

Tara J. Yosso is a Professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California Riverside. Her research and teaching apply the frameworks of critical race theory and critical media literacy to examine educational access and equity, emphasizing the community cultural wealth Students of Color bring to school.

Community cultural wealth: an array of cultural knowledges, skills, abilities, and networks possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist racism and other forms of subordination (Yosso, 2006). Yosso identifies at least six overlapping, interdependent, forms of capital like the multifaceted view created by a kaleidoscope:

- *Aspirational capital* refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
- *Linguistic capital* includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication in multiple languages and/or language styles (including communication through art, music, poetry, theatre, and dance).
- *Social capital* can be understood as networks of people and community resources.
- Navigational capital refers to skills in maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this implies the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind.
- *Familial capital* refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition.
- *Resistant capital* refers to those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenge inequality.

Each of the forms of capital within the kaleidoscope, and their multifaceted dimensions builds on an extensive body of critical social science research that has consistently reframed culture as a resource for Communities of Color, rather than as a detriment. Listening and learning about strengths that the kaleidoscope can help us document how these knowledges have been preserved and passed down – often in difficult circumstances including violence, threats, humiliations, and unjust laws. How might we generate opportunities to cultivate community cultural wealth as a tool of reclamation – a tool for social justice?

Background to Dr. Yosso's Research

Academic institutions facilitate the flow of knowledge, skills, and students along the U.S. educational pipeline. Historically, at every schooling level however, Chicanas/os suffer the lowest educational attainment of any other major racial or ethnic group. Nationally, of every 100 Chicana/o elementary school students, only 26 will pursue college. Of the 17 who begin their higher education journey at a community college, only one transfers to a 4-year university. Understanding the contexts and conditions shaping these outcomes, we work to shift our research lens away from deficit explanations that blame students and their communities, to focus on the structures, practices, and discourses that restrict equal educational access and opportunities.

CCW Implications on Undergraduate Stages of Passage

Students of Color often encounter a negative campus racial climate, replete with incessant covert racial assaults—racial microaggressions (e.g. Pierce, 1995; Solórzano, et al., 2000; Sue, et al., 2007). Vincent Tinto’s (1993) model of undergraduate “stages of passage” (separation, transition, incorporation) does not account for these experiences. For example, Chicana/o, Latina/o undergraduates engage three distinct processes, beginning with confronting pervasive messages of rejection, which characterize racial microaggressions (Yosso, 2005; Yosso, et al., 2009). In response to a negative campus racial climate, Chicana/o Latina/o students foster academic and social counterspaces, where they build a culturally supportive community and develop skills to critical navigate between their multiple worlds (e.g. school, home).

Modeling CCW at UC-Merced



How might we operationalize community cultural wealth and integrate these insights about the stages of passage in our thinking about and approach to cultivating student success?

Reflections for Critical Dialogue

- Dynamic process of knowledge construction
- Continuities and change across time and place/space
- Sharing and passing on knowledge (in a system based on individual merit)