Critical multiculturalism in the classroom: From theory to practice

Denise Michelle Dalaimo
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM IN THE CLASSROOM:
FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

by

Denise Michelle Dalaimo

Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1993

Master of Arts
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1995

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Critical Multiculturalism in the Classroom: from Theory to Practice

by

Denise Michelle Dalaimo

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Since Paulo Freire's (1970) revolutionary work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "radical" (critical/feminist/multicultural) educators have endeavored to change the face of education by altering traditional power relations and by including the work and experiences of previously under- or unrepresented groups. Research to date in the field of radical pedagogy has been largely focused on and performed in the small and intimate classroom. Many of the approaches and techniques proposed by radical educators -- though effective in smaller classes -- are difficult to implement in the larger, more impersonal classroom which is becoming more and more prevalent in contemporary higher education. This research has been largely ethnographic and is exploratory in nature. Various pedagogical approaches have been used and a hybrid pedagogy -- critical multiculturalism -- has been developed. Data is presented in categories consistent with the goals of this research, i.e., (1) altering the traditional student-teacher power relation, (2) giving voice to previously marginalized students, (3) celebrating diversity without tokenism or exoticization, and (4) motivating students to think critically and to participate in positive social change. Implications for policy and future research are briefly discussed.
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I consider myself blessed to have so many wonderful friends and family members who together have been my "True North," providing emotional, intellectual and physical sanctuary. My eternal love and friendship go out to my sisters, Merlinda Gallegos and Melissa Monson, who joined me in my tirades against the injustices of the world and convinced me that we, as advocates and educators, could make a difference. Our sisterhood has profoundly influenced my thinking and has — in many unspoken ways — convinced me that my research is a meaningful contribution to the future of education in
this country. Honorable mention is also owed to Michael and Gail Dalaimo and my wonderful and remarkable nephews Nicholas, Anthony and Andrew -- who will collectively always represent "home" to me; my father, Murry Dalaimo, whom I will always love deeply regardless of time, space, or distance; Laura Prete Shea, who has remained a dear and trusted friend for thirty-something years; JannMarie Morgan and Nancy Toroian, who have both overcome incredible hardships only to become new and improved versions of their former selves, and; John and Camille Newlon, who have provided much needed frolic and detour whenever I started taking myself too seriously.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since Paulo Freire's (1970) revolutionary work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "radical" (critical/feminist/multicultural) educators have endeavored to change the face of education by altering the student-teacher power relation toward a more democratic, emancipatory form and by including the work and experiences of previously under- or un-represented groups. Critical pedagogues tend to take a theoretical and political approach to education, focusing on the needs and autonomy of individual students, and emphasizing the importance of critical thinking (Freire 1970, 1973, 1978, 1985, 1989, 1994; Giroux 1983, 1988a, 1988b; McLaren 1989; Shor 1980; 1988, 1992). While feminist and multicultural educators share these theoretical and political concerns, they concentrate their focus on linking macrosocial elements of gender, racial/ethnic, and sexual discrimination and oppression with the microsocial elements of the classroom (Aptheker 1993; Kanpol 1995; Lewis 1990; Luke 1994, Maher and Tetrault 1994; Rich 1979; Scanlon 1993; Schieder 1993; Spelman 1985).

Research to date in the field of radical pedagogy has been largely focused on and performed in the small and intimate classroom -- rarely the sociology classroom. Many of the approaches and techniques proposed by these educators, though effective in smaller classes, are difficult -- if not impossible -- to implement in the larger, more impersonal classroom which is becoming more and more prevalent in contemporary higher education. The purpose of this research is exploratory in nature. Over the last five years I have taught five Introduction to Sociology courses, a Social Problems course, and an upper division Social Inequalities course. I have consistently taught and behaved in the classroom in a way that has been -- as much as possible -- consistent with the
theories and techniques of radical pedagogies. An amalgam of radical pedagogies, I have
developed an approach which emphasizes — in both content and process — diversity,
critical thinking, and social change, which I call critical multiculturalism (CM). For the
last two years, I have been actively performing ethnographic research with the classes I
have taught. The students in these classes were informed of the goals of my approach
and that I was conducting research during our classes. I tried to make them feel a part of
the research as much as possible by explaining each step of the project, from gathering
demographic data at the beginning to asking for "qualitative data" throughout the term.

Over the course of my research I have kept a journal and taken field notes, and in an
attempt to be as democratic as possible, I have received constant feedback from students
— directly through discussions, voting, and open-ended interview questions, and
anonymously by evaluations and the use of a suggestion box. The benefit of my
experience as a critical multiculturalist has been two-fold: it has allowed me to be self-
reflexive and responsive in my teaching style, and; it has enhanced my own critical and
intercultural thinking skills. With this constant input I was able to better meet the needs
of the students by specifically addressing their comments, questions, and concerns. I feel
this approach has been successful in that I have been able to modify aspects that received
negative comments/reactions and fine-tune those things that seemed most effective in
evoking the spirit of critical multiculturalism. I am now in the process of analyzing the
data collected during this five years of teaching and research, and I will examine the
issues that have emerged in response to the exploratory nature of my research. On a
grander, perhaps more utopian scale, my ultimate goal is to understand how we can bring
the spirit of critical thinking, diversity, and social change to students in contemporary
higher education.

ORGANIZATION

This dissertation is organized in six chapters. In chapter two I explore the
emergence of a sociology of education, its primary foci, and the debates surrounding it.
First I examine conventional educational research, exploring historical roots, as well as the central themes, of each of the perspectives in their contemporary form. I review empirical studies inspired by functionalism; the economic theory of human capital; methodological empiricism (concentrating on studies of educational inequality); conflict theories of education; the interactionist tradition in educational research, and; the new synthesis which has emerged. Next, I move on to an examination of race, class, and gender inequalities in the classroom and a review of research done in this area. Special attention is paid to the relationship between the social/political structure of the United States and the educational experiences of individuals from previously marginalized groups. After exposing the inequalities in American education, I discuss how these inequalities are perpetuated in the classroom, i.e., through tracking/ability grouping and its part in the fulfillment of the correspondence principle; the debate over bias in standardized testing, i.e., SAT, GRE, etc., and; various other subtle aspects of the hidden curriculum.

Once the incidence and perpetuation of inequality in American education is established, I continue with a discussion of multiculturalism in education, concentrating on the debate surrounding the value of diversity. Although empirical studies exist that testify to the value of a diverse educational atmosphere, there continues to be a conservative backlash in many "progressive" academic departments, including women's, ethnic, and international studies. Critics question the validity of studies that promote diversity. They argue that through diversity programs, colleges reinforce negative stereotypes even as they seek to broaden students' understanding of different groups.

In chapter three I discuss and review contemporary theoretical perspectives in education studies. I begin by discussing the controversy surrounding the existence of a "postmodernist pedagogy." Some critics would argue there are inherent political and ethical contradictions within a "postmodern pedagogy." These critics ask: if there can be no grand theories of pedagogy, no Truth or objective Knowledge, no Authority, no Justice, and no subject (i.e., no agency) in the postmodern, then how can there be a
Justice, and no subject (i.e., no agency) in the postmodern, then how can there be a "postmodern pedagogy"? True to the larger context of much of postmodern discourse, many "pedagogues of the post" reject the notion of grand narratives and make no claims to developing an "alternative discourse." Rather, they "emphasize the inappropriateness of pedagogical prescriptions, arguing for pedagogies that remain specific to the multiplicities of particular context" (Gore 1993:32). As for the acquisition of Truth or of objective Knowledge, these are modernist goals. The postmodern educator's goal is to help the student learn how to think for his or herself. Once a student acquires the ability to think critically, he or she may use that knowledge for the rest of his or her life. Other issues discussed in this chapter are justice and ethics. If there is no Justice, no universal ethical code, then how can we enlighten or empower, not to mention emancipate others? If there is no agency, there is no possibility for social change. In this chapter I will argue that there is a political edge to a good deal of postmodern educational thought, specifically, in critical, feminist, and multicultural pedagogies where issues of ethics and politics become central to the process of learning.

