Propaganda, collective participation and the ‘war of position’ in the Brazilian Landless Workers’ Movement

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Abstract

The Landless Workers’ Movement (MST) is recognized as Brazil’s most successful social movement. Although its goal is agrarian reform, the MST has been the subject of significant educational scholarship due to the emphasis it places on education reform, and formal and informal education. The MST’s pedagogy has been extensively analysed. However, what remains remarkable about the MST is the on-going participation of its members after they achieve their immediate goal of land allocation. This article presents findings from a content analysis of 25 years of the movement’s journal – the Jornal Sem Terra (JST). Although the usage of media within movements has received considerable attention, the majority of this scholarship focuses on external media. This article explores implicit pedagogical usage of the JST. Specifically, grounded theory is used to analyse how the MST pedagogically advocates on-going participation in collective relations through its usage of the Portuguese term formação, whose meaning is nuanced, but can be summarily understood as training or development. Through a content-analysis of the JST, three key themes on cooperation as on-going participation are illustrated, documenting how formação – as a pedagogical imperative for new cooperative social structures – is part of the struggle Gramsci terms the ‘war of position’.

Key words:
implicit curriculum, cooperation, social movement, Gramsci, propaganda, Landless Workers’ Movement (MST)

Introduction

Latin American social movements have provided important insights into the linkages between critical pedagogy and collective action (Arnowe, 1973; Belle, 1984; Ghanem,
The 'war of position' in the Brazilian Landless Workers' Movement

Although many social movements arose during Brazil's transition to civilian rule in 1984, the Landless Workers' Movement (O Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra or the MST) is widely recognized as the most successful (Veltmeyer, 1997; Robles, 2001).

The MST is an agrarian reform movement, that seeks to challenge Brazil's highly concentrated system of property ownership, which is among the most inequitable in the world (Alston et al., 1999). Members achieve this end by tactically occupying land deemed 'unproductive' (Branford and Rocha, 2002). This tactic of land occupation evolved in response to Article 186 of the Brazilian constitution, which states that if the land is not socially productive it can be expropriated by the government (Wolford, 2006). After occupying unproductive land, members form squatter settlements, which are known as encampments. Through these encampments the MST pressures the government to expropriate the land and create a legal settlement. For 25 years, MST members have used this land-occupation strategy to demand fundamental agrarian reform and, more broadly, the creation of a new citizenry (Branford and Rocha, 2002).

Adult education plays a central role in the MST, because Brazil's landless families have been frequently forced to migrate for itinerant work opportunities, losing the chance to receive a formal education. As a result, formal and informal educations are omnipresent in MST encampments and settlements (Knijnik, 1997; Kane, 2000; Branford and Rocha, 2002; McNee, 2002). Over the last 25 years, the MST has become an exemplar of Brazilian popular education reform (Knijnik, 2002; Diniz-Pereira, 2005). The importance of education within the MST buttresses the findings of various scholars, whom have shown that formal education and informal learning in movements contributes directly to the formation of collective identities and the acquisition of new skills (Finger, 1989; Crowther and Shaw, 1997; Foley, 1999, 2001; Kilgore, 1999; Overwien, 2000; Holst, 2002; Anyon, 2009).

The major focus of educational scholarship has been the MST's pedagogy, and its ties to Freirean processes of praxis and conscientisation (Freire, 1973; Knijnik, 1997; Caldart, 2004; McNee, 2002; Issa, 2007). What remains remarkable about the MST, however, is its longevity. And in this, one question remains largely unanswered. How does the MST, as a social movement organisation, maintain active political participation among its members after they achieve their immediate goal of gaining access to land? Participation in encampments, and winning access to land is a largely cooperative effort. Yet, scholars have noted that participation in the movement's collective projects frequently wanes following settlement as members focus on individual challenges (Branford and Rocha, 2002; Wolford, 2003, Johnson, 2004; Ondetti, 2008). The MST seeks to combat this waning of collective participation following settlement. This is because, as it is said in the movement, 'one struggle begins another'. Indeed, after land is won, numerous other struggles emerge, including gaining access to material resources such as credit, to roads and schools as well as galvanising the social resources for collective agricultural production. As a result, the MST is not simply the struggle for land, but also, the struggle on the land. Exploring the nuances of post-settlement participation, this paper argues that the movement's periodical, the Jornal Sem Terra (JST), is both an explicit and implicit pedagogical medium, and plays an integral role in maintaining movement participation through the continued training of the MST's members.
Utilising grounded theory to analyse the JST, this research focuses on the ideological and pedagogical message surrounding the Portuguese term *formação*. While more space will be subsequently devoted to unpacking its usage, at this point it is sufficient to indicate that *formação* is a nuanced term, which can be translated as ‘formation’ in English, but might be better understood as ‘training’ or ‘development’, although neither referent singularly captures the term’s meaning. As this research demonstrates, *formação* is used within the MST to refer to a combined set of formal and informal pedagogical processes whereby members are ‘made human’, and engage in a larger social struggle (Klandermans and de Weerd, 2000; Mayo, 2008). A considerable part of *formação*, this research argues, is the training which takes place to promote co-operative participation in the movement, through new social relations, political institutions and agrarian collectives. This pedagogical usage of *formação* within the JST, can be seen as a counter-hegemonic actions, part of Gramsci’s long-term ‘war of position’ (Carrol and Ratner, 1994, 1999; Mayo, 2008).

