From Correspondence to Prefiguration: Mobilizing Learning Sciences for Alternative Social Futures

Natalia Smirnov, Independent Researcher, post.natalia@gmail.com
Joanna Weidler-Lewis, Pennsylvania State University, jrw96@psu.edu

Abstract: In this paper, we propose that Learning Sciences has a special potential to contribute to the making of a collective future aimed at social cooperation and planetary flourishing, rather than goals of unlimited economic growth and global competitiveness implicit in the discipline's inherited logics. To that end, we review studies of learning in contexts of social movements and activist projects, and discuss the movements' centering of *prefiguration* – the strategy of building and enacting alternative sociopolitical relations and infrastructures *in the here and now* with a future-oriented aim of dismantling and transforming oppressive institutions. We propose that *prefiguration* can also serve as a generative orientation and design principle for Learning Sciences and a *prefigurative analysis* of learning contexts can help to orient the contributions of the field towards more anti-oppressive and consciously open-ended sociomaterial arrangements.

Introduction

Learning Sciences (LS), as a field, strives to both empirically understand the fundamental processes of how people learn and engineer innovative educational designs responsive to the complex cognitive, social, and cultural dimensions of learning. This double commitment makes the field a powerful potential contributor to the deliberate shaping of social futures. But to what extent are the discipline's future imaginaries informed by and responsive to the current political realities and struggles, such as climate change, ethnic violence, and the global debt crisis? In this paper, we question the field's implicit future-looking commitments, and propose some alternative centerings aimed at deliberately transforming rather than reproducing the world.

Since its inception, LS has detached itself from school as the primary site of learning, treating the institution as more reflective of the industrial turn in social organization than one based on deep understanding of the processes by which people make meaning or develop expertise. This decoupling from the older, formal, industrial model of education has enabled the field to innovate methodologically and establish the legitimacy of learning experiences in community spaces, at home, online, and other settings. But what, in the imaginary of LS, ought to replace the form of the school? In the Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences, Sawyer writes that "the world economy has changed to an innovation- and knowledge-based economy, and that education must change as well for a society to make this transition successfully" (2014, p.729). Following this imperative, Sawyer paints a potential picture of the future of education: learners of all ages, liberated from the factory-like buildings of schools, enabled by personal tablets and laptops and personalized education software, mastering subjects at their own pace at home or in local learning hubs, occasionally supported by expert learning consultants—knowledge workers who will replace teachers and whose skills will be valued on par with those of lawyers, doctors, and engineers (pp. 727-744). In other words, the (ideal) education of the future shall resemble the lifestyle of the precarious freelance knowledge worker of today.

In 1976, Bowles & Gintis proposed the "correspondence theory" of education, arguing that schools in a capitalist society mirror or correspond to the social and institutional relationships that characterize commercial production and employment, rendering students—the future capitalist labor force—fragmented in consciousness, unprepared for and uninterested in participatory decision-making, and subordinate to the interests of a power-holding minority—in other words, ready for work. In fact, many schools today still resemble the organization of an industrial, hierarchical, nationalist society, churning out unquestioning executioners of uncreative cognitive tasks. But assuming that a science-informed organization of education ought to serve the interests of the changing "world economy"—one that privileges entrepreneurship, innovation, and technocentric knowledge work—only updates the system to correspond to the new capitalist world order—a deregulated, privatized, and neoliberal one.

We resist the taken-for-grantedness that educational configurations ought to serve the needs of dominant economic order, implicit in much of LS scholarship. What if instead of centering "the economy" and the presumption of its infinite growth as a primary organizing principle for designing educational configurations, we dared to prioritize other goals—the preservation and flourishing of ecological and cultural diversity, global peace and social cooperation, and the increased access to leisure and educational abundance for all human beings? How might our vision for a "future of education" shift to meet these priorities? The field's "signature" methodologies of design-based research (Barab, 2006), social design experiments (Gutierrez & Jurow, 2016), formative

interventions (Penuel, 2014), expansive learning (Engeström, 2015), and longitudinal dynamic idioculture projects such as the 5th dimension (Cole, 2006) can be leveraged towards prototyping and articulating the social and institutional relations necessary to enact and sustain these desired futures.