After addressing the controversy surrounding the existence of a postmodernist pedagogy, I continue with a discourse analysis of contemporary approaches to education, i.e., radical pedagogies. "Pedagogy" — the art and science of teaching — includes not only the process and content of what is taught and learned, but also the principles and philosophies which inform educational techniques. It includes not only how something is taught, but also how it is learned. There are many different strands, or camps, of educational theories and methods which fall under the umbrella of radical pedagogy, and none is wholly inclusive or mutually exclusive. In this chapter I discuss three representative strands of radical pedagogy, namely critical pedagogies, feminist pedagogies, and critical multiculturalism. Critical multiculturalism -- what I believe is the evolution of critical and feminist pedagogies -- celebrates the concept of difference; evokes the voices of previously silenced students, and; denounces textual authority. I discuss not only the theoretical approaches of these schools of thought, but also strategies
and techniques common to them all. The connection these theories and philosophies have with my research in the classroom are further examined in Chapters four and five.

In chapter four I address methodological approaches in contemporary education studies, as well as my research design. Included here will be an in depth analysis of critical ethnography, especially as it has been used in the college classroom. Special attention will be paid to possible methodological landmines, i.e., significant methodological issues such as over-subjectification, representation, and authority. While performing critical ethnography, the danger of over-subjectification is a real one. In an attempt to represent the voices of previously silenced subjects, researchers sometimes do too much invoking and describing and too little analysis.

Representation is another possible problem. Although self-reflexivity in ethnography allows for the evocation of more than one truth, it is not meant to "replace the 'self' with 'other' as the focal point of the ethnographic enterprise, but rather to show how knowledge is 'interactionally constructed' between self and other" (Balsamo 1990:50). To be self-reflective, the researcher must maintain sensitivity to the problem of representation, as well as to what some researchers see as an inherently unequal and manipulative relationship between the researcher and the subjects (McRobbie 1982; Walkerdine 1986). At the same time, one must keep a precarious balance between "objective science" and subjective interpretation of data.

Authority refers to the extent to which a researcher uses and/or imposes her own voice on the voices of the Others of the research, as well as the distinction between author and subjects. Postcolonial, feminist, and interactionist scholars emphasize the need for dialogic validity, i.e., the research subjects should be able to recognize, understand, and identify with our work. They must be able to see themselves in the work that is, after all, about them. Critics assert this is not "valid social science." This debate will be examined thoroughly in this chapter.

In my research I set four goals for myself: (1) to alter the traditional student-teacher power relation; (2) to give voice to previously marginalized students; (3) to celebrate
diversity without tokenism or exoticization, and (4) to motivate students to think critically and to participate in positive social change. In my research design, I explore the key concepts of this study and their interrelationships. Since my research is exploratory, and necessarily inductive, I begin with sensitizing concepts which give "the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (Blumer 1969:18). Through the process of conceptualization, indicators of these concepts have emerged. The concepts used in this research include: multicultural awareness; inclusionary and critical thinking; cultural relativism, and; praxis. In this chapter, key concepts are tentatively defined, indicators are revealed, and operationalization is discussed. Next, I consider issues of reliability and validity, discuss population and sampling procedures, and disclose my research questions.

In chapter five I discuss and analyze my findings. First I look at student reactions to the various methods and philosophies of critical multiculturalism, including issues of: power and authority in the classroom. This was interesting because through students' comments we can recognize the internalization of the traditional teacher/student power relation, as well as students' reactions to a shift in the power structure through critical multiculturalism. Additionally, I address democracy in the classroom — including voting and examination options; giving voice to previously silenced students through the use of a suggestion box, frequent student evaluations, open class discussions, and student teaching, and; celebrating diversity through an exercise which highlights dominant group privilege, a consistent emphasis on critical thinking, and an eye toward praxis and social change.

Preliminary findings reveal an overall enthusiasm for CM in the undergraduate classroom. Students liked my "laid-back," "approachable," and accessible style. The thing that stands out as a universal student favorite was the democratic aspect. We have a class vote at the beginning of the term where we set up the ground rules, i.e., how many and what types of evaluation; whether we have a paper, groupwork, etc.; if there is extra credit; if attendance counts, etc. Students felt more involved in the class and would often
make proposals and vote on them over the course of the term. Though with less outright enthusiasm, students also seemed to appreciate the critical thinking, multicultural and global aspects of CM. Many commented that it had "changed the way [they] look at the world."

As wholly accepted as was the democratic approach of CM, the student-teaching aspect was almost unconditionally disliked. Students felt that: student teaching was distracting; they did not learn as much from student teachers; student teaching was a waste of time and; that they would rather have me do the teaching. Class discussions were what drew the most conflicting reactions. The majority of reactions were positive. Many students said open discussions were their favorite part of class, calling it "exciting," ... "intense, humorous, revealing, and at times frightening." Several students in early morning classes — as early as 7:00 a.m. — said class discussion were what got them out of bed in the morning. Many others agreed, stating that these discussions made them look forward to coming to class. However, there were also some harsh criticisms of open discussions. A few students remarked they thought things got out of hand, that I lost control at times, and that people sometimes rambled and got off the subject.

Mediating open discussions in the classroom is an artform, one I am admittedly still working on. However, there is a fine line between hearty debate and "out of control," especially as perceived by individuals from diverse backgrounds. While I often straddle this line in order to encourage critical thinking, each semester I learn a little more from the interaction of my students which enables me to improve in this area.

There are many comments which refer to myself as an instructor, including remarks about my accessibility, compassion, and enthusiasm as well as both endorsements and criticisms of my political approach. A couple of students simply did not like the critical multiculturalist approach. This student didn't believe he/she could handle the responsibility of the CM approach. S/he writes,
The class is FAR too student centered. The structure is too liberal. We are Americans and in a group will take ALL we can get. En mass it's not the learning that's important it's how much can we get away with.

In chapter six I briefly discuss policy implications and I make suggestions for future research, including: a hidden prejudices scale; an ethnocentrism scale, and; the development of a pre-/ post- evaluation instrument that could "measure" students' multicultural awareness (broadly defined). Such an instrument would be pivotal in obtaining funding from both government and non-government organizations. I believe this research has proven important because it has revealed the benefits of the Critical Multiculturalist approach for students, teachers and the community. It encourages students to become more involved in their education, and consequently, in their lives — both locally and globally. The data gathered in this project reveal the importance of further research in the area of Critical Multiculturalism, e.g., Does CM affect political participation (voter turnout, letters to members of congress, yardsigns, volunteer work, etc.), empowerment, self-esteem, etc.?
CHAPTER TWO

THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION: EMERGENCE AND MAJOR DEBATES

In this chapter I explore the emergence of the sociology of education, its primary foci, and the major debates surrounding its inception. First I examine conventional educational research, exploring the historical roots as well as the central themes of each perspective in its contemporary form. I review empirical studies inspired by functionalism, human capital theory, methodological empiricism (concentrating on studies of educational inequality), conflict theories of education, the interactionist tradition in educational research, as well as the new synthesis which has emerged. Next, I move on to an examination of race, class and gender inequalities in the classroom and a review of the research conducted in this area. Special attention is paid to the relationship between the social/political structure of the United States and the educational experiences of individuals from previously marginalized groups. After exposing the inequalities in American education, I discuss how these inequalities are perpetuated in the classroom, i.e., through tracking/ability grouping and its part in the fulfillment of the correspondence principle; the debate over bias in standardized testing, i.e., the SAT, the GRE, etc., and; various other subtle aspects of the hidden curriculum.

Once the incidence and perpetuation of inequality in American education is established, I continue with a discussion of multiculturalism in education, concentrating on the debate surrounding the value of diversity. Although empirical studies exist that testify to the value of a diverse educational atmosphere, there continues to be a conservative backlash in many "progressive" academic departments, including women's, ethnic, and international studies.
THE EMERGENCE OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Social science became interested in education during a period of previously unprecedented growth of public expenditure on schools and universities. Motivations to advance a "sociology of education" included (but were not limited to) the collection of relevant information in order to (1) develop social policy, (2) justify or legitimate social policy, and (3) criticize and reform social policy. Given that education has traditionally been "held in poor repute as a field of research, the institutionalization of the sociological study of education was greatly facilitated by the prestige derived from borrowing theories, procedures, and substantive concerns from the larger and more respected fields of stratification and general sociology" (Karabel and Halsey 1977:11). In order to fully understand the emergence of a sociology of education it is necessary to become familiar with the major paradigms involved, as well as the social and political contexts from which the field emerged.

