracy of the reading as is evidenced by multiple student responses below:

> It really makes you think about the true significance behind your school setting. I had never recognized how much engineering for success there is in private schools compared to public schools. (Student #14, privileged class)

> It was helpful to know the opinions of the classmates because they could also tell their own experiences learning in different kinds of schools. So it definitely was helpful to understand the different predispositions of students or the different ways of interaction between teachers and students. (Student #7, privileged class)

> Going to a boarding school, as I stated before, I knew I was lucky, but what really enhanced my knowledge of really how lucky I was, was with the other students in the class who did not have the same exposure-It put into perspective the amount of activity and opportunity that was available (to me). My experiences I now wholeheartedly understand were wildly different and special. (Student #1, privileged class)

In addition to further deepening students' understanding of cultural capital and educational inequality more broadly, the debriefing discussion was most useful in challenging students' belief that American society is a meritocracy, a revelation that students made with consistency only after the collective debriefing session:

> Prior to school, the experiences you have at home and in social surroundings set you up for failure or success at school. I had no idea it was to such a large extent. The system limits meritocracy severely. (Student #5, privileged class)

> It helped me to look at other issues that involve education and apply that to cultural capital. The relationships being made in private schools make it

better for the child's future outcomes. This also emphasizes the US Society as stratified because it's rare that Americans (experience social mobility) based (only) on merit. (Student #4, working class)

The lack of knowledge and resources to lower class individuals could clearly be seen through this exercise. Also, the perspective that people of lower class status are lazy and don't work hard was eliminated from my mind because it can be truly harder for them to achieve success. (Student #21, privileged class)

Student responses indicated that the collective debriefing session was crucial in students' understandings of cultural capital as counter to the American meritocracy ideology. It is likely that the discussion influenced students to make this connection precisely because the experiences of their classmates were so consistent with what they had presumably already learned from course readings, lectures, and the simulation itself. However, students could have easily dismissed course readings as based on flawed or inaccurate data that only reflected a partial reality. Similarly, they could have perceived the authors and the course instructor (a Black woman) as biased. In contrast, their peers might appear to be unbiased sources as they are not likely to be perceived as being invested in convincing them of any particular truth. As such, it is a powerful experience when these numerous personal accounts align with course readings and lectures. Taken as a whole, student responses point to the important synergy that takes place when individual and collective debriefing are used to unpack classroom-based simulations such as the one discussed in this article. Individual debriefing provides students with the opportunity for self-reflection without judgment where they have the opportunity to formulate their distinct points of view without input from classmates or the course instructor. The collective debriefing is like pointing multiple cameras at the same phenomenon from different angles, thus allowing for a deeper more holistic view of an image. Similarly, the collective debriefing provides students with a more holistic view of cultural capital and social inequality than they had after their individual debriefing session.

Discussion

This paper examined the significance of debriefing as a pedagogical tool in simulation-based learning by observing the impact it has on students in an Introduction to Sociology course. Students participated in a simulation called "Cultural Capital in the Classroom," an activity which aimed to highlight the potential role that schools can play in reinforcing social

inequality in society. The exercise simulated the classroom, which is a familiar site to students, where they assumed either the role of a middle class or working class child who is taking an exam. The simulation then made visible how cultural capital privileges middle class students and places those from working class families at a disadvantage. In doing so, students came to realize the relationship between their acquisition of dominant cultural capital and their own academic success. From this micro-level example, students questioned the role of schools as institutions that foster equal opportunity for success across the socioeconomic spectrum and were increasingly likely to accept structural explanations for inequality. Many students had believed that educational institutions fairly distributed rewards based on innate intelligence and hard work. When the simulation challenged this core belief, students began to critically engage the assumption that American society is meritocratic.

The individual debriefing that immediately followed the simulation contributed to students developing a greater degree of empathy for the working class. This empathy partially resulted from having to assume the identity of a working class student or from observing the benefits accrued to students who assumed the identity of a middle class student. This is a significant finding because Norris (2013) reported that although students who participated in "Beat the Bourgeoisie" reported gaining a deeper understanding of social and cultural capital and barriers to mobility among members of the working classes, the simulation did not lead students to feel differently about poor people, and it did not lead them to critically analyze a specific social institution. In contrast, "Cultural Capital in the Classroom" capitalizes on the guilt and defensiveness that privileged students can feel in discussions about social inequality that point to them as beneficiaries of an unjust system of oppression. This simulation diffuses some of these feelings by requiring students to take on an assumed identity. Since unpopular views can be attributed to their assigned persona, taking on an assumed identity releases students from the fear that they will be judged unfavorably by their peers, and this creates a safe space that is conducive to critical thinking.