To inform this re-orientation, we can learn from a growing number of LS scholars studying learning in the context of social movements and activist projects. These settings are conducive sites for deepening our understanding of potential alternative social learning arrangements and processes. Unlike schools or other discipline-centric or age-segregated settings that aim to provide access to existing/dominant forms of expertise and activity, social movements are oriented towards actively creating social change, through multi-scaled and often decentralized forms of activity such as political campaigns, media and communication strategies, direct action, and public pedagogy projects. Additionally, social movement projects often critique and iterate their own internal organizational forms (such as by recognizing and addressing racist or sexist discourse among their members) in order to better reflect their envisioned political relations.

In what follows, we review relevant studies of learning in the context of social movements and activist projects and articulate their shared commitment to *prefiguration*—the strategy of building and enacting alternative sociopolitical relations and infrastructures in the here and now with a future-oriented aim of dismantling and transforming oppressive institutions. We then propose that the concept of prefiguration can serve as a generative analytic tool for LS more broadly, to trace, articulate and inform the politically proleptic dimensions of educational configurations. Finally, we use examples from our own work and from the global youth-led environmental movement to demonstrate the application of a *prefigurative analysis*—an interrogation of the means and ends of learning.

Learning in the context of social movement and activist projects

A growing number of Learning Scientists have explored the organization of learning in the context of social movements and activist projects (Jurow et al., 2016; Kirshner, 2008; Curnow, Davis & Asher, 2019; Vea, 2019). Social movements, as sites for learning, are more complex to study than classrooms and other contained educational spaces: projects often span multiple years or even decades, participation may fluctuate as different members join and leave, and traditional roles of teacher/student or expert/novice are not explicitly inscribed as leadership may shift with time and changing priorities of the movements themselves. Movement activities are understood to happen simultaneously at multiple scales — interpersonal, local, network, state, national, and even global. There is also no convenient sequestering of academic disciplines in movement work; instead multiple literacies and ways of knowing get mobilized to inform and advance movement projects. For instance, in analysis of animal rights activists, Vea (2019) traced how movement members developed and spread multimodal representations, such as social media memes and virtual reality experiences, to help broader audiences experience affective connections to non-human animals and incite an ethical response to animal suffering. Here, the multimodal literacy practices were tools not only for expression and communication, but for shifting the scale of the movement's political activities. Similarly, in a study of local resistance to government austerity cuts in Toronto, Canada, Esmonde, Curnow & Riviere (2014) documented a variety of ways activist members engaged with mathematical reasoning and representation, such as interpreting and generating budget statistics, using measurements and estimates to make flyers and posters, and analyzing online engagement data. Mathematics was an essential and critical aspect– but not the central focus– of activist activities.

Correspondingly, studying who and what learns or changes as part of movements' activities requires engaging with multiple units of analysis: practices, epistemologies, individual and group identities emerge, solidify, get modified, become standardized, and spread across networked activist sites. For example, in their study of a campus-based environmental justice group, Curnow, Davis & Asher (2019) documented the processes of politicization among members. In particular, they noted how different participants learned to see and work against marginalizing processes within the movement itself, such as by facilitating "go-arounds" to ensure more equitable vocal contributions from all members, orienting towards relational ways of knowing and being in solidarity with indigenous communities, and introducing productive theoretical and political concepts such as "standpoint feminism." The taking up of new practices and epistemologies also influenced some members to take up new political identities within the group, identifying as "radicals."

While deep and consequential learning occurs as part of movement participation, it happens in the context of meaningful collective action. In his study of learning in three youth activism organizations, Kirshner (2008) noted that "each of the groups organized long-term projects motivated by an authentic problem or task," ensuring that youth participants "confronted problems whose solutions were ill defined and subject to the constraints of the real world" (p. 91). Whereas authentic, problem-based, and project-based tasks are valued in LS as effective educational approaches in classrooms, responding to actual political struggles in the context of social movements often involves significant behind-the-scenes or "invisible work," not easily measured or even clearly defined

(Jurow et al., 2016). For example, in their longitudinal participatory research project with a food justice movement, Jurow et al (2016) documented a number of practices that fell outside of the anticipated work of community leaders (known as promotoras) enlisted to support gardening in a neighborhood identified as a "food desert." This unanticipated work, which promotoras were not prepared or trained for, included troubleshooting technology provided for gardening activities, counseling residents on personal domestic violence and health issues, and marketing the positive impact of the organization to the public. This project also demonstrated the potential of a research-practice partnership between LS and a social movement to support the design of a software tool that articulated and made the invisible work visible, to facilitate its execution, and to increase the community leaders' technical literacy and fluency.