This research’s purpose is to explore how propaganda communicates implicit curricula. This purpose is achieved by using grounded theory to analyse the movement’s journal, focusing on *formação* as an exemplar of implicit curricula. The specific objective is to examine how models of ongoing participation are communicated through the JST, by the MST as an organization, to its members. This objective is achieved through the presentation of thematic results, which illustrate that a major function of this implicit curriculum of *formação* is the promotion of co-operative participation in the movement through new social relations, political institutions, and agrarian collectives. Given that member’s participate less in active demonstrations following settlement, understanding how the MST communicates with its members remains a significant question. While scholarship has explored issues surrounding media and social movements, most of it concerns movements’ tactical deployment of external media, or external representations of movements, but not movements’ internal usage of media (Melucci, 1996; Froehling, 1997; Jordan, 1999; Downing, 2001; Mamadouh, 2004; Pickerill, 2004). In particular, the educational work of radical media is under-explored (for notable exceptions see: Worth, 2003; Boshier and Huang, 2009, 2010). Contextualised theoretically and drawing on empirical results, the paper informs this gap in scholarship by positioning the implicit curriculum of *formação*, and its advocating of alternatives to the neoliberal state, as counter-hegemonic actions. This research’s larger theoretical contribution is its illustration of how an implicit curriculum – *formação* in this case study – is communicated, concerning post-settlement participation within Latin America’s most successful social movement.

**The Jornal Sem Terra**

The JST provides an exhaustive data source for analysing the linkages between pedagogy and radical media, having been in continuous production since the movement’s origination in 1981. Starting as an occasional leaflet, the JST has grown to be a regular periodical with wide geographic print distribution, as well as a sophisticated online presence. The JST provides an excellent resource for scholarship as it is widely disseminated within settlements, frequently promotes discussion and reflects the movement’s history.
The JST is a critical arena through which the MST communicates with its members, sharing information about victories, linkages with other movements and ideological struggles. The journal also has a self-described pedagogical role, describing itself as an instrument of \textit{formaç\~ao} – of political education, training and development (JST, 1990). As part of its pedagogical role, it seeks to generate awareness, helping its members develop an understanding of the nature of capitalism and the important role of their struggle in the formation of a new society. The communication of this pedagogy can be described as an implicit curriculum, which is accessed through formal, informal, incidental and tacit learning.

**Methods**

This research was designed to explore whether the JST communicates implicit curricula to MST members. Specifically, it sought to inform the question of how the JST presents the relationship between formal education, informal learning, and ongoing movement participation. Grounded theory provides an appropriate methodology, as this research involved first reading through several thousand pages of JST articles, and then condensing the recurring terms into salient themes. 

