Negotiating Treacherous Terrain: Disciplinary Power, Security Cultures, and Affective Ties in a Local Antiwar Movement

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After September 11, 2001, the calls of U.S. government officials for greater security measures and retribution for the lives and resources lost during the attacks elicited a range of responses within the United States. Although many people were angry and fearful of additional attacks, others were frustrated with the retaliatory and often racist rhetoric calling for war and for greater domestic surveillance, and dismayed that the ongoing neoliberal reduction of public space had found a new justification. Many from this latter constituency took to the streets in protest of the invasion of Afghanistan, the dwindling civil liberties at home, the proposed (and later realized) military offensive against Iraq, and the disaster capitalism accompanying these invasions. In the United States and worldwide, the demonstrations reached their peak immediately before and just after the United States invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003. Much of the energy of the U.S. antiwar movement dissipated after the 2004 presidential election, which reinstated the administration that led the country into an always contested and increasingly unpopular war.

This article considers the antiwar movement in Santa Barbara, California, initiated during the buildup to the invasion and occupation of Iraq as a case study for exploring the use and creation of public spaces by antiwar activists, the different visions of activism and social life within the movement, and the impact of relationships to institutional power on the interactions between individuals and dissenting groups. This analysis occurs at the edges of dominant studies of social movements, as it addresses public space and the geographical dimensions of social activism. Emphasizing space has numerous merits, including the possibility to focus on the interactions among different groups of people during public demonstrations. Although we recognize that most, if not all, public demonstrations, including those discussed in this article, are part of broader social movements, we emphasize spatial and power dynamics rather than political opportunities, collective identities, or resource mobilization in order to address aspects of social movements that are often undertheorized in existing literature.

In particular, we discuss the utilization, theorization, and politicization of space by diverse constituencies in Santa Barbara protests against the latest U.S.–Iraq war. Moving beyond the usual state-versus-dissenter binary, this article deconstructs the unitary categories of “citizen” and “dissenter,” discussing the ways in which different groups make distinct claims and have diverse imaginaries concerning the use of space. At the same time that public protest has been incorporated into the liberal state and routinized through the permit process, it has also become less effective at accommodating more radical positions against the war and the economic and security crises brought on by corporate globalization (Mitchell and Staeheli, 2005). Additionally, the demographics and history of Santa Barbara, including the presence of a large research university, largely predetermined the level of cross-racial and cross-class political collaboration that took place. Therefore, we use Jesse Munn’s (2008) concept of “intimate segregation” to highlight the ways in which marginalized people (particularly people organizing via queer, racial and ethnic, gender, and feminist identities), through creative organizing strategies and reappropriation of public space, articulate and enact forms of dissident citizenship distinct from more mainstream, and often explicitly patriotic, forms of protest.

Munn emphasizes how people occupy space differently and come to understand their place. In his example of gentrification in a Chicago neighborhood, “white people begin to internalize [segregation] as they learn to police local spaces, social life, and neighborhood narratives in order to maximize their privilege” (Ibid.: 18). A similar process, which we call intramovement disciplining, occurred in the recent Santa Barbara antiwar movement. As we explain below, the people able to exercise disciplinary power were part of or allied with a veterans’ organization articulating a “peace is patriotic” framework for dissent. Their predominantly white and male identity enabled them to work closely with law enforcement and serve as representatives of state power when official state representatives were absent.

Examining divergent organizing strategies reveals the importance of security cultures and affective ties within collectives. The term “security culture” refers to the methods an organization uses to limit who has access to information about the organization’s members and activities (Robinson, 2008: 225–232). Although all
Negotiating Teaching Terrains

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We believe that teaching involves understanding, respect, and the knowledge that an active and engaged classroom is a space for learning and growth. As educators, we believe that teaching is not just about imparting knowledge but also about facilitating learning environments where students can engage in meaningful discussions and explore their own ideas. Our approach to teaching is guided by the belief that students learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. We strive to create a classroom environment that is inclusive, diverse, and supportive, where students feel safe to express their ideas and take risks in their learning. We believe that teaching is not just a profession but a passionate pursuit, and we are committed to continually learning and growing as educators.
theory that homogenizes experiences of disadvantage and emphasizes the non-rational character of women’s culture. Repeatedly overlooked is that standpoint epistemology foregrounds complex and contradictory material conditions, the dialectic of oppression and resistance, and “culturally specific, resilient lifelines that can be continually refashioned in response to changing contexts” (Collins, 2000: 179). By contrast, the common cultural understandings and community building strategies, the search for a chosen family, and the high value placed on an ethic of community building and political conscientization that members brought from an array of prior experiences make Queergrad an exceptional vantage point from which to consider antiwar coalition politics.