Because movement work spans multiple physical spaces and temporalities, the boundaries of where and when learning happens in social movements become blurry and stretched. In their case study of an activist youth media project, Ferman and Smirnov (2016) argued that beyond the teaching and learning of media skills and literacies involved in producing a youth-led news show, youth and adult members engaged in significant amounts of behind-the-scenes work and learning required to execute it, including institutional partnership building, developing infrastructures for distribution, facilitating community screenings and discussions, and mentoring one another on academic, personal, and professional issues. Inadvertently, in researching social movement and activist projects, LS scholars not only articulate "the how" – the empirically observed processes and practices of learning – but grapple with the "for what" – the political aims, "for whom" – the communities affected, and "with whom" – the stakeholders included in or marginalized by the research (Philip, Bang & Jackson, 2018). As Zavala (2016) reflects on doing participatory research with a grassroots campaign to resist the privatization of an elementary school, activist learning contexts "won't hold still" for researchers, as political understandings mature, collective tensions emerge and get negotiated, and strategic priorities shift. These conditions make it more challenging to center researcher-defined questions. However, what we lose by giving up experimental control, we may gain in ecological validity that comes with studying learning "in the wild" and the reward of contributing knowledge to building more just alternative futures.

We think researchers can learn from the complex, real-world learning contexts of social movements and activist projects. However, we also believe that LS, as a field, in its joint attention to theory, practice, design, and scale has much to contribute to the pressing needs of social movement work. LS research can help social movements diagnose naive political and economic mental models, develop strategies to foster deep conceptual change regarding ideologically thorny issues, effectively diffuse organizational practices across geographically and demographically varied activist network sites, and engage diverse stakeholders in collaborative inquiry and design to build desired alternative social futures. To consciously shape social futures and not just reproduce ones compatible with the dominant economic order, researchers must contend with how alternative sociopolitical relations are made available and enacted within a learning context. The simultaneous holding of an alternative future – one that contrasts with the dominant institutional and political forms – while attempting to enact the desired sociopolitical relations in the present – is the political strategy of *prefiguration*. We explain prefiguration next.

Prefiguration

Marxist, social movement scholar Carl Boggs coined the term prefiguration (1977). Boggs defined prefiguration as the "embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal" (1977, p.100). Prefigurative strategy was born out of anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist efforts to foster participatory involvement in revolutionary practice; as such, prefiguration contrasts with "statist" revolutionary models such as Leninism, which rely on hierarchical, centralized, and heavily bureaucratic organizational strategies for instituting political change, which end up reproducing the main relational forms of capitalism, including specialized and alienated labor. Scholars have since drawn on notions of prefiguration to analyze more recent social movements such as the alter-globalization movement (Maeckelbergh, 2011), Occupy Wall Street (Graeber, 2013), and Catalan anarchist "social centres" (Yates, 2015), specifying some features and nuances of the prefigurative strategy that may be potentially relevant to and compatible with LS.

Undergirding theories of prefiguration is the union of action and ideology; how one engages in the world is how the world ought to be. As Maeckelbergh argues, "prefiguration is a practice that assumes the ends and the means to be inextricably linked, where the means are the result of past ends and result in future ends, and therefore prefiguration rejects a focus on either means or ends to the exclusion of the other" (2009, p. 90). More than simple platitudes, like "be the change you wish to see" or "practice what you preach," prefiguration is a mode of experimental actualization that does not distinguish between practice and thought (Van de Sande, 2013), and must involve a change in material arrangements (Yates, 2015). While the actual practices, norms, values and relations

of prefiguration "will look different based on the communities that take it up, via the spaces that make it possible" (Zavala & Golden, 2016, p. 213), movements and projects carrying out the prefigurative strategy tend to share a dual commitment to continuously working to decentralize power through horizontal and democratic decision-making (Maeckelbergh, 2011), and interrupting forms of racial, classed, gendered, colonial, heteronormative and able-ist oppression, including/especially within the movement's own relations and activities (Luchies, 2014, p.100). Drawing on a study of three activist social centres in Barcelona, Yates (2015) proposed that prefiguration is made up of five dynamic and interrelated processes: (1) collective experimentation, (2) production and circulation of political perspectives, (3) development of new social norms and conduct, (4) consolidation of norms and values in movement infrastructures, and (5) diffusion of ideas and practices to wider audiences and networks. In other words, prefiguration involves the iterative construction of alternative sociopolitical and material relations that simultaneously embody and bring forth the movement's desired collective future, while staying constantly humble and open to what that future ought to look like, as it can only be prefigurative if it is responsive to and inclusive of all participants.