By deriving theory from an examination of data, grounded theory takes an approach that in many ways is the opposite of the conventional scientific method. Axial coding was first conducted, starting with the terms \textit{education} and \textit{learning}, as these were the broad areas of interest (Kelle, 2005). Passages that contained variants of the terms \textit{education} and \textit{learning} were intensively analysed, generating a coding paradigm that consisted of other recurring generative terms, such as \textit{masses}, \textit{knowledge}, \textit{cooperation}, \textit{participation}, and \textit{formaç\~ao} (formation/development) (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). As the content analysis was conducted year-by-year, a recurring theme emerged early on concerning the relationship between \textit{formaç\~ao} and the moulding of political consciousness, specifically through participation in collective activities. \textit{Formaç\~ao} was coded as a higher-level concept, and it was then hypothesized that in passages containing \textit{formaç\~ao} and more than one additional generative term, \textit{formaç\~ao} would be used to describe the benefits of collective behaviour. Seeking to assess whether this hypothesis could be falsified, the remaining years of the journal were analysed. Although the term \textit{formaç\~ao} on its own can be used in other contexts, such as in the formation of a political bloc (\textit{formaç\~ao de banda/quadrilha}), when combining other terms from the coding paradigm with \textit{formaç\~ao} in an advanced lexical search, it became clear that an empirical phenomenon had emerged.

The research drew upon purely qualitative analytical techniques, as the hypothesis focused on the specific content of the passages in which \textit{formaç\~ao} was used. Quantitative tools, such as frequency counts and proximity analyses, while helpful in other content analyses, were found to be ineffective in the present study due to the variety of non-educational contexts in which \textit{formaç\~ao} is used. Drawing on close textual interpretation, three themes coalesced concerning the implicit pedagogical usage of \textit{formaç\~ao}. Although distinct, each theme relates to the importance of cooperation as form of on-going movement participation. Turning towards the literature, Gramsci's concept of the war of position provided a refined optic for understanding the MST's, and in turn JST's, usage of \textit{formaç\~ao} in the context of advancing cooperative participation. Following the theoretical contextualisation of this study, the thematic results of this content analysis are presented.
Propaganda as pedagogy: in the medium is the message

Attention to the educational and cultural politics of social movements began largely in the 1980s (Belle, 1984; Finger, 1989; Eckstein, 1989; Johnston and Klandermans, 1995). Research on education within social movements has since largely focused on formal educational aspects, such as seminars and workshops (Overwein, 2000; Swain, 2005; Holst, 2009). Yet, scholars are increasingly looking at the experiential learning that occurs in everyday contexts, such as discussion groups and political demonstrations, to explore how movements integrate cultural and political ideals in an educational setting (Alvarez et al., 1998; Holst, 2002; Gouin, 2009). One pedagogical aspect of movement culture that has gone largely unanalysed, however, is the implicit and explicit messages communicated through propaganda.

When one thinks of social movements, propaganda often provides the images that come to mind: banners, placards, protest songs, leaflets and so on. For many people, propaganda has a largely pejorative connotation, being associated with lies, deceit, distortion (Jowett and O'Donnel, 2006). However, in various countries, the term is more neutral, owing to its original Latin root *propagae*, which means to propagate (Randal, 2002). In Brazil, for example, propaganda refers to both ‘advertisement’ and ‘publicity’, in addition to the more common Western conception of the manipulation of information. Propaganda is understood here as an organised process of communication, whereby particular ideas are disseminated and promoted in an attempt to either directly or indirectly influence the opinions and behaviours of large groups (Randal, 2002).

Although there are various theoretical models of propaganda, such as Chomsky and Herman’s (1988), Ross’s epistemic merit model potentially holds the most applicability for studies of education in social movements (Ross, 2002). There are three main elements to this model: the sender (who is doing the persuading), the receiver (at whom the message is directed), and the message itself, which is the means of communication. In order for a piece of information to be considered propaganda, Ross argues that four conditions must be met. First, propaganda is defined by intentionality; it is purposefully-crafted communication. Second, propaganda has a target. It is directed towards a specific group of people. Third, propaganda is different from other forms of persuasion, such as advertising, because it is tied to a socio-political organisation. Lastly, propaganda is part of an ideological or epistemic campaign. The epistemic campaign - the usage of media as a tool in shaping political consciousness and behaviour - is where propaganda’s educational potential resides.