Functionalism

With evidence that technological superiority could be converted to military power, post-WWII America was in a scientific race with the Soviet Union. New scientists and engineers were urgently needed, and society looked to our systems of education to provide "human resources." Functionalists emphasized the rapidity of technological change and the need for "army upon army of skilled technicians and professional experts" and they looked to education as the supply source. From this perspective, the increasing specialization and differentiation of the educational system was a direct outcome of the technologically determined changes in the occupational structure.

Functionalism advanced the social scientific study of education by emphasizing the connections between education and other institutions such as the economy and politics. Functionalist studies of education include: Parsons (1959) "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society"; Clark (1960) "The 'Cooling-Out'
Function in Higher Education”; Turner (1960) "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System," and; Trow (1961) "The Second Transformation of American Secondary Education. Though these studies have since been widely criticized, there can be no doubt that these and others like them have led to the accretion of data that have proven valuable to researchers with a variety of paradigmatic assumptions.

Criticisms of the functionalist approach in education include (1) it exaggerates the role of technology in the educational process (2) it places undue emphasis on consensus and equilibrium in society while underestimating the importance of conflict and ideology, and (3) with its emphasis on technical training, it neglects the content of the educational process. Despite heavy official support for this approach, the process of determining the value of educational investment was still a mystery.

_Human Capital Theory_

By investing in themselves, people can enlarge the range of choice available to them. It is the one way free men (sic) can enhance their welfare (Schultz 1961:2).

Human capital theory asserts that individuals who invest time and money in education and training will increase their productivity, and thus their worth. During the post-WWII expansion, this belief brought students flocking into higher education by the millions — largely motivated by the anticipated high rate of return to individuals with college degrees. The theory of human capital resonates with models of technological functionalism that were popular in sociology in the late 1940s and 1950s, inasmuch as they emphasize the technical function of schools and the efficient utilization of human resources. For example, in their functionalist theory of stratification, Davis and Moore (1945) assert that "a medical education is so burdensome and expensive that virtually none would undertake it if the M.D. did not carry a reward commensurate with the sacrifice" (p. 244). Karabel and Halsey (1977) maintain
the theory of human capital is [a] direct appeal to pro-capitalist ideological sentiment that resides in its insistence that the worker is a *holder of capital* (as embodied in his skills and knowledge) and that he has the *capacity to invest* (in himself). Thus in a single bold conceptual stroke the *wage-earner*, who holds no property and controls neither the process nor the product of his labor, is transformed into a *capitalist* (p. 13).

True to the form of functionalism, human capital theory legitimated the status quo by offering quantitative and "scientific" justification for America's investment — both figurative and literal — in the system of education. "Government agencies, private foundations, and such international organizations as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development were actively involved in the promotion of the theory of human capital" (Karabel and Halsey 1977:13).

Many critics of human capital theory, including Bowles and Gintis (1975), denounce the ideal of meritocracy and maintain that competition in labor markets does not ensure that greater earnings reflect greater productivity. Other factors which determine wages include: worker characteristics; unionization; the existence of a minimum wage; traditions of status; customary differentials, and: dual labor markets (Karabel and Halsey 1977:14). Additionally, human capital theory deflects the focus off of institutional inequalities and structural variables and instead concentrates on the individual, thereby "blaming the victim." However, although the types of educational investment best suited for economic success remain a matter of some debate, the idea of a *social* rate of return has its possibilities. The "science" of human capital theory remained a point of controversy because it was seriously lacking in methodological empiricism. Both the disciplines of education and sociology looked to a highly technical style of research to explain the *process* of education — an area previously under-examined until this point.

*Methodological Empiricism and the Debate over Inequalities*

Methodological empiricism — a branch of sociology that is defined primarily in terms of its methods — is discussed here in terms of inequalities in education. Since
WWII and the diffusion of egalitarian ideologies there has been an upsurge in the demand for equal educational opportunities. Research in this area has consisted largely of quantitative studies which analyze the role of education in reducing or perpetuating structures of inequality or quasi-experiments under the guise of action-research. It should be noted that most of this research has been funded by government organizations with the intention of developing and/or legitimating social policy. The attraction of methodological empiricism for government and administrators is its "scientific" approach and alleged value-neutrality which leaves ends in the hands of policy-makers and focuses the labor of social scientists on the means by which these ends may be achieved (Gouldner 1971).

*Blau and Duncan.* Blau and Duncan's (1967) book *The American Occupational Structure* was principally concerned with occupational mobility, but included an analysis of the role of education in the perpetuation of social inequalities. The authors' introduction of path analysis into this type of research had a significant influence on subsequent research in the sociology of education. Arguing for achievement rather than ascription, Blau and Duncan maintain "superior status cannot ... be directly inherited but must be legitimated by actual achievements that are socially acknowledged" (1967:430). This opinion was later contested by Bourdieu (1973) among others who suggest that an individual may inherit social status by becoming absorbed in the dominant culture through the transmission of 'cultural capital.' Bourdieu argues that those in power control the form that culture takes and are thus able to sustain their position, and education is a significant ingredient in the process of social reproduction. In essence, those with power and money have the "juice" to get their children in the "finest schools" where they will, theoretically, obtain the best education possible.
The Coleman report. James Coleman's (1966) *Equality of Educational Opportunity* was primarily a policy-oriented work. The social and political upheaval of the 1950s and 1960s led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Among other things, the Civil Rights Act ordered the Commissioner for Education to "conduct a survey and make a report to the President and the Congress, within two years of the enactment of this title, concerning the lack of availability of equal educational opportunities for individuals by reasons of race, color, religion, or national origin in public educational institutions at all levels in the United States." Contrary to what was expected, Coleman's findings revealed that the characteristics of black and white schools were surprisingly equal and that school facilities seemed to have relatively little effect on students' academic achievement — a finding that will later give credence to Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital. Critics argued there were methodological problems with Coleman's study, most notably his "official definition" of the problem of educational opportunity. In addition, there were very little data on specific internal workings of schools themselves, and — although Coleman concluded that family background was much more important than school characteristics in explaining differential achievement among students — there was no clear focus on components of family background in the research itself. Overall, Coleman's findings did not fulfill the study's objective, i.e., to explain the inequalities of performance between classes and races.

Despite criticisms, Coleman's study served two important functions. It revealed the limitations of earlier models of educational reform and it made the pivotal distinction between equality of opportunity and equality of results — the latter of which demanded "the active involvement of the school in the provision of equality of outcomes for identifiable social groups" (Karabel and Halsey 1977:21), i.e., affirmative action. Criticisms of the methodological empiricist approach include the tendency to confuse the empirical with the statistical, and the frequent neglect of those problems that did not readily lend themselves to quantification. However, regardless of its sometimes myopic
vision, methodological empiricism has made important contributions to the advancement of educational research — especially with regards to educational inequalities.

**Conflict Theories of Education**

Though its deepest roots go back as far as Marx, Weber and Durkheim, contemporary conflict theories of education were a natural progression of the social and political upheaval of the 1960s. Both neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist approaches emerged as a product of fresh ways of looking at old data. While functionalists primarily perceive the social scientist as value-free, conflict theorists maintain the researcher is necessarily value-laden and they advocate active engagement against the conventional invocation of objectivity and personal and political detachment. Scholars from this perspective — often referred to as the New Left — believe that contemporary society begs a new form of social research that strives toward change, not merely understanding. Karabel and Halsey maintain there are five prominent "generationally linked factors that provided the social basis for the shift in educational research toward conflict theory" (1977:30). These include: (1) the incompatibility of the New Left advocacy of praxis with the traditional appeal for objectivity and detachment (2) the absence of conflict in functionalist theories rendering them useless in the analysis of social problems (3) the perception of methodological empiricism as being intimately involved with policy-making and the state (4) New Leftists' humanist tendencies finding little satisfaction in the quest for quantification, and (5) neither functionalism nor methodological empiricism seemed capable of explaining the rise of the New Left itself.