We believe that the notion of prefiguration, as defined above, is deeply compatible with the goals and methods of LS to better understand the cognitive, social, and cultural processes involved in learning and to use this knowledge to design learning environments to help people learn more deeply and effectively (Sawyer, 2014, p. 1). Bringing the language of prefiguration and LS together, we can think of prefiguration as the iterative design of learning environments that embody desired sociopolitical relations. Because LS contributions are not always conscious or explicit about their political orientations, a commitment to prefigurative LS is a commitment to non-authoritarian, anti-oppressive, and open-ended research and design. And because prefiguration depends on experimentation, development of concepts and practices, consolidation of norms and values in infrastructures, and diffusion of ideas across movement networks, LS contributions of cognitive theories, design principles, implementation strategies, and socio-technical tools can be productively leveraged to serve the needs of prefigurative social movements. In fact, the earlier review of LS studies in the context of social movements and activist projects demonstrates this compatibility: Vea's (2019) finding of activists' use of affective power of "embodied encounter" and multimodal literacies to engender an ethical response towards non-human animals is a form of production and circulation of political perspectives (Yates, 2015). Curnow, Davis & Asher's (2019) tracing of the emergence and take-up of the "go-around" practice in the activist group is a strategic form of anti-oppressive norm, experimentally arrived at and consolidated into the movement's infrastructure.

An understanding of prefiguration can also invite LS researchers to stay honest and be wary of studies that signal at certain political ends (e.g., "equity") while implicitly centering, corresponding to, and reproducing dominant social and economic relations and oppressions as the means of "getting there." As such, we propose applying a kind of *prefigurative analysis* – an interrogation of learning contexts in terms of the prefigurative processes and alternative futures they embody. We illustrate this approach next.

Applying prefigurative analysis

As scholars who have committed our own careers to studying learning oriented towards social justice and political engagement, we decided to pose the prefigurative challenge first to ourselves. We asked: to what extent to do the contexts we research embody prefigurative social and political relations? What alternative futures do these contexts envision and make available (if any), which possibilities do they preclude, and what existing political structures and trajectories do they take for granted, center, and correspond to? We also asked these questions of the growing youth-led environmental movement, to examine what prefigurative processes and strategies are involved.

For this paper, we considered several prior research projects the authors engaged in as well as examined interviews and the online presence of youth climate activists. The first case considers an ethnographic study of undergraduate engineering and the ways in which LGBTQ students were working to transform engineering practices to be more accepting of their sexual identities (Weidler-Lewis, under review). The second case compares two technology-mediated civic learning contexts—a school-based government simulation and an out-of-school participatory design of a civic learning platform (Smirnov, 2019, 2016). Our last case compiles the individual acts of youth climate activist and shows how they are part of the social movement enacting a climate-just future. We have chosen to foreground Yates's (2015) operationalization of prefiguration to highlight the prefigurative work in each.

The limits of disrupting sex-based inequity in a historically male-dominated discipline

Weidler-Lewis began an ethnographic study of the LGBTQ student group, GLE, in order to investigate learning from an intersectional perspective specifically questioning how sex, gender, and sexual orientation were made consequential in undergraduate engineering education. Queer and feminist scholars have long argued that

heteronormativity imposes a false alignment of sex, gender, and sexuality such that it appears natural that a binary biological sex (male, female) is the basis for gender (masculine, feminine), which in turn evokes sexual desire, with heterosexuality the assumed natural order (Butler, 2002). In order to disrupt this alignment, the relations among these axes (sex, gender, and sexuality) must be interrogated. Furthermore, understanding how inequity produced in one axis informs inequity in another axis is imperative from a prefigurative standpoint.