In educational scholarship, the explicit and implicit pedagogical focus of propaganda has received extremely limited direct attention. Within this lacunae, the work of Bosheir and Huang (2009, 2010) is exemplary. Their studies focus on the role of propaganda as a form of both adult non-formal education and informal learning within the historical development of the Chinese Communist party. Through their analysis of internal party documents and programmes, Bosheir and Huang document that propaganda campaigns were, and still are, pedagogical tools used to advocate everything from attendance in adult education classes to cooperative labour initiatives (see also Wang, 2010). As Boshier and Huang (2010) argue, the purpose of these campaigns 'is to educate citizens. Propaganda is a synonym for education. Not all education is propaganda. But, at least in party circles, all propaganda is education (289)'. Other scholarship in this vein has explored the pedagogical usage of political cartoons within
American populist newspapers in the late 19th century, arguing that these easily-understood cartoons provided simple digestible political commentary for largely illiterate farmers (Worth, 2003). Emancipatory media should be seen, therefore, as integral to the learning that occurs within social movements (Downing, 2001; Shaffer, 2009).

In analysing the pedagogical content of movements' internal media, the concept of *implicit curriculum* has significant value. While the phrase implicit curriculum has been used in educational scholarship, efforts at defining it have been fairly diffuse and underdeveloped (Dudley, 1977; Crockenberg and Bryant, 1978; Inlay, 2003). Drawing on Abu-Lughod's (1998, 2005) astute analyses, which explore how Egyptian television serials are pedagogical tools used to produce specific subjects and imagined communities, or geographically-dispersed groups unified by cultural narratives (Anderson 1983), this article argues that in the context of media, the phrase implicit curriculum can achieve greater theoretical purchase. As used herein, implicit curriculum refers to the largely unacknowledged, either intentional or unintended, pedagogical content that promulgates and maintains knowledge and appropriate behaviour.

The informational content of propaganda is received through largely informal, incidental, and tacit processes, although as I later show it can also be engaged with in formal educational contexts. While these pedagogical processes are frequently difficult to disaggregate (de Carteret, 2008), we can conceive of informal learning as either individual or collective, intentional or unplanned, and characterized by an awareness that learning is taking place (Mezirow, 1990; Foley, 1999; Hager and Halliday, 2006; Marsick et al., 2009). Schugurensky (2006) argues that intentionality and consciousness are the dual parameters frequently used to delineate informal learning. Incidental learning, by contrast, is explicitly a by-product of another activity (Marsick and Watkins, 1990). Following Schugurensky (2006) again, incidental learning is acquired through experiences in which the learner is unaware of a previous learning goal but subsequently gains awareness that learning has occurred. Tacit learning, or socialization, while also based on experience, is by contrast distinct in that there is not necessarily an immediate awareness of learning occurring (Livingstone, 2006; Schugurensky, 2006; Marsick et al., 2009). Within social movements, such unacknowledged learning is particularly common as Foley indicates it is 'embedded in action and is often not recognized as learning' (1999:1).

Although it operates through an implicit curriculum, the movement's journal also plays a role in formal education, understood most readily as including a teacher and occurring in a school. For example, the JST is used explicitly as an educational tool in various settlement schools. In a 1990 self-reflexive JST article (JST, 1990), the usage of the journal as a pedagogical medium is discussed in the context of a shortage of traditional educational resources, such as textbooks or workbooks, in many settlements. For example, the journal, which contains short news reports from struggles throughout Brazil, is described as being used to teach geography and to help foster a collective identity of struggle within the movement. Learning about geographically disparate struggles within the unified movement, a student is quoted in the article as remarking that the 'JST is the bond that unites us to Brazil, there is no textbook that does what it does' (JST, 1990: 5). This brief review has illustrated the pedagogical power of propaganda in communicating - through formal, informal, incidental, and tacit means - not only a movement's ideology and identity, but also the problems its members face, and their practical solutions.
When ‘community’ is not very communal

Analysing ongoing participation following settlement brings into focus a persistent question for scholars of contentious politics: what defines participation? Frequently, participation is thought of as an either/or binary. One either participates in a movement, carrying placards, actively resisting, or one does not (Tindall, 2002). Yet this dichotomy is more of an academic construct than anything based in the messy realities of everyday collective action. As Tindall (2002) argues ‘... activism should be conceived of as a continuum that ranges from non-participation to sustained and intense involvement in a full range of social movement activities’ (415). This article argues that in analysing ongoing trajectories of participation within MST it is instructive to explore the importance of post-settlement cooperation and the collective at various scales within the movement, such as at from the settlement, to regional, and national levels (Marston, 2000; Brown and Purcell, 2005).