**Neo-Weberian conflict theory.** With a classic Weberian spin, Randall Collins (1971) attacks the functionalist theory of educational stratification, arguing that our educational system reflects less our expanding technological needs than the effects of "status groups" competing for wealth, power, and prestige. Collins maintains "The main activity of
schools is to teach particular status cultures, both in and outside the classroom." He argues it is not as important for schools to transmit technical knowledge as it is to stipulate "vocabulary and inflection, styles of dress, aesthetic tastes, values and manners" (p. 1010). Collins' argument has roots in the Weberian emphasis on the power of dominant groups and the belief that conflicting interests -- rather than systemic needs -- arbitrarily shape the educational system. This status-based conflict over education is centered in the labor market where employers sort and allocate people to occupations with varying rewards based on educational outcomes. Although Collins does not have direct empirical evidence on the inner workings (aka the "black box") of schooling, he does analyze data on the relationship between organizational characteristics and educational requirements. From his analysis of 309 organizations in San Francisco, Collins (1974) concludes that organizations look to educational institutions to provide them with workers who have internalized the values and goals of the firm -- i.e., loyalty, punctuality, obedience, respect for authority, task completion -- not necessarily technical skills. The significance of Collins' research is in its assertion that our educational system is a crucial agent in the differential socialization of students based on status groups.

**Neo-Marxist conflict theory.** Bowles and Gintis -- exemplars of neo-Marxist conflict theorists of education -- look to the social relations of production for an analysis of educational systems. They maintain that the social relations of capitalism -- based on the prevailing system of private property -- are at the root of an "hierarchical division of labor." In *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) the authors argue that the educational system is a key factor in the reproduction and perpetuation of an economy based on occupational segregation, and is largely a reflection of capitalist hegemony. Bowles and Gintis' "correspondence principle" of the relationship between hierarchy in education and hierarchy in the economy argues that based on our varying class backgrounds, we learn values and personality traits appropriate to our future positions in the occupational
hierarchy that are roughly correspondent with our social origins. For example, a student from a lower social class background is likely to learn things like punctuality and obedience in school so that she may fulfill her role as an hourly wage earner, while a student from a more privileged social background is likely to learn leadership and problem-solving skills so that she may fulfill her role in middle- or upper-management. Thus, according to Bowles and Gintis, our system of education -- through class-linked inequality of academic success and differential socialization -- perpetuates social inequalities based on the social relations of capitalism.

Ways in which conflict theories differ from functional theories of education include: an emphasis on social change; a belief that social theories change in response to social conditions; a belief that methods should be adapted to the subject matter being researched; a belief that unequal educational opportunity leads to unequal occupational outcomes; the quest for an explanation of educational inequality rather than merely a description; an emphasis on differential socialization, and; where functionalists view education as the "great equalizer," conflict educational theorists stress the role of education in the perpetuation and maintenance of structured social inequality.

**Interpretive Perspectives in Education**

Struggles for educational reforms continued, while the re-emergence of racially-linked genetic theories of intelligence turned up the heat to explain differential scholastic achievement among students. Attempts by macrosociologists -- i.e., functionalists and conflict theorists -- to describe and explain differential academic achievement had failed and a new microsociological approach was gaining momentum. This "new" sociology of education focused on the "black box" of education, i.e., the content and internal operations of the schools themselves. Leaders in this field included Basil Bernstein and Pierre Bourdieu who were among the first to link the problem of differential academic achievement to socially controlled cultural transmission, i.e., "cultural capital."
Scholars self-identifying as symbolic interactionists, phenomenologists, social psychologists and ethnomethodologists — inspired by a collective suspicion of macrosociological approaches and by avenues of inquiry found in Berger and Luckman's (1967) The Social Construction of Reality — joined in the investigation of classroom interaction, the curriculum, and the categories and concepts used by educators. These researchers examined practices such as tracking (aka ability-grouping) and revealed the "hidden curriculum," as well as notable cultural bias in standardized testing — all of which were found to impede the academic achievement of students from the lower socio-economic strata.

Interpretive sociologists maintain that social reality, which is "constantly in a state of becoming rather than being ... is such as to preclude conventional social science approaches to data" (Gorbutt 1972:6). This perspective necessitates a commitment to relativism which leads to a suspicion of quantitative evidence and the employment of direct and participant observation which, micro-scholars would argue, is more suitable to a classroom — versus a laboratory — setting. From this epistemological perspective, "everyday social interaction is a creative activity" (Cicourel 1974:348) and researchers attempt to make sense of classroom interactions as students and teachers negotiate over meanings. Though very often critical in his or her approach, the microsociologist usually avoids direct contestation of dominant social relations, and the social and political environment of the 1960s and 1970s begged a perspective with a more characteristically political character. The emphasis on the social construction of reality ignored the social and institutional constraints on individuals as actors in contemporary society. Karabel and Halsey (1977) argue

If empirical work is confined to observation of classroom interaction, it may miss the process by which political and economic power sets sharp bounds to what is 'negotiable.' The classroom analyses of the 'new' sociology of education are not, in short, related to social structure, and therefore tend to ignore the constraints under which human actors operate and so to exaggerate the fragility of the daily routine of school life (p. 58).
The authors' opinion represented a growing belief in the integration of structural and interactional levels of social analysis. Proponents pointed to a need to understand both "the linkages between schools and other institutions" and "the relationships between the social distribution of power and the distribution of knowledge" (Keddie 1971:156). Young supports Keddie's assertion and adds "it is or should be the central task of the sociology of education to relate [the] principles of selection and organization that underlay curricula to their institutional and interactional setting in schools and classrooms to the wider social structure" (1971:24). It was clear that what was now needed was a concerted effort by proponents of the interpretive school to follow through with its program of empirical research and to engage its findings with the structural studies of macrosociologists.

The New Synthesis

The work of England's Basil Bernstein is distinctive in its consistent attempt to marry micro- and macrosocial levels of analysis. Like Bourdieu, Bernstein is concerned with the cultural transmission of certain types of knowledge which led him to explore the social basis of language. His examination of linguistic codes and social classes is a sound example of an integrated analysis of the structure and process of class reproduction. Bernstein (1973) writes "The genes of social class may well be carried less through a genetic code but far more through a communication code that social class itself promotes" (p. 165). These codes are "qualities of social structure" -- where social structure is seen primarily as a system of class inequality -- that are transmitted linguistically in the family. For example, if one is raised in a working-class family and community he or she learns working-class characteristics of expression, role expectations, identifications, assumptions, etc. Bernstein argues "the relative backwardness of many working-class children ... may well be culturally induced backwardness transmitted by the linguistic process" (1973:175).
However, Bernstein's work in this area has been described as having affinities with the theory of cultural deprivation which has been highly criticized for its "blame the victim" approach. Karabel and Halsey point out, "The children of the middle class may have more 'cultural capital' than the children of the working class, but Weber would have been quick to note that their 'superiority' is ultimately based on power to determine what is admissible as 'cultural capital'" (1977:67). This perspective advocates, once again, the integration of the macro- and micro-perspectives in the sociology of educational research.

NEITHER SEPARATE, NOR EQUAL: INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION

Although years of educational attainment for minorities and women have increasingly risen over the last 40 years, this has not translated into occupational or income equality. Rather, these groups have had to face income and occupational segregation which has led to less job security, less autonomy on the job, fewer benefits and less income for marginalized groups in the United States. With respect to income and occupational inequalities, minority group members and women have consistently earned much less than dominant group members, i.e., whites and males.

Race-, Ethnicity- and Gender-Based Inequalities

Educational attainment. In 1977, 46 percent of Blacks and 40 percent of Hispanics over the age of 25 had a high school education or better, compared to 67 percent of their white counterparts. Seven percent of Blacks and six percent of Hispanics had earned college degrees, compared to fifteen percent of Whites. In the last twenty years, educational attainment has risen for all groups. In 1997, 75 percent of Blacks, 55 percent of Hispanics, and 83 percent of Whites received high school diplomas, and the numbers
Table 1.1. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older by Sex and Race/Ethnicity, in Percent of Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>High School Diploma</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


for college graduates rose to 13 percent, 10 percent and 25 percent respectively (see Table 1.1). In addition, eighty-six percent of African Americans and 62 percent of Hispanics ages 25 to 29 were high school graduates in 1997, continuing an upward trend that began in 1940. In fact, the gap in high school completion between African Americans and Whites narrowed in the 25 to 29 year old age group over the past decade to the point where there was no statistical difference in 1997.