Public Space and Dissident Citizenship Practices

That people outraged about the invasion and occupation of Iraq would take to the streets is unsurprising. Displaying opposition through the physical presence of dissenting people conveys messages that letters, votes, and lobbying for legislation cannot. Don Mitchell (2003: 52) claims that “to win the right to representation as part of the political public, excluded groups have taken the streets, plazas, and parks and transformed them into places for representation.” Representation is not only central to inclusion in political life: “representation both demands and creates space,” Mitchell argues, describing oppressed communities’ struggles to gain and maintain access to public spaces as acts of survival as well as paths toward social change (ibid.: 35). In addition, space constantly shifts as it is claimed and reclaimed. We hope to emphasize this fluidity within the negotiations among different factions of protestors. Space shifts not only due to power differences between the state and the dissenters, but also due to hierarchies within dissenting populations. As Michel Foucault (1994a: 372) observed, focusing on a simple opposition between state and civil society ignores the complexities of social movements and the multiple sites of confrontation. Such unequal arrangements are often based on longstanding gender, racial, and age privileges, and draw from existing and desired relationships to the state and its institutions.

Santa Barbara residents disagreeing with government plans to pursue military action in Iraq used public spaces—parks, key intersections, outdoor spaces (including those designated as “free speech zones”) at the local university, and State Street, Santa Barbara’s main commercial and tourist strip—as forums for political views not represented in the mainstream media and government proceedings. They also claimed these spaces in ways that required negotiation with the city and fellow dissenters. Disagreements about how to utilize public spaces overlapped with philosophical differences among participants. For some demonstrators, the struggle to prevent and later end the war with Iraq was distinct from larger domestic and international issues. For others, this military aggression was inexorably connected not only to other current and historical aggressions, but also to what some refer to as “the war at home” over the uneven distribution of power and resources during the second Bush presidency. Therefore, the messages conveyed within each protest reflected divisions within the larger movement and competing forms of citizenship being enacted in the streets. In addition, individuals and the collectives they were part of had varying relationships to patriarchal and white privilege and participated to different degrees in ageist and homophobic practices. Thus, social inclusion was constantly negotiated during protests and organizing.

Although we are primarily concerned with diverse political agendas within the broad category of “dissenters,” state surveillance and different relationships to state institutions (such as the military and the police) influenced the relations among protestors. Some movement participants believed that the state would protect their right to dissent so long as protestors followed a prescribed set of rules. Others did not see state institutions as permitting systems and the police as innocuous, or actively pushed beyond the limitations of legal protests. In the end, protestors whose interests were more closely aligned with the state gradually fulfilled a paternal, disciplining role within the movement.

In Santa Barbara, local and federal law enforcement officials engaged in many forms of surveillance and suppression, including denying permits, taking photographs and videos of protestors, especially those engaging in unsanctioned direct actions, using easily identifiable “covert” operatives, refusing to support protestors attacked by bystanders, arresting people under terrorist charges for taking part in unpermitted demonstrations, and donning riot gear to suppress at least one demonstration. Jules Boykoff (2007: 730) emphasizes the spatial and cultural implications of surveillance: “State surveillance can impinge on the practice of dissent, constraining spatial scales.” The spatial boundaries and scale of demonstrations result from negotiations between demonstrators and the state, and between different groups of protestors. Different surveillance tactics have unique impacts upon public demonstrations, but all have the possibility of diminishing political activity by exerting physical violence, fomenting internal disagreements, and creating logistical hurdles to legal protest. Dissenting parties responded by accepting the limits on protests, refusing to work within restricted spaces, stretching the spaces provided, and/or creating new spaces.