Cooperation and cooperativism are foundational principles of the MST, ostensibly grounding social relations, political institutions, and collective agricultural production. Within Brazil, cooperation and cooperativism have long been described as related but distinct processes (Camargo, 1960; Fleury, 1983; Rios, 1989 – see Scopinho (2005) for a critical synthesis). The term cooperative, when used to refer to an organisational structure, can be understood as a model that emphasizes equality in social relations, ranging from ownership and management to the distribution of resources. Cooperation, by contrast, refers to social relations that are predicated on common goals and directed towards a definable problem. At the centre of each of these are the importance of the collective, and its component values of solidarity, equality, and perseverance (Almeida and Sanchez, 2000). Both the importance of the collective to the larger political project of agrarian reform, and these specific values, are strongly emphasized throughout the movement and its literature (OST, 1990, 2004; Rios, 2004; Elias, 2010; Tavaes, 2010).

Tracking its ideological value, we can see the importance of the collective in the organisational structure of the MST, which at the local, state, and national level is organized into collective decision-making institutions. For example, at the scale of the individual settlement, the smallest organisational unit is known as the núcleo de base or base nucleus. These working groups are comprised of approximately a dozen families and meet to discuss and find solutions to everyday problems (see Harnecker, 2003 for a systematic description of MST organisational structure).

In addition to its role in the movement’s organisational structure, the collective provides the framework for cooperative agricultural production. Agricultural cooperatives have a multifaceted nature, being both economic and political institutions, as well as pedagogical tools intended to increase political consciousness and impart socialist values (Almeida and Sanchez, 2000). As their history within the MST is nuanced and fragmented – strongly influenced by geographic disparities in labour relations – a thorough account is beyond the scope of the present work. What is noteworthy, however, are the tensions between collective and individual value systems, whereas Wolford notes, it becomes apparent that ‘sometimes the everyday experience of “community” is not very communal at all’ (2003: 501). Johnson (2004), for example, documents the undercutting impact that members’ histories as miners, and resulting individualistic attitudes, have on attempts at cooperative production and ownership in Amazonian settlements.
In addition to being a source of tension within the MST, collective values, whether embodied in decision-making institutions or agricultural cooperatives, do not fit into the neoliberal model of individualised market-driven production. As Caldeira (2008) argues, the MST’s efforts at creating communal settlements and production opportunities is part of a dialectical project that seeks to synthesize new political institutions with traditional values (154). Such an effort – that seeks to build alternatives from the grassroots – is exemplary of Gramsci’s war of position.

**Formacao and the war of position in the MST**

Although *formacao* is a crucial element of the MST’s educational and political programme, there has been almost no work published in English that explicitly explores the topic. Plummer describes *formacao* as ‘consciousness-raising work, political education, and leadership development’ (2008: 2). Before analysing how *formacao* functions pedagogically, I explore the development of *formacao* within the MST, focusing first on the importance of Antonio Gramsci’s thought.

The MST’s pedagogical linkages to Gramsci are unsurprising given his posthumous resurgence in critical education scholarship (Coben, 1995; Schugurensky, 2000; Borg et al, 2002; Mayo, 2008). For Gramsci, the path towards social and political transformation lay in the moral and political struggle against hegemonic knowledge and social structures (Giroux, 1999). Hegemony was seen by Gramsci as the tactical deployment of force and consent, where each reciprocally balances and informs the other, without force overpowering consent *(ibid).* In that hegemony is largely about the domination via the organisation of consent, it concerns the domination of knowledge (Carrol and Ratner, 1994). Gramsci believed that the ruling ideas within a society were so powerful that they limited the possibilities for thought among the dominated classes (Coben, 1995). In order to build a viable revolutionary force, Gramsci felt that consent needed to be subverted from below, through the creation of new knowledge, social relations, and forms of popular political organisation. These processes of resistance, which try to undercut domination by consent, aim to produce a *counter-hegemony.*

The counter-hegemonic project is about the formation of alternatives within an existing political system (Borg et al., 2002). Concerned with movement-building and long-term goals, this process is described as the war of position, a strategic metaphor which Gramsci defines in opposition to the war of manoeuvre, which involves direct action against the state. The war of position is a process of passive revolution. Within a social movement, Carrol and Ratner (1999) describe it as the attempt:

*to occupy or create new spaces for alternative identities, moralities, and ways of life within the limits of existing social, economic, and state structures, activating a longer-term process of building a counter-hegemonic bloc of social forces through popular education, consciousness-raising, community development, self-reliance, etc.* (4).