The students in GLE were an ideal group in which to apply a prefigurative analysis as they all had dispositions as problem-solvers and world-changers (author, year). While each student had an individual pathway into an engineering future, collectively they were acting to reorganize the social world to make being openly gay in engineering acceptable. Yates's (2015) operationalization of prefiguration makes apparent the work GLE students engaged to create a new world. A short example is provided for each. The students *experimented* with expressing their sexuality to others by wearing symbols like a rainbow pin or adding affiliations with LGBTQ activism on their resumes. They *circulated* their political perspective by holding informational sessions and promoting the group through t-shirts. Their meetings showcased *conduct* such as stating pronouns to reflect the political position. They reconstituted the material environment, *consolidation*, by having an all-night party in the engineering center and to claim the space as their own. Lastly, they worked to *diffuse* their message by meeting with other similar student groups locally and nationally. The micro-actions within the GLE group can be mapped onto the distal changes in the broader societal discourse that is increasingly accepting of LGBTQ identities in STEM disciplines and is evidenced by national groups that reflect this discourse such as oSTEM and Lesbians who Tech (oSTEM, 2019; Lesbians who Tech, 2019).

Although the students in GLE were organizing for a more equitable future based on sexual orientation, the women in GLE experienced sex-based discrimination and gendered expectations that the men did not. This suggests disrupting heteronormativity and Butler's (2002) heterosexual matrix through sexuality alone is not enough to disrupt the expectations of alignment between sex and gender. This finding does not take away from the prefigurative work the students are enacting, but rather is a reminder that all axes of oppression must be continually interrogated. Also, while the students were working towards having their sexuality accepted within their chosen career trajectory, they were unquestioning of the dominant ideologies present in the engineering field such as its deep entanglement with the military-industrial complex. A prefigurative analysis gives shape to the limits of change happening in this discipline and the directions we must attend to in order to create a more egalitarian world.

Civic participation vs civic futuremaking

Smirnov's work on civic learning in technology-mediated contexts can help illuminate when education spaces orient to prefigurative arrangements (i.e., ones that imagine and embody alternative, anti-oppressive futures) versus arrangements that provide access to the workings of the current societal systems. In her study of a citywide initiative to develop an online social network for youth civic engagement (Smirnov, 2016), the design process was organized to allow the youth leaders to study and critique existing social media platforms, define values and vision for the platform they wished to create, anticipate cultural and communication challenges that might be inherited from other societal contexts, and develop technical features and community routines to counteract these anticipated scenarios. For example, based on their experiences with Facebook and other social networks, youth anticipated that bullying or hateful speech might seep into the positive online space they were developing. In a participatory design workshop, they tested out different ways these interactions might emerge and strategies that could prevent or resolve them, such as clearly highlighting positive community guidelines, creating rules for intervening, and the young designers themselves taking on roles as leaders and community welcomers. As such, in developing a new sociotechnical environment, the youth creators engaged in *experimentation*, *production of new norms and conduct*, and *consolidation* of them in a digital and community infrastructure (Yates, 2015).

Alternatively, another civic education context—an American Government class that engaged high school seniors in a simulation of the U.S. legislative process was differently prefigurative (Smirnov, 2019). On the one hand, students had that the experiential opportunity to imagine, author, debate, amend, and vote on new legislative policies – circulating political meanings and experimenting with bill proposals as potential solutions. On the other hand, the learning environment explicitly mirrored dominant political norms and relations. For example, in the beginning of the simulation, students had to choose a political party (Democrat or Republican) to identify with. They were discouraged by the teachers from identifying as independent or a third-party members because doing so would make them less able to participate in all the processes of the current bipartisan U.S. government system. In conducting their debates, students had to follow traditional parliamentary procedure, which, while facilitating a structured system for contributing perspectives, did not necessarily counteract implicit discursive biases and oppressions based on race, gender, class, and ability. In other words, the learning arrangement was designed for students to learn to effectively participate in the existing activity structures and bipartisan biases of the U.S.

legislative process. While learning how the existing system works also enables someone to see opportunities for reforming it, the simulation did not allow the space and time to encourage this kind of radical re-imagining. It effectively *corresponded to* the dominant political system and its practices, but did not *prefigure* an alternative sociopolitical system.

Shaking the system: Global youth climate activists

Inspired by teen activists taking a stand against gun violence in America, one of the most recognizable youth climate activists, Greta Thunberg began protesting for climate justice outside of the Swedish parliament every Friday holding a wooden sign with "Skolstrejk för Klimatet" (Goodnow, 2018, 2019). When she was eight years old, Autumn Peltier encountered "toxic" water for the first time and realized that access to clean drinking water was not available to all people; since then she has become a clean water activist and at age fourteen was named the chief water commissioner by the Anishinabek Nation (CBC, 2019). Helena Gualinga says she has been fighting for climate justice and indigenous rights her entire life, and uses social media to shed light on the plight of her Ecuadorian community and the efforts to stop oil companies and government repression from land abuse in the Amazon (Brueck, 2019). Although it is easy to assign individual accomplishment to these youth, we argue that they are part of a network of youth activists engaged in prefiguration for a climate-conscious, just future.