We would expect a rise in years of educational attainment to translate into a decrease in poverty it does. In 1959, 48% of black Americans were living below the poverty level, compared to 28.4 percent of Whites and 31 percent of Hispanics in 1997.\(^2\)

Though the percentage of black and Hispanic Americans living in poverty has declined substantially, it is still over three times that of white Americans. However, regardless of race, women continue to be more likely to be poor than men, in what many refer to as the "feminization of poverty" (see Table 1.2).
Table 1.2.Persons Living Below the Poverty Level, by Sex and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of the Population Living</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Latinos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below the Poverty Level</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Sexes</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.0³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1997, the educational attainment levels of women ages 25 to 29 exceeded those of men in the same age group. At the high school completion level, 89 percent of the young women and 86 percent of the young men had diplomas in 1997. Young women also led at the college completion level, 29 percent to 26 percent. When including all persons 25 years of age or older in this analysis we see women losing ground to men at the level of the bachelor's degree and all advanced degrees (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 years and Older, by Sex, 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Income and occupational inequalities. Though we have seen an increase in educational attainment among minorities and women and a decrease in poverty among Blacks and Hispanics, notable income and occupational inequalities remain. In 1987, the
average African American and Hispanic with a bachelor's degree earned roughly 75% and 83% respectively of his or her white counterpart. In 1997, the mean earnings of white workers with a bachelor's degree was $38,936, for Blacks it was $31,955, and $32,955 for Hispanics — closing the income gap slightly with Whites to 82 percent and 85 percent respectively. The mean earnings of black high school graduates was $18,722, for Hispanics $18,528, and for Whites $22,782 — Blacks and Hispanics earning 82 percent and 81 percent respectively of Whites mean earnings (see Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. 1996 Mean Earnings of Workers 18 Years Old and Over, by Educational Attainment, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No Diploma</th>
<th>High School Diploma</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree</th>
<th>Advanced Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>15,011</td>
<td>22,154</td>
<td>38,112</td>
<td>61,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17,826</td>
<td>27,642</td>
<td>46,702</td>
<td>74,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10,421</td>
<td>21,942</td>
<td>28,701</td>
<td>42,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15,358</td>
<td>22,782</td>
<td>38,936</td>
<td>61,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18,246</td>
<td>28,591</td>
<td>48,014</td>
<td>75,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10,290</td>
<td>16,277</td>
<td>28,667</td>
<td>42,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>13,110</td>
<td>18,722</td>
<td>31,955</td>
<td>48,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14,877</td>
<td>19,514</td>
<td>36,026</td>
<td>57,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10,337</td>
<td>15,379</td>
<td>29,311</td>
<td>35,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>13,287</td>
<td>18,528</td>
<td>32,955</td>
<td>49,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14,986</td>
<td>21,593</td>
<td>38,130</td>
<td>49,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9,867</td>
<td>14,635</td>
<td>27,407</td>
<td>50,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


However slowly, statistics do reveal an increase in income for women in the labor market. Between 1996 and 1997, the real median income of family households maintained by a woman with no husband present increased 4.4 percent, while the median
income of family households maintained by a man showed no statistically significant change. Nonetheless, the female-to-male earnings ratio was 0.74 in 1997, a number which has remained relatively steady for decades (Current Population Survey of U.S. Census Bureau, March 1998). In 1996, the mean earnings for a male high school graduate was $27,642 compared with a comparably educated female's $21,942 (79 percent), and a male with a bachelor's degree earned $46,702, while his female counterpart earned $28,701 — only 61 percent of his earnings. In fact, the mean earnings of males in 1996 exceeded those of females at every level of educational attainment except in the Hispanic population where women with advanced degrees earned an average of $1653 (3.4 percent) more than their male counterparts.

The dual labor market. Consistent with Bowles and Gintis' correspondence principle, gender role stereotyping and unequal educational opportunities for students of color fuel the fire of an already segmented labor market. The existence of a dual labor market in the United States helps to perpetuate occupational segregation, income inequality and poverty. Simply put, a dual labor market consists of (1) a primary labor market aka the monopoly sector where jobs tend to be higher in pay, status, and security, and (2) the secondary labor market, aka the competitive sector -- where jobs tend to be low in pay, status, and security. Women and minorities are disproportionately represented in the secondary labor market.

Female dominated jobs (e.g., nursing, teaching, and clerical work) are more verbally and/or emotionally oriented, while male dominated jobs (e.g., surgeons, engineers, and architects) are more spatially and mathematically oriented. Not surprisingly, more value is placed on those jobs which required stereotypically male traits, and consequently, women earn less than men. American women make up a disproportionately large amount -- over 90% -- of jobs such as nursing, kindergarten teachers, secretaries, dental assistants, childcare workers, bank tellers, cleaners, and servants -- all traditionally low
paying, low status jobs (U.S. Department of Labor 1996, table 11). Conversely, females make up less than 5% of mechanical engineers, airline pilots, vehicle mechanics, construction workers, welders, truck drivers, (U.S. Department of Labor 1996: 171-176) — traditionally high paying jobs — and less than 6% of law partners, 8.3% of engineers (U.S. Department of Labor 1997: 95-113; Bureau of the Census 1995: 411-413), 8% of federal and state judges and only 1% of top corporate officers and executives (U.S. Bureau of Labor 1990) — occupations traditionally high in pay, status, and power.

A similar situation exists for minorities in the job market. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Blacks and Hispanics continue to be disproportionately underrepresented in many white collar and professional occupations such as doctors, lawyers, professors, pilots and scientists, while disproportionately overrepresented in service and blue collar occupations like maids and housemen, cleaners and servants, postal clerks, short order cooks, and farm workers (see Table 1.5). In 1995, Blacks made up about 11 percent and Hispanics almost 9 percent of all employed civilians. Blacks and Hispanics were overrepresented (25%-40%) in the blue collar and service industries and underrepresented (0%-2%) in white collar and professional fields (U.S. Department of Labor 1996). Those positions in which Blacks are typically underrepresented are generally either unionized or require high levels of education.

The overrepresentation of Blacks in certain public-sector jobs — i.e., welfare, postal service, and correctional officers — has suggested to many that the government is a significant route to the middle class for this group. However, the economic benefits for Blacks working for the government have been eroding in the last ten to fifteen years (Zipp 1994). Moreover, even when they do gain high-level positions in the public economy, their positions are tenuous because of the volatility of political conditions (Collins 1993). Similarly, Hispanics are underrepresented in many white-collar positions and overrepresented in agricultural and textile-related jobs.
Table 1.5. Occupations in Which People Who Declare Themselves Black and Hispanic were Disproportionately Under- and Overrepresented in 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage of All Employed Black</th>
<th>Hispanic Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underrepresented</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial and Professional</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacists</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College professors</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers and judges</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Writers</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airplane pilots/navigators</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales occupations</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiters and waitresses</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overrepresented</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maids and housemen</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses' aides, orderlies, and attendants</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaners and servants (private households)</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal clerks (except mail carriers)</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressing machine operators</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-order cooks</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile sewing machine operators</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm workers</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from U.S. Bureau of the Census (1995)

Cultural Capital, Socialization, and the Hidden Curriculum

The sociology of education has studied inequalities in the educational process since its inception. Regardless of an increasing parity in educational attainment, there
continues to be income and occupational equality for many ethnic/racial minorities and women. To address these inequalities we must investigate these groups' social and historical context including family, socialization, education, the economy, and politics. Racial and ethnic minorities, women, the poor, and other marginalized groups have always struggled for freedom and equality in one form or another. Members of marginalized groups are often forced to live in low income areas which translates into an inadequately funded education since public schools are primarily funded by property taxes. However, using property taxes to fund public schools is only the tip of the iceberg. Common practices within the educational system itself may perpetuate institutional discrimination. According to the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, poor, black, or Hispanic children are more likely to be physically punished, suspended, expelled, or forced to repeat a grade than white students. While many would argue that, while unfortunate, these practices do not affect a child's academic performance experts maintain that they all increase the likelihood that he or she will drop out of school (Eitzen & Baca Zinn 1991). Because of an inadequate opportunity structure certain marginalized groups have not had the cultural capital (values and norms — usually of the dominant ideology — which are passed on from generation to generation), the contacts, or the resources that dominant group members have had. Once channeled into a system of socialization, segregation, tracking, and discrimination, these structured and institutionalized inequalities serve to reproduce capitalistic values and to legitimate social stratification, while preparing certain marginalized students for lives specific to differential socioeconomic statuses (Anyon 1980).