Intramovement disciplining was as salient for many demonstrators as state surveillance, showing the multivalent functioning of power. Foucault explores how the art of government, or governmentality, establishes continuity in the exercise of power in both upward and downward directions. The downward direction, for example, instills authority in male heads of household, and by extension in other male authority figures, to ensure good behavior among the population (Foucault, 1994b: 206–207). Thus, in the Santa Barbara antiwar movement, the policing of protestors went beyond the state. Self-designated male “authorities” also endeavored to ensure the “good behavior” of other participants by taking stock of behaviors they deemed questionable, holding meetings about people they viewed as out of control, and confronting people about their conduct. This disciplining responded
to and helped to create loci of confrontation among dissenting constituencies, showing a more complex set of relations than can be addressed by an analysis of the state versus dissenting citizens. These disciplinary dynamics originated in conflicts regarding the weekly antiwar march and continued in contentions about alternative direct actions.

The spaces used for dissent in Santa Barbara were overlaid with cultural meanings and racial and class stratification. In 2000, approximately 35 percent of the people living in Santa Barbara were Latino/as or “Hispanic” of any race; however, 51 percent of the residents living below the poverty line were Latino/as. Given that census data typically ignore undocumented workers, both percentages are likely to be underreported. The median family income among Latinos is $36,547, compared to $66,152 for white families and $57,880 for the overall population. Housing costs in Santa Barbara, like in many California cities, are high. According to the California Association of Realtors, the median home price was $975,000 in March 2008 (falling to $735,000 by March of 2009), influencing the high rate of renter-occupied homes: 58 percent of the homes in Santa Barbara are renter occupied, compared to 39 percent nationwide.

Our analysis begins in September 2002, when weekly antiwar marches commenced along the main commercial and tourist strip of Santa Barbara, an already gentrified area called State Street. The street’s charm and transition have been well documented in online forums concerned with local architecture. One site, for example, explains that “before the eighties … it was a seedy area.” This shift from establishments serving working-class, often Latino/a patrons, to more middle-class, white patrons hit a new pitch with a second turnover of retail spaces from independently owned boutiques and restaurants and lesser-known chains to major national chains such as Gap, Anthropologie, and Starbucks. Indeed the decided replacement and replacement of black- and Latino-owned small businesses and community associations from this business corridor to others closer to the East Side of Santa Barbara has been a creeping, decades-long process. In fact, the battle over the La Casa de la Raza community center that splashed across local newspapers in 2011 and 2012 indicate the intense racialization, homogenization, and sanitization of downtown space through attempts to marginalize, harass, and badger the attempts by the black and Latino communities to protect and claim space for alternative visions of economic and community development. Predictably, colonial aesthetics mandate that the aesthetic is “Spanish colonial”; most roofs are covered in red-orange terracotta tiles, nearly all storefronts are stucco, and intricate wrought-iron trim is common. Despite the long-term drought in the area, elaborately tiled fountains and plants from all over the world line the street. Rotating sculpture exhibits by well-known and up-and-coming artists are strategically placed along the approximately fourteen-block commercial strip between the 101 freeway and the beginning of a residential section of the street. The last liquor store disappeared after the marches began in 2002, leaving a single sex shop as the only reminder of a less manicured urban landscape. Even before this, the historic Second Baptist Church, a major site on the map of black Santa Barbara, moved away from its eighty-year history on Gutierrez Street just doors from the sex shop, but within viewing distance of lower State Street. At the launch of this era of U.S. occupation, gentrification in Santa Barbara, like that in other cities with far less wealth inequality, followed unoriginal trends in mapping public space that typically overlay sexuality, sexual practice, and race in land use codes and building permits issued.

Such changes in atmosphere require everyday disciplining along with more long-term demographic shifts. State Street’s sculpted space is subtly, rather than overtly, policed; non-consumers are discouraged from lingering too long on the benches in front of the shops and restaurants by merchants, patrons, and, when necessary, security personnel. Although people from a variety of racial backgrounds inhabit these spaces, consumer options cater to predominantly white wealthy residents and tourists. This “consumerist city,” like most urban spaces in the United States (and, increasingly, the world), prioritizes economic transactions over other forms of sociality (Dawson, 2006: 124).