Each of these youth, and there are many more who could be named, began with imaging a world that could be otherwise. Thunberg *experimented* by not attending school on Fridays and instead held the first version of what would become known as #FridaysForFuture – a global school strike by children and their allies concerned about the future of the planet. As she says, "What is the point of learning facts in the school system when the most important facts given by the finest science of that same school system clearly mean nothing to our politicians and our society?" (Thunberg, 2018). Gualinga's preferred mode to *circulate* her political message is Instagram, where she draws attention to not only action in her community, but global action such as the youth-led climate strike in New York City in the Fall of 2019 (@helenagualinga, 2019). Thunberg's use of zero-carbon emitting transportation such as sailing instead flying and Peltier's new role as water commissioner are examples of the youth activists changing their *conduct* to reflect their position on climate activism. Every instance of #FridaysForFuture, every protest in the streets, and every march for climate activism is a way of *consolidating* this movement into the material environment. Each has spoken before the United Nations, *diffusing* their message internationally. Their actions are implicated in global climate action movements including the 2019 U.S. Youth Climate Strike.

The media attention Thunberg has received over the other youth activists is problematic as it devalues the ways in which all of these activists see the interconnections between economic, racial, and environmental oppression. Thunberg herself acknowledges her position of privilege and she specifically calls out how her home country of Sweden must act on climate change, arguing that developing countries will be unlikely to care about the climate crisis, "if we who already have everything don't care even a second about it" (Thunberg, 2018). Furthermore, this recognition is part of the reason why she uses her position of privilege to act, despite her inclination to not speak due to her Asperger syndrome and selective mutism (Thunberg, 2018). Gualinga sees the inseparability of indigenous peoples' rights with climate activism; she argues, "by protecting indigenous peoples' rights, we protect billions of acres from exploitation" (Gualinga, 2019). Peltier sees access to clean water as disproportionately affecting the poor and non-white communities (Volkov, 2018). As the leader of the youth-led "This is the Zero Hour Movement," Nadia Nazar says, "together, the youth are shaking the systems that have supported the climate crisis, including racism, patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism" (Burton, 2019).

Conclusion and implications

Applying the prefigurative analysis to our prior work shows the gaps between the socially just worlds we wish to create and the means by which learning contexts aim to get there. The students of GLE worked hard to transform practices towards greater inclusion of their sexual identities, but more work is needed to dismantle the practices that reinforce the dominant ideologies of engineering related to capitalism and patriarchy. The second case demonstrated that prefiguring civic engagement must be organized to allow for the reimagination of possibilities outside our current two party structure. Incorporating youth climate activists into our analysis shows how climate justice is being globally prefigured: not by one lone Scandinavian, but by youth who are part of collectives working now to make their future possible. We are already beginning to see the effects of their activism materialize: recently, Italy became the first country to make climate the center of its core curriculum, declaring that "the 21st century citizen must be a sustainable citizen" (Horowitz, 2019). It is now our turn to leverage our collective knowledge as a field to support youths' imagining and make it an enduring reality.

Our call to action is to commit our work to prefiguring alternative futures by centering radical possibilities of dignity, compassion, abundance, and justice, not only to corresponding to economic futures already

dominating our world. This means that when we design for learning we need to make explicit our political commitments rather than claiming neutrality, a stance particularly important in disciplines often regarded as 'neutral', such as math or science. If we continue to unconsciously replicate existing systems, we risk reproducing oppression inherent in historically produced disciplines. A commitment to prefiguration might also require us to consciously commit to a research and design process that interrogates oppression in all its forms, because as the youth climate activists profiled in this paper show us, in the act of re-imagining a more just alternative future, all systems of oppression are implicated. Finally, our designs for learning must be purposefully open-ended, allowing for ongoing experimentation and negotiation. After all, the core of prefiguration is an embrace of radical participation, and that is an expertise that belongs to those who dare to go against the common, settled, and even so-called "best" practices.

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