Cultural capital. As many studies have shown, black and Hispanic children do less well in school than white children from similar socio-economic backgrounds. This is explained by Ogbu, Giroux, and Bowles and Gintis in the context of cultural reproduction and resistance theories which contend that working class and minority youths — either
consciously or unconsciously — reject the meaning and knowledge taught by the schools and turn to working class adults or to street people as a source of materials for resistance and exclusion. These youths form countercultures which limit their success in mainstream capitalist America. They see their family and friends in working class jobs or no jobs at all. They see their success in the mainstream economy as hopeless, and turn to other — often deviant — ways of making a living. This can be seen in the Strain Theories of Robert Merton, where "deviant" individuals may choose alternative strategies (e.g., stealing or dealing drugs) to achieve mainstream goals (i.e., money, wealth, "success") which may divert the interest and efforts of marginalized groups into non-academic pursuits. These "deviant" activities may also promote personal attributes or competencies that are not necessarily congruent with standard school practices for academic success. Thus, although a minority student may be very intelligent, she may be excessively absent, tardy, or disruptive, or not try because she does not believe it will do any good. These individuals see the positions of their parents and other adults in the community and perceive their chances of success in a mainstream job as slim to none, i.e., they have "realistic expectations" of their own positions in society. Additionally, academically "successful" minorities have to deal with peer pressure because doing well in school is perceived by many as "acting white". This pressure continues into adulthood, where accepting a traditionally "white" job will sometimes alienate professionals of color from their friends and family — i.e., from their collective social identity. Even when a minority student or professional does attempt to challenge the odds and strive for academic and/or occupational success, decisions such as employment, funding, and policies are usually made by members of the ruling class, which often discriminate against minorities and women. The result is just one more obstruction in the long and winding road to equality.
**Socialization.** Women, too, have strict role expectations that help to shape who they are and what they do. Although it has always existed, gender role differentiation has taken on a singular significance since the industrial revolution when men left the farms for urban employment (the public sector) and women remained at home to raise the children and take care of her husband (the private sector). Women were expected to be the nurturers and caretakers of the family, while it was the male's role to go to work and bring home a salary. Eventually, with the help of time and socialization, the traits that were expected of a "proper" woman at the turn of the 20th century became the traits of the hegemonic female in 20th century America — a woman who was selfless, emotional, relational, expressive, and cooperative. Traits of the hegemonic male were (and remain) independence, competitiveness, goal-orientation, and confidence. These gender roles became institutionalized in the U.S. and are perpetuated and legitimated in the family and in the educational and occupational structures today.

The institutions of the family and education are pivotal in the process of socialization. Children look to family members and educators for role models and the transmission of norms, values and role expectations. Some families — usually upper and middle class — treat men and women more equally than other families. Boys and girls model and imitate their parents and other adults in the community, and they internalize the norms and values of that community. These behaviors and expectations become part of their self-concept and personality. If a young girl is raised in a household where Dad works and Mom stays home to cook, clean, and tend to the family, she is likely see her future as similar to her mother's. However, if she grows up in a home where her parents work together as equals and she begins to develop corresponding egalitarian expectations, she still has the system of education to contend with.

In 1972 Lenore Weitzman, Deborah Eifler, Elizabeth Hokada, and Catherine Ross conducted the premier study of sex-role socialization in children's books. Their goal was to examine materials that help socialize us to discover what values and behavior patterns
are taught and reinforced. In 134 children's readers the authors found sex stereotyping in both number of times males and females appeared, and the activities in which they were shown. This research revealed that books that won distinguished awards were mainly about males and that male characters outnumbered females eleven to one. Females are portrayed as individuals who had things done to them. Furthermore, the authors found that boys were portrayed in positive terms while girls were largely portrayed in negative terms. Boys were seen as active and adventurous while girls were passive and immobile. "While boys play in the real world outdoors, girls sit and watch them -- cut off from that world by the window, porch, or fence around their homes" (Weitzman et al 1972:55). This distinction parallels the public/private dichotomy discussed earlier. Boys sought exciting pursuits and independence outside the home while girls were shy and dependent, watching longingly from inside the home. In the mid-1980s this study was replicated by Williams et al and comparisons were made. This parallel study found that although the number of women in picture books has increased significantly, the characteristics of women have changed very little. Women and men continue to be depicted as conforming to traditional stereotypes of males and females in American culture.

Considering male/female differences, it can be seen that females are more often shown as dependent, submissive, nurturant, and passive and more likely to serve others whereas males are more likely to be independent, competitive, persistent, creative, and active (Williams, Allen, Vernon, Williams, and Malecha 1988:63).

Sadker and Sadker (1994) conducted one of several studies that have revealed the differential educational experiences of boys and girls in elementary and middle schools. The study looked at student-teacher interactions in more than 100 fourth, sixth, and eighth grade classrooms in four states and the District of Columbia. The Sadkers' research demonstrated that boys get more attention (both positive and negative), receive more academic contacts, and are asked more complex and abstract questions than girls. In addition, girls and boys receive different types of evaluative comments. Boys were more likely than girls to receive praise for intellectual competence and girls were more
likely than boys to receive praise directed at rules of form. The Sadkers argue that through this discrimination, girls acquire "learned helplessness" and perceive their failure as insurmountable. Girls are more likely then, to blame poor performance on ability (factors they cannot control) as opposed to a lack of effort, and consequently give up easier than boys. Low expectations for girls, then, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Boys, on the other hand, tend to persevere and work more diligently at a problem than girls do. Having been told he is capable of success, the young male student also lives up to his family's, teachers', and peers' expectations of him.

The results of these and other studies demonstrate that gender bias in the classroom is still prominent in America today. Boys continue to be rewarded for autonomy while girls are rewarded for dependence and following form and instructions. While boys are rewarded for individuality and goal-orientation, girls are rewarded for simply completing their work. This discrimination persists into the realm of counseling, where boys are encouraged to go away to a "good college," while girls are advised to go to a community or local state college. These prejudices in the "hidden curriculum" are also found blatantly in the formal curriculum.

The rigidity of gender-role stereotyping is harmful to both girls and boys. Little boys are just as constrained by the necessity to be independent, fearless, and ambitious as little girls are by the emphasis on dependence, fragility, and nurturance. Eventually, girls internalize these societal norms and expectations and their self-concepts reflect the rhetoric about girls not being good at math and science, that girls should not be independent or aggressive, that the woman's place is in the home, etc. These unyielding role expectations lead girls to score lower on "male-oriented" subjects such as math and science which are abstract and goal-oriented, i.e., traits that boys were rewarded for. Girls score higher than boys in "female-oriented" subjects such as English and reading, which stress the verbal skills girls were rewarded for earlier in their academic careers.
After being told time and again that they are not good at something, many minorities and women eventually quit trying and fall into a trap of self-fulfilling prophecy. Different traits and values are nurtured, punished, and rewarded in different social, occupational, cultural, national, spatial, and temporal climates. Since the ruling class is made up largely of white middle and upper class males, it is the norms, values, and beliefs of this group that are rewarded and perpetuated in capitalist America. In general, the expectations of a white, middle or upper class male are higher than those of minorities and women. As I have discussed, equal years of educational attainment does not mean an equal education, and an equal education does not mean equal income. Income and occupational inequality is perpetuated through social institutions which are organized in such a way that guarantees continued power, status, and profit for the ruling class. This process is legitimated by the dominant ideology and imparted to us through agents of socialization. We are taught that we live in a democratic and meritocratic society, and that therefore each individual is responsible for his or her own successes and failures, regardless of opportunity structure. Conflict educational theorists argue that a change in income inequality can only come from a change in the occupational structure, thus a change in contemporary capitalism. Consistent with the praxis-oriented nature of the conflict theorist, many believe changing social and occupational policies (e.g., affirmative action — an endangered concept) is necessary to attain this goal. The implementation of such policies as parental leave and comparable pay are seen by some as a small step toward equality for women and minorities.