The Weekly March and the Veterans for Peace

In September 2002, Rebecca, a Lebanese American woman, and Helen, a Japanese American woman, both in their late fifties, together with a few other UC staff, sent an email inviting people to gather on Saturday morning to express their frustration regarding the ongoing war in Afghanistan and the proposed war with Iraq. This brief memo was an overwhelming success. Helen remembers being surprised to see “close to two hundred people there—and multigenerational groups of people [with] banners, posters, drums, music, you know, it was an incredible gathering. It just brought tears to my eyes because … we really needed this.” Rebecca explains, “We marched on the sidewalks” through downtown, “we had signs, we said we weren’t interested in taking over the streets, that we were exercising our right to assembly.” Using the sidewalks along State Street provided the largest possible audience and maneuvered within the laws regarding public assembly without needing city sanction or a police escort. This expression of dissent soon became a weekly ritual and continued to grow in size, reaching a few thousand people at its peak (out of a local population of 150,000). After several weeks, someone informed Rebecca that a police escort had been arranged and that traffic would be stopped, allowing the march to occupy the streets of downtown Santa Barbara, including State Street.

For Rebecca, this defeated important aspects of the initial plan. First, “One of the things we had wanted from the outset was to not ask for permission.” Second, “When we walked on the sidewalks rather than in the street, all the traffic kept moving and we had a different kind of an audience than we did once we took the streets,” she explains. Once the march was legitimized by a city permit, “The police would close the streets to all traffic so all of the people who used to be passing by us in cars were no longer doing that.” In Richard Schechner’s (1993: 48) terms,
Veterans wanted to reach. Queergrad also deployed an embodied politics that was antithetical to the media ban on images of soldiers' coffins returning from Iraq and other battlefields. Although the bodies lying temporarily in the street were not the actual corpses of fallen soldiers and civilians, they served as reminders of the dead that the public was not supposed to see. Although the Veterans later organized a beach memorial for U.S. lives lost (Arlington West) that addressed concerns similar to Queergrad's, Queergrad violated the spatial, ideological, and body politics the Veterans wanted marchers to adhere to.

In contrast to the Veterans' patriotism, Queergrad articulated a critical and affective dissent, revealing and analyzing the larger web of violence and control within which the twenty-first-century invasion and occupation of Iraq were embedded. Their public actions solicited emotional-political responses to the human costs of war and their organizing strategy was premised on cultivating and nurturing connections among participants. Queergrad members demonstrate that political participation cannot be separated from affective ties to family, ethnic and racial communities, political allies, or friendship networks by positing affective connection as the basis for effective organizing and cultural critique (Mookherjee, 2005: 31–50). Despite these commitments, Queergrad's orientation had limitations. Most Queergrad members were uncomfortable with race as a basis for political action, and did not succeed in making Queergrad a space for mobilizing against racism. Many members included race in their research, but in terms of organizing, the space was still dominated by white group members and reflected the status privilege and aspirational bourgeois ideologies of doctoral education. Non-black members were sensitive to being praised as exceptional white people or having blackness turned into a spectacle for imitation. Still, the organization lacked basic clarity about race and racial violence.

Even in the context of long-term commitments to antiracism, the level of dialogue about race remained prosaic rather than being a primary motivating factor shaping political work. For example, the project of family-making and constituting mutual obligations rested on core assumptions in associational practice. These assumptions require ignoring a hard-nosed assessment of the "burdened individuality," "shattered [familial] bonds," and the state-sponsored temporal and spatial family disruption and geographic displacement that constitutes the psychic and material world of most black and Latino people (Hartman, 1997; Roberts, 2003). As family relations and kin ties continue their legacies as material features of the propertied possession of whiteness, Queergrad's lack of a more astute analysis of racial violence meant that members overlooked important and vital genealogies of revolutionary political practice and filled them with imaginaries of possibility, geographies of witness, and testimonies of affiliation that echoed the many makings of political family, intimacy, comfort, and solace under extraordinary duress (Beam, 1986; Riggs, 1989; Lorde, 1992, 1994a, 1994b, 2012; Dececco and Nelson, 1994; Johnson and Henderson, 2005; Arnold and Bailey, 2009; Johnson, 2011; Moore, 2011).