The centrality of a larger counter-hegemonic project within the MST is emphasized by João Pedro Stédile, a member of the MST’s National Coordination Committee, who points out that:

*We need social movements to build up permanent organized forces. Power isn’t just in the state. Power is diluted into multiple forms beginning at home and spreading to the community and society... This is something we learned from Antonio Gramsci. Changes must begin at the base of society* (Stobart, 2004).
In developing the grassroots, education plays a pivotal role in the war of position, because raising consciousness is necessary for the development of leadership within a movement (Carrol and Ratner, 1994). Within the MST, the concept of *formação* is ideologically linked to Gramsci's analysis of the role of consciousness-raising within the war of position. In a document from the MST’s national school, *formação* is defined as:

> the process of raising the level of consciousness of the militants, movement members, and the masses, *formação* is the force that makes ideas, strategies, the program, the methodology and the organizational principles... (Peloso, 2007:44, in Plummer, 2008: 40).

*Formação* takes place through various pedagogical processes along a formal-tacit continuum. Much of the explicitly formal opportunities for *formação* take the format of short or long courses, which are organized by the MST’s *formação* sector.¹⁰ More informal means of *formação* consist of participating in marches, and settlement discussion groups. *Formação* likely also occurs through tacit everyday actions, such as the happenstance reading of the JST, or incidental processes, such as in the critical discussion of a JST article. As the following results illustrate, *formação* is integral to participation in cooperative institutions and the journal’s implicit curriculum.

**Results: Formação and cooperation**

The following results are presented thematically, illustrating the various ways that *formação* is presented in the JST. From nearly a thousand occurrences of the term *formação*, three themes emerged concerning the relationships between it, the need for cooperation, and the construction of a new society. These subjects are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are synthetic elements of an implicit curriculum of *formação* that imparts a larger narrative concerning the long-term project of social and political transformation.

**Cooperation as consciousness**

The development of critical consciousness is a long-standing objective of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1973; Mayo, 2004; Giroux, 1996). However, the linkage between movement participation and consciousness is seldom highlighted. In the JST, the contextual linkages between cooperation, the development of critical political consciousness and the success of the movement are championed again and again. In a JST article on the importance of *formação* among the MST’s grassroots, the argument presented was that:

*We have learned through history that movements need to formar [train] their militants to better develop the organic nature of the struggle. We have also learned that formação [training] is a process...which makes it possible to build a new consciousness of participation, and enables us to overcome organizational challenges...*

*We already knew that formação was a means to action, but it is also the manner in which we coordinate the nucleus, how we organise the assemblies, how we make decisions and how we protest...It is important that the base of the MST understands that the nucleus should participate actively in this process, constructing, through practice, the organizational principles, and dedicating time and force to liberate companions to involve them in the movement's formação activities.* (JST 2004: 10)
In this excerpt, we find that the ‘new consciousness of participation’ is coupled to a narrative, which is both implicitly descriptive and proscriptive, emphasizing the importance of formação in the larger political project. The ‘organizational challenges’ that formação enables members to overcome are only hinted at here; however, the subsequent emphasis on ‘liberating companions’ so that they can appropriately participate in the nucleos and formação activities draws attention to the importance of transcending false consciousness through the realization of ‘organizational principles’, such as cooperation and solidarity.

This passage directly focuses our attention upon the linkage between education and the transcendence of false-consciousness, which is a recurring theme in traditional critical pedagogical scholarship (Freire, 1973; Giroux 1996; Mayo, 2004). It argues that MST members require continued training in order to surmount the problems related to individualism that frequently occur following settlement (Branford and Rocha, 2002; Wright and Wolford, 2003; Ondetti, 2008). What is implicitly prescribed through this passage, and others that echo its sentiments, is that consciousness-raising is a process, one through which members transcend the false consciousness of individualism and build a new consciousness of participation grounded in solidarity and cooperation.

**Cooperation as social relations**

For Gramsci, social relations between workers were a fertile territory for transformative educational work (Giroux, 1996; Mayo, 2008). In MST publications, the importance of social relations is consistently highlighted. In a 2010 JST interview, Diana Daros, a MST educator, notes that:

> One reads about the social function of work, its importance in human formação (development), but not usually in terms of education... Through the linkages with work we deepen our organizational forms and establish the relationships between workers... The outcome of the bulk of the work is not individual, but for the whole community. When making bread, it will be for everyone, regardless of whether it is good or bad. The work, besides making us feel human, also helps to establish incredibly important social relationships.