The hidden curriculum. Before vast industrialization, most Americans lived and worked on family farms and the family was the primary agent of socialization. In contemporary society, schools fulfill a large part of this function. The term "hidden curriculum" refers to the latent socialization of norms, values, and roles that a school provides along with the "official" curriculum. It refers to standards of behavior that are
deemed proper by society and are taught subtly in schools. According to this hidden curriculum children must wait to speak until they are called upon, they must regulate their activities according to the clock or bells, and they are expected to concentrate on their own work rather than assist other students who learn more slowly — all behaviors that will serve them well as they take their places in the capitalist occupational structure.

The importance of education as socialization for entering the workforce has vastly increased. Few urban children learn skills from their parents that will enable them to make a living. However, such socialization extends well beyond such basic intellectual skills as reading, writing, and arithmetic. Today, schools teach manners, cleanliness, respect for authority, certain attitudes and certain social skills. For example, Japanese schools offer guidance sessions during lunch which seek to improve the classroom experience and develop "healthy living skills," i.e., instill values and encourage behavior useful for the Japanese business world, such as self-discipline and openness to group problem solving and decision making (Tsuneyoshi 1992).

The American educational system allocates members of society to their appropriate adult roles by enabling them to receive training commensurate with their talents, skills, and efforts. It socializes members of the working class to accept their class position by providing unequal access to the skills and training that are necessary in contemporary society. Children are taught at an early age to define their academic aspirations and abilities in keeping with the social class of their parents, i.e., the lower one's social class, the less likely one is to value higher education as a plausible avenue to upward mobility, and the less likely one is to work to excel academically. These lowered educational aspirations are reinforced by inferior educational opportunities, and through labeling and discrimination in the classroom.

The hidden curriculum is a form of social control. In a classroom overly focused on obedience, value is placed on pleasing the teacher and other authority figures and on remaining quiet rather than thinking critically, creative problem solving, or academic
learning (Leacock 1969). Many believe this type of educational environment — where students become accustomed to habitual obedience to authority — contributes to much of the disturbing behavior we teach about in the sociology classroom, e.g., experiments by Milgram, Zimbardo and Asch. The social control function of the hidden curriculum is not limited to patterns of rules and behavior. Schools and their representatives direct and restrict students' aspirations. Teachers and guidance counselors may encourage male students to pursue careers in the sciences but steer equally talented female students into careers as early childhood teachers or nurses. Much of this subtle sorting of students on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, and/or gender is accomplished through tracking (aka ability grouping) and cultural bias in standardized testing.

**Tracking and the correspondence principle.** Curriculum tracking is used in a vast majority of schools in the United States as a way to maintain order and cater to a heterogeneous group of students. Instead of benefiting all students equally, however, Spade, Columba and Vanfossen (1997), Braddock and Dawkins (1993) and Anyon (1980) provide evidence which supports the view that tracking plays a distinct role in the perpetuation of stratification and status maintenance. Tracking, or ability grouping, can be defined as the grouping of students into course sequences and classrooms on the basis of personal qualities, performances, or aspirations. The examination of the process of tracking that follows includes (1) the process by which students are assigned to tracks within schools, (2) the differences in curriculum between schools, and (3) the effects of these various curricular programs on students' academic achievement and potential for future successes. In principle, tracking allows every student to receive an education consistent with his or her talents and abilities. In practice, students from privileged backgrounds are likely to be placed in higher tracks, while those from less privileged backgrounds — who are disproportionately members of minority groups — are likely to be placed in lower tracks (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Oakes 1985).
Students are tracked on the basis of personality traits, IQ scores, educational and occupational aspirations, and previous academic achievement. When we investigate this further we find that all of these things are influenced by a student's socioeconomic status. For example, a student's personality traits are largely influenced by the traits of their parents and their peers. Thus, a student from a middle class background would likely portray those characteristics — independence, leadership, outgoing personality — that many believe are consistent with middle class success in capitalist America.

Educational and occupational characteristics are also influenced by a students' peers and family. A lower class student has a *working class consciousness*. She is likely to reify her role in society as fixed or given, and to see herself as a member of the lower class. Like her parents before her, then, she may have little hope of social mobility, and her goals are likely to be lower than that of the middle class student.

Previous educational achievement is also misleading. Many studies have shown that students' levels of academic achievement are highly correlated to SES. This implies that the intellect and ability of a student has less to do with the track that student is assigned to than does SES. Because race is highly correlated to SES, we can look to Braddock and Dawkins (1993) for evidence. In English courses, African American and Latino students made up 15% and 18% of the "high-ability" track respectively compared to 32% of Anglo Americans. In "low-ability" track English courses, African American students represented 34%, Latino students 29%, and Anglo students 14%. Percentages were similar for mathematics courses.

Regardless of how students are tracked into different programs, once in these programs the differences between the education of lower and middle class students become more vast. Jeannie Oakes (1985) — in a study of 25 secondary schools across America — examined the dominant differences between tracks and found that students' perceptions of teachers in the high track are positive. Students from the high track saw teachers as less authoritarian and less punitive than did the students from the low track.
Lower track students spent less time on task and more time on disciplinary measures. As far as the learning interactions in the two tracks, high track students participate more actively in learning activities than the lower track students, who tend to be the passive recipients of their education. Social relations between the tracks also differs. High track students identify with the school and have a higher incidence of school affiliation and participation in social activities, while the lower track students feel socially isolated and alienated from their schools. These differences among tracks result in different attitudes, self-concepts, and educational and occupational outcomes. As might be expected, high track students are enthusiastic about their futures and exhibit high self-esteem. Lower track students have low self-concepts and low educational aspiration. They seem to exhibit a "why bother?" attitude.

Jean Anyon's (1980) study examined between school tracking. She divided schools into four social class categories: working class, middle class, affluent/professional, and executive/elite. Anyon's findings were similar to those of Oakes. When asked about their perceptions of knowledge, teachers in the working class schools described it as teaching the basics and practical skills. Middle class teachers stressed understanding and comprehension, and affluent school teachers emphasized creativity and discovery, i.e., they taught students to think for themselves. Teachers at the executive/elite schools saw knowledge as an intellectual process, including problem solving and critical thinking. Students' perceptions of knowledge were similar to their teachers'. The working and middle class school students saw knowledge as something external to them in the forms of memorizing "outside" facts and information. The affluent/professional students saw knowledge as internal. They stressed developing ideas, thinking for themselves, and creating knowledge within themselves. Executive/elite students viewed knowledge as both internal and external. They stressed knowing how to do things and understanding what it takes to be the best — clearly upper and middle class values.
Anyon found the curriculum also varies greatly between these schools. Working class schools stress procedural and mechanical tasks and fact oriented education. Middle class schools, on the other hand, gave students a choice in the content of their education. Information was more conceptual and less emphasis was put on procedures and skills. Affluent/professional schools predictably emphasized discovery and direct experience as well as creative and critical thinking. The executive/elite schools stressed exploration and emphasized decision-making processes, individualized instruction and the teaching of abstract concepts.

Findings from the research of these authors indicate that each track has a normative structure which prepares the students for a life specific to their SES. Tracking helps to maintain and perpetuate class status from one generation to another by sorting children from different backgrounds into different curricular programs. Social mobility in these circumstances, then, is extremely difficult due to a lack of opportunity structure for the lower classes. Once tracked, a student is put through a specific class-based education which only serves to perpetuate social stratification and status inequality. The differences that occur within and between these tracks affects the way a student feels about herself and her academic performance. The lower the expectations of teachers, parents, and peer groups, the lower the academic achievement of the student. Therefore, status and power are maintained in the middle and upper classes, and the lower classes believe they are where they deserve, i.e., at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale. Thus, class conflict is reinforced and social inequality is perpetuated through these tracking procedures.