Queergrad was a site of what Michael Hames-Garcia calls "fugitive thought" made out of utter paradox, especially for people for whom legibility as "family" and "kin" are always mutually constituted with dispossession, containment, gratuitous violence, and assimilation (Somerville, 2000; Sycamore, 2004; Sharpe, 2010; Hong and Ferguson, 2011). Yet such paradoxes are worth examining for what they portend for substantive radical politics. Queergrad was not an explicitly genderqueer space and lacked a robust analysis of the implications of militarism and nationalism for sexual identity (Puar, 2007). Instead, most members were motivated by a desire to step outside the perceived ghettoization of queer politics into the political economy of sexuality. Nevertheless, a queer politics provides resources that enable practiced imaginaries of family ties and mutual obligations. Queered politics were the essential groundwork for the political mobilization of the straight and queer participants in the Queergrad-led antiwar actions (Cvetkovich, 2003).

The die-ins described above were one of many actions intended as political education. Topics shifted weekly and included media complicity in the Bush administration's policies, the impact of armaments containing depleted uranium on cancer rates, and the impact of war, nationalism, and militarism on women. While other transnational organizations in Santa Barbara utilized similar typcasts (for example, the local chapter of Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association encouraged white women to wear burqas to publicize the plight of women under the Taliban), the performances by Queergrad members encouraged people to think about everyday examples of racialized gender—including, for example, the fact that walking in downtown Santa Barbara as a dark-skinned woman was often treated as racial spectacle by tourists. Each week's performance included a visual component, such as dresses meant to signal group membership, distribution of flyers, and chants related to the week's theme. As expected, this greater visibility—combined with explicit pedagogical tools such as handouts—generated a greater degree of interaction with bystanders. Despite the occasional demand to "support our troops," which rang particularly hollow the week the group focused on depleted uranium's impact on people, including U.S. troops, in fields of battle, most reactions were quizzical and curious. Most often, onlookers accepted the materials offered by demonstrators.

Zoë, a mixed-race, queer-identified Latina who organized with Queergrad and ARISE, describes the affective dimensions of organizing in Santa Barbara: "I was still ... searching for the folks that were going to be my people for the time I was there and I think that when the war started there became a really clear sort of way to ... recognize these people that I really want to be friends with or close with or to politically align with, or just have the emotional common understanding of the world." Queergrad's organizing also allowed for flirtation, creating a space of comfort and camaraderie in a homophobic and racist culture, city, and broader antiwar community. Freedom from the guarded behavior often necessary for survival in homophobic cultures became an important part of building community and envisioning intersectional responses to the war. Monisha Das Gupta discusses
a similar experience of LGBT organizing in her research about South Asian LGBT organizations: “Love, affirmation, empathy, understanding, and protection all became central to the stories ... members relate about their organizations” (Das Gupta, 2006: 173).

Queergrad’s multi-issue antiwar campaign created space for the activism and leadership of queer people and their allies. For example, Kyle, a white male graduate student who participated in some creative interventions in the weekly march, describes protesting as “an opportunity” to practice his values while building an intimate relationship and friendships with people in Queergrad. Similarly, Cathy, a white queer-identified professor who did her graduate work in Santa Barbara and whose partner was finishing her doctorate in the years Queergrad was active, was drawn to the group because of existing friendships and a romantic partnership. She recalls “stepping into ... this collective of graduate students” who were invested in connecting “large issues of militarism and misogyny and racism.” This creative engagement was particularly meaningful because she “got a sense that all of us had this feeling of ... being isolated” for a number of reasons, including “quite possibly from being queer in Santa Barbara.” Cathy also emphasized the importance of “being visionary about women’s bodies,” and carried at the weekly marches a sign reading “Feminist Bush is Sacred, Nationalist Bush is Profane.” This multilayered slogan transformed the president’s name into a sexual pun while positioning policies championed by the Bush administration within larger processes controlling women’s bodies.

In the process of becoming a public presence, Queergrad became a place for people sharing similar critiques to come together and produce a queer-friendly, antiracist, feminist response to national crises, providing an alternative to what Wanda describes as major problems with contemporary U.S. culture: “I think that we just have a very impoverished sense of the social,” she observes. “I think citizenship is completely symbolic, is really boiled down to the least, the lowest common denominator. And they would really prefer for us to not be citizens and just be consumers.” However, the lack of racial diversity within the group and the privilege of graduate students have limited the scope of this nurturing tactic even while it provided the basis for creative demonstrations.