In this article, the salient point is that social relations of labour are pedagogical, deepening both the organisational structure and the relationships between movement members. Reconstituting the social relations of production can be seen a key element of Gramsci’s war of position, which as illustrated concerns the reconstruction of alternatives to present society from the grassroots (Gramsci, 2011). Emphasizing the importance of cooperation, Daros employs a metaphor of bread-baking as a collective behaviour to emphasize how one’s actions, regardless of how individual they might seem, are ultimately beneficial for the collective. Through this metaphor and her discussion of the importance of formação through labour, we get a window into how labour pedagogically functions to humanise and build social relationships.

The linkage between labour and learning is explicit within the MST’s educational philosophy (Caldart, 2002). What is more implicit is the curriculum put forth in the JST, emphasizing how the landless have been dehumanised through exploitative labour relations, and that the MST members are struggling at the grassroots level in the war of position, structuring through everyday participation new social institutions predicated upon communal relations.
Cooperation as an organisational tool

Organisation is a resounding theme in the MST, as it is only through cooperation that a critical mass can be galvanised to place pressure on the state. However, for a social movement that seeks long-term societal transformation, maintaining organisational coherence is an imperative of the struggle on the land. Consider this excerpt from a 2008 article:

*Cooperation is the principal basis for organization in the settlements. It is a strategy. We should not think only of cooperation at a formal level... Cooperation is a tool for organizing, resistance, and for searching for better conditions for rural families...*

*Our schools and centres of formaçâo function as large spaces that promote experiences related to cooperation... Our example is the MST itself, which is the fruit of the experience of both external and internal cooperation (JST 2008).*

This passage emphasizes both the formal and informal strategies through which cooperation is integrated into the movement. Formal spaces, such as centres of formaçâo provide spaces for collective discussions, and short courses through which members gain experiential knowledge about cooperation and its role in resistance. Within these formal educational spaces and the implicit pedagogical ones of the JST, we find echoes of a critical pedagogy of place, which challenges us all to 'read the texts of our own lives and to ask constantly what needs to be transformed and what needs to be conserved' (Gruenewald, 2003: 11). Reflexively drawing attention to the movement as a pedagogical example, both the lesson and task are clear: the movement's past and future successes are tied to building and maintaining cooperative institutions; to continue the struggle on the land, these formal and informal institutions provide the tools for building a new society.

Discussion and conclusions

Since the movement's inception, gaining access to land has been part of a larger project of societal transformation. This project in many ways tracks Gramsci's war of position. For Gramsci, education and propaganda were key tools used to forge grassroots alternatives to exploitative social structures. In building the envisioned society from the grassroots of the settlement up, the MST holds cooperation as a fundamental tenet. Given that participation among MST members frequently wanes following settlement, this paper has argued that a) an implicit curriculum of formaçâo is communicated through the JST, and b) this curriculum of formaçâo edifies by describing cooperation as a form of on-going participation – one which seeks to maintain political commitment amongst MST members. The preceding thematic results of cooperation as consciousness, social relations, and an organisational tool have illustrated three facets of a singular theme – that of cooperation as the foundation of a new society. This last JST excerpt ties together the discussion of the three previous themes into an integrated whole:

*It's necessary to advance the level of cooperation between families, not only to improve their living conditions, but also from a strategic standpoint, to help in construction of the 'social'. We need families to evolve their consciousness and cultural formaçâo [development] within the settlement so they can collaborate with the on-going struggle... We continue to struggle [with cooperation] so that these families can contribute as parts of a larger struggle, which is the struggle for social transformation. So if we*
want to develop and dream of a different society and a different human being, with new attitudes, behaviors and values, we must transform the environment we inhabit. In the settlement... we need to change the individualist consciousness, where everything revolves around the self. Not 'my' but 'our' settlement. Not 'my' but 'our' property. It is an inversion of values... (Tavaes, 2010)

As this passage illustrates, formação is a persistent pedagogical challenge facing the movement. Seeing the success of the 'larger struggle' as hinging upon formação - upon the development of consciousness, social relations, and organizational institutions through cooperation - highlights the role of education and propaganda in the on-going war of position.