*Cultural bias in standardized testing.* In addition to the perpetuation of social stratification through tracking, standardized testing helps in the maintenance and legitimization of inequalities through significant cultural biases. Many elementary and secondary schools use Intelligence Quotient (IQ) tests as a basis for tracking students and
assigning them to different educational programs based on their intellectual abilities. IQ tests are supposed to measure innate intelligence, but many scholars believe they are culturally-biased toward the dominant group, evaluating an individual’s familiarity with a specific range of white, middle-class experiences rather than indicating and inherent intelligence. The following question from a standard IQ test measures knowledge learned from a specific social and cultural context, i.e., middle-class America:

Tennis is to racquet as baseball is to:
  a. club
  b. strike
  c. bat
  d. homerun

To the extent that a student has not been exposed to this environment, his or her IQ scores will suffer. Ramirez (1988) developed an intelligence test based on knowledge found within Chicano culture. Among the questions included were:

That part of the southwestern United States from which it is believed the Aztecs migrated before they settled in Mexico City is:
  a. San Diego
  b. Aztlan
  c. Colorado
  d. Santa Barbara

The Chicano term for the police is:
  a. la migra
  b. la chota
  c. el gabacho
  d. el pachuco

When administered to white and Chicano college students, Chicanos scored significantly higher on average than whites: 93.3 out of a possible 140 points compared to 36.4 for white students. (The correct answer for both is "b.")

Over 46 million students from kindergarten through high school take more than 150 million standardized tests each year (Lemann 1995). In the U.S. almost two million high school students rely on their scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the
American Achievement Test (ACT) to get them accepted to a "good college." These test scores vary substantially by racial-ethnic background and gender. For example, Asian Americans typically have the highest total scores, followed by white Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican American, and African Americans (Chronicle of Higher Education 1990). As with the IQ test, to perform well individuals must learn how to answer the test questions in the culturally acceptable way. The following question reveals a class bias because it assumes that the student is familiar with the terms being used, especially sonnet. Children from middle- and upper-class homes are more likely to have come across poetry and to recognize sonnet than children from lower-class homes.

Painter is to painting as ______ is to sonnet.
   a. driver
   b. poet
   c. priest
   d. carpenter

This question also assumes the student is familiar with the form of a logical syllogism (A is to B as C is to D), is adept at taking multiple choice tests, and is familiar with art. Finally, the question may be interpreted in two ways, i.e., painting could be both a noun and a verb, therefore the student must also be good at English. The student who has been socialized in a middle- or upper-class home is more likely to possess the knowledge to accurately answer this question. Because standardized tests are produced by testing companies dominated by middle-class white males, such tests regularly contain subtle but real biases that penalize women and students from different cultural and class backgrounds (Lemann 1995).

In the late 1980s, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) suspected that female high school students were capable of doing better at the prestigious university than their Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores suggested. The school reassessed the way it judged SAT math scores of female applicants, and in 1993, the MIT admissions office conducted a study that confirmed these suspicions. They compared the SAT
scores and college grades of men and women enrolled in the same majors at MIT and found, in nearly every department, that women's grades equaled or exceeded men's but their SAT math scores were lower. The Associate Director of Admissions and the study's author, Bette Johnson, concluded "We learned we could admit a lot more women from the applicant pool" (Shenk 1997:95). Many critical scholars maintain (and the College Board and ETS acknowledge) that the SAT by itself is not a strong predictor of the performance of many groups of students. "And although the test's sponsors say that it is most reliable when combined with other admissions information and shouldn't be used without that, many selective colleges and scholarship competitions rely heavily on the SAT. As a result, students are rejected by colleges and universities where they could do well" (Shenk 1997:94).

The SAT and tests like it also play a disproportionate role in admissions through self-selection. Many students look at test score requirements, perceive them as too difficult, and choose not to apply. William Hiss, a vice president and former admission dean at Bates College in Maine, found self-selection to be a serious problem among minority students. Since Bates no longer requires SAT scores -- relying on "a mastery of a rigorous high school curriculum and on other demonstrations of student motivation" -- the percentage of minorities applying to and enrolling in the school has doubled. Further, research conducted by Bates reveals minority students admitted without SATs have been successful overall in their college careers (Shenk 1997: 95).
THE DEBATE OVER MULTICULTURALISM IN EDUCATION

Since the 1960s, multicultural educators have demanded that our educational institutions and their representatives take seriously the implications and consequences of living in a multiracial and multicultural democracy. However, almost four decades later we continue to be bombarded with calls from the Right for standardized testing, the rejection of multiculturalism, and the development of curricula around a "common culture."

Our country is a branch of European civilization. ... "Eurocentricity" is right, in American curricula and consciousness, because it accords with the facts of our history, and we — and Europe — are fortunate for that. The political and moral legacy of Europe has made the most happy and admirable of nations. Saying that may be indelicate, but it has the merit of being true and the truth should be the core of the curriculum (Will 1989: 3).

This comment represents those who believe — despite our increasingly multicultural and global nature — that America and the rest of the world can still be unified around the original Western ideas that have been described in Schlesinger's The Disuniting of America as "still a good answer — still the best hope" (Lemert 1993:10). A white, male, Harvard, liberal, intellectual, historian, Schlesinger argues "We used to say e pluribus unum. Now we glorify pluribus and belittle unum" (quoted in Feagin and Feagin 1999:464). Criticisms of diversity are not confined to Will and Schlesinger. They are only two of many conservative educators whose notion of a common Western culture serves as a yardstick with which to measure and denounce "any attempt by subordinate groups to challenge the narrow ideological and political parameters by which such a culture both defines and expresses itself" (Jackson and Solis 1995:xi). Himself a recent immigrant from India, D'Souza (1991) labels multiculturalism an "illiberal education" which represents a serious threat to education in the U.S. (p. 13).

Critical educators disagree and suggest that to claim unambiguous "Westernness" as the basis of school curricula is to "repress to the dimmest parts of the unconscious a
fundamental anxiety concerning the question of African American and other minority identities ..." (McCarthy and Willis 1995:75). These scholars argue that teachers must increase their understanding on the issues affecting education such as cultural diversity and social justice by developing knowledge and skills that can help them increase their intercultural competence. Cultural diversity programs have done just this, providing a necessary corrective to the dominance of Eurocentric culture. Multicultural studies "have encouraged us to look at traditionally excluded cultures and study them on their own terms rather than seeing them through the eyes of the dominant class" and motivate people "to see in plural ways, so that they are not seeing through the lens of any single culture, but understanding the relationships of cultures to each other" (Andersen in Feagin and Feagin 1999:465). Empirical research also reveals solid support for a multicultural perspective on U.S. college campuses. According to a 1995 survey of 34,000 professors by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, fewer and fewer professors believe the classics of Western culture should serve as the foundation for the college curriculum and they are instead supporting diversity and multiculturalism. Only 28% believed teaching Western civilization is essential, down from 35% in 1989. Additionally, more professors have attended workshops on cultural awareness and believe they are sensitive to minority needs (Magner 1996:A12).

One goal of the liberatory classroom is that members learn to respect each other's differences rather than fear them. Such a perspective is ecological and holistic. The classroom becomes an important place to connect to our roots, our past, and to envision the future (Shrewsbury 1993:8).

It is important to note here a critical multicultural education does not preclude classical Western education. It is a matter of expanding what has come to be called "the canon" to include research and writing done for, by, and about members of previously marginalized groups. However, this "expansion" should not be an afterthought to traditional Eurocentric education, but rather a movement based on inclusivity that allows

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for the intertwining and intersecting of various perspectives, philosophies, and group memberships.

Despite the continuing barrage of conservative arguments, many contemporary educators continue to chip away at the stone of Eurocentric hegemony in the classroom. Banks (1988), Giroux (1992), Kanpol and McLaren (1995), McCarthy and Willis (1995) and others have called for a modification of traditional multicultural education toward a critical multiculturalism which seeks to promote democratic initiatives in curriculum, pedagogy, and social relations in the schools. Critical multiculturalism not only promotes understanding of our diverse society, but also supports efforts directed toward attaining social, cultural and emotional harmony. Despite calls for objectivity in the classroom, Giroux (1992) maintains public school curricula cannot be seen as either objective or neutral.

As institutions actively involved in constructing political subjects and presupposing a vision of the future, they must be dealt with in terms that are simultaneously historical, critical, and transformative. The knowledge we attain in school is socially produced, imbued with human interests, and deeply implicated in the unequal relations off-campus (p. xii).

In addition to an emphasis on social change, a critical multicultural approach to education requires a far more nuanced discussion of the racial identities of minority and majority groups than currently exists in the multicultural literature (McCarthy and Willis 1995:77). A nonessentialist approach and a consistent focus on the intersectionality of group memberships is another key ingredient in critical multiculturalism. For example, contemporary feminist and multicultural scholars have argued against the use of the essential Woman in feminist theory