**ARISE: Confrontational Actions**

Another alternative to the patriotic public space managed by the Veterans for Peace was a series of direct actions performed by an ad-hoc formation of people, some of whom later came together as ARISE. According to Sophie, “the day after the bombs started dropping in Baghdad, there was a pretty big group of lefty, progressive radicals,” primarily from the university but with some representation from the broader community, “who decided that they needed to do something that was outside the bounds of this so-called peace movement that had developed.” On March 21, 2003, the morning after the United States invaded Iraq, this collective executed a set of direct actions throughout the city that explicitly moved away from the space claimed by the weekly march. They began with a series of die-ins at intersections, gas stations, and recruiting centers; two people also attempted to block the freeway early in the day, and at the end of the day the group joined a sanctioned march and then led a break-off contingent back towards the freeway and began marching up an exit ramp. As hundreds of people blocked the ramp, traffic ground to a halt and police blocked the freeway entirely. By stopping, however temporarily, the flow of traffic along the California coast and choosing gas stations and military recruitment centers as targets, this collective emphasized the economic aspects of the war and employed tactics more reminiscent of global justice protests than the queer, feminist tactics utilized by Queergrad (Brand and Wissen, 2002: 9–17; Starr, 2005).

Although both groups used die-ins as part of their public performances, the tone and context differed significantly. Acknowledging the devaluing of certain bodies, Queergrad members drew links between reviled queer bodies in the United States, including their own, and the unnecessary casualties of war, especially the civilians who become nameless, faceless, and storyless extras in the drama of war. Using the same tactic without the feminist overlay or link to queer organizing, ARISE critiqued unnecessary wartime deaths through connections to oil companies, contractors profiting from the war, and the recruiting strategies that draw young, often poor, people into the military. These embodied acts of resistance emphasized root economic causes and focused on the unequal power between nations based on money and military might, which has roots in colonialism. While this framework overlapped with Queergrad’s critiques of war and militarism, gender was not a key component of ARISE’s analysis.

As an organization, ARISE was very aware of COINTELPRO and other examples of U.S. government surveillance of dissenting groups (Day and Whitehorn, 2001: 285–297). This knowledge, combined with the presence of a police plant in the protests the day the war started, created a tight security culture within the collective. Ron describes undercover cops following people and taking photographs during protests, which led to “being at [ARISE] planning meetings and really wondering who was an FBI informant.” He believed that the state “wanted to make sure that no one was going to ... get to a level of coordinated activism and opposition to the U.S. structure as it had for, say, the Vietnam War.” As a black person, Ron felt particularly visible and therefore especially targeted by the police, based on his understanding of the ways that “structural violence gets particularly targeted to Black people” and his experience of being followed during demonstrations.

Ron was not alone in these trepidations. Fear regarding potential surveillance was a distinctive feature of ARISE’s organizing process. “We knew that there were Santa Barbara police that were videotaping these marches [and] infiltrating the marches and being undercover marchers along with us,” Sophie emphasizes, and “as people on the Left who know the history of COINTELPRO ... I think a lot of
The current construction of power in society is a complex interplay of institutionally embedded inequalities and systemic oppressions. The social and economic structures that maintain power dynamics are often invisible, yet they shape the daily experiences of individuals and communities. Understanding these structures is crucial for addressing social injustices and fostering equitable societies.

**Mock Project Proposal**

Mock Project Proposal

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Elizabeth Cunningham, Mark Schrader, and Tiffany Without-Heard
The interface between good public policy and social information with which it interacts is always a delicate balance. The need for informed citizens and effective leaders is crucial for the well-being of the community. However, the current system is often inadequate, failing to engage and educate the public effectively.

### Conclusion: \underline{Negotiation and Representation of Social and Educational Interests}

The discussion has highlighted the importance of open and effective communication between all stakeholders. It is crucial that policies are not only developed but also implemented in a way that is accessible and understandable to the general public. The role of education in this regard is significant, as it provides the necessary tools for citizens to participate actively in the democratic process.

Furthermore, the establishment of clear and transparent mechanisms for representation ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more equitable and just outcomes. By fostering an environment where all voices are heard, decisions can be made that benefit the entire community.

In conclusion, the effective negotiation and representation of social and educational interests are essential for a healthy and participatory society. Continuous efforts towards improving these aspects will undoubtedly contribute to the sustainability and development of our communities.

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