This research has sought to advance educational scholarship on social movements by highlighting the pedagogical function of radical media. Through its analysis, a larger question has emerged: can we distinguish between education and propaganda? If we are to listen to Mao, the answer is no, for propaganda was education (Boshier and Huang, 2010). Exploring this question, we can return to Ross's epistemic merit model, noting that education and propaganda share all three elements - the sender, receiver and message; additionally, we find that both are also characterized by intentionality, directionality, and their objective of epistemic transformation. Whether or not education can be seen as emanating from a socio-political organisation - the final characteristic that defines propaganda - is largely a question of one's intellectual and political perspective. For critical education scholars, posing that question is missing the question itself. As Apple and Aasen (2003) explain, every educational phenomenon that one can imagine is political. What follows is that all educational institutions are socio-political organisations. What will likely remain contentious, for scholars, about this assertion is the embeddedness of implicit curricula within explicit propaganda. For example, one might argue that imparting an implicit curriculum via propaganda is a top-down organisational approach at odds with the Freirean roots of participatory learning that the MST espouses. Yet, I believe that a movement publication imparting an implicit curriculum is essentially akin to Freire's generative themes, which are topics of concern to learners that are used in a Freirean learning context to generate critical, self-reflexive dialogue. Seen in this light, cooperation becomes a theme for reflection and discussion among MST members, and as educational scholarship has long indicated, it is through this reflection that learning occurs (Mezirow, 1990). Unsurprisingly, movements, such as the MST, are not so concerned with these academic questions, but with the tactical reality of propaganda's pedagogical value. As Alexandre Liviero, national coordinator of the MST, opined in a 2010 JST article: 'The challenge is to make our publications into tools of propaganda and political training.'

This article's data document the linkages between political education, ongoing participation, and the creation of a new society. From a critical perspective, the implicit curriculum is not just contained within the content, or the writing style or the subject matter, although it is all of these at the same time. Taken as a whole, the journal is both a communication and pedagogical system. Whether readers access this implicit curriculum through formal, informal, incidental or tacit means is not the focus of the present study, and awaits further research. The tenor of the message is clear: movement participation does not cease with the attainment for land. The struggle is not only for the land, but also on the land. In seeking to create new subjectivities and a new society, education plays a fundamental role. Specifically, cooperation is integral
to the training and development (formação) of the movement's members, enabling them to actualize their, and thereby the movement's, potential as a transformative phenomenon in a larger war of position.

Notes
1 At their most basic, the Portuguese words 'sem terra' can be translated as 'without land'. The phrase is used within the MST, and in this paper, however, in two different ways. First, Caldart (2002) notes that Sem Terra, which is capitalized and without a hyphen, is akin to a proper name, denoting an identity of members of the MST. When written 'sem-terra', which is both uncapitalized and hyphenated, it is being used to refer to a social class, such as landless peasants.
2 The grievances, political opportunities, and resources responsible for the origination of the MST have been well theorized. See Branford and Rocha (2002), Wolford (2004); Ondetti (2008)
3 Jornal Sem Terra can be translated literally as 'Landless Journal'; however, as indicated above, the usage of Sem Terra as a proper noun, denoting the identity of the movement's members signifies that a closer translation would be 'Journal of the Sem Terra'.
4 The Portuguese term formação will be used hereafter, and the closest English translation provided.
5 Although landless farmers began a series of collective land occupations in 1981, it was not until 1984 that the MST was officially founded. For detailed histories and analysed of movement formation and growth see Branford and Rocha (2002); Wright and Wolford (2003); Wolford (2003, 2004; 2010); and Ondetti (2008)
6 Fortunately for scholars, the majority of these publications can be accessed. These journals were accessed in three formats. For the years 1984-1990, microfilm at the United States Library of Congress was examined. Reproductions of the issues between 1990 and 2004 were obtained from a private collection, and digitized. Beginning in 2004, and continuing to the present, the MST has made the JST available online.
7 While also containing subtle and not-so-subtle pedagogical content, the phrase implicit curriculum can be differentiated from the much analysed concept of hidden curriculum, which is largely used to describe how certain values and attitudes are transmitted in the classroom, embedded in the curricula and institutional processes. For a survey of work on hidden curricula see Margolis (2001).
8 See Branford and Rocha (2002); Wright and Wolford (2003); Wolford (2004, 2006, 2010), and Ondetti (2008)

References
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