The most noteworthy finding, however, is that students did not begin to question the validity of the ideology of meritocracy until after they had participated in the collective debriefing. Once students came to terms with what they individually thought, the collective debriefing took on additional power by confirming or challenging what the students had deemed as credible. This power rested in the collective nature of this activity. Since the debriefing was mostly a discussion among the students, they were able to learn

directly from each other's experiences; this proved more powerful than hearing the same information from a professor who is normally seen as the only expert in the classroom. For example, students who attended boarding schools could affirm to their classmates that their experiences were in fact consistent with what the class had learned (from lectures and readings) about cultural capital production in elite schools, and, together, they were able to triangulate this knowledge with what they learned in the simulation, and their own schooling experiences.

Even so, it is important to note that the effectiveness of the collective debriefing depended on appropriate scaffolding throughout the semester. The individual debriefing provided a forum for students to independently synthesize and integrate prior knowledge gained from course readings and lectures, to apply them to the simulation and to develop a stance and defend it. The individual debriefing was a crucial step in developing students' critical thinking skills as it provided a safe space for students to reflect individually, without the pressure to share their views with their peers or the course instructor. Further, while the empathy for disadvantaged populations (mentioned above) that emerged from this simulation holds innate value in allowing students to imagine themselves in the shoes of "the other," this empathy also facilitated the critical insights generated in the collective debriefing phase. When feelings of empathy begin to replace feelings of guilt, discomfort or defensiveness, students become more invested in engaging in the intellectual labor required to think critically about social inequality (Meyer & Turner, 2002; Weiss, 2000). That is, while we often think of emotional work and intellectual work as separate, the individual and collective debriefing gives us a window into how emotional learning can bolster the capacity for the intellectual work that we call critical thinking.

Based on the analyses of the data presented thus far, the authors provide three recommendations for colleagues who are considering using this exercise in their courses. First, in hindsight, the course instructor would conduct the survey at the beginning of the course in order to more accurately capture students' pre-course attitudes about the extent of social inequality in the United States and use this information to tweak lesson plans throughout the semester to address students' misconceptions about social inequality. Second, scaffolding is important in order for this exercise to work. Students should be introduced to cultural capital in lectures and course readings prior to the simulation. The simulation is intended to deepen and concretize students' understanding of cultural capital. Third, and most important, both individual and collective debriefing should be used to assess and reinforce students' understanding of cultural capital as the data

shows that these two types of debriefing reinforce each other.

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Appendix A
Social Inequality Mini-Survey by Mindelyn Buford II, PhD

1) Which phrase best reflects your general opinion about U.S. society: (select only one)
     a.   U.S. society is meritocratic and an individual's chance to get ahead in U.S. society *is not* limited by their social origins.
     b.   U.S. society is meritocratic, but an individual's chance to get ahead in U.S. society is limited by their social origins.
     c.   U.S. society is stratified and an individual's chance to get ahead in U.S. society is limited by their social origins.
     d.   U.S. society is stratified, but an individual's chance to get ahead in U.S. society *is not* limited by their social origins.

2) Which phrase best reflects your general opinion about inequality in U.S. society: (select only one)
     a.   Inequalities of wealth, power, and status are socially created and should be kept to a minimum through laws and policies.
     b.   Inequalities of wealth, power, and status are socially created, but they are inevitable and the legal system and government **should not** intervene.
     c.   Inequalities of wealth, power, and status are naturally occurring, but should be kept to a minimum through laws and policies.
     d.   Inequalities of wealth, power, and status are naturally occurring and inevitable so the legal system and government **should not** intervene.

3) Which is the most important to you? (select only one)
     a.   Access to opportunities and resources regardless of class background
     b.   Access to opportunities and resources regardless of racial background
     c.   Access to opportunities and resources regardless of gender
     d.   Access to opportunities and resources regardless of sexuality
     e.   Access to opportunities and resources regardless of some other social characteristic (please list the characteristic)
     f.   Don't know/none of the above

Instructions
   1.   Group Students based on how they respond to the questions (a's , b's cs' etc).
   2.   In groups discuss-why did you select a particular response? Why did you NOT select the others?
   3.   Report out and discuss each group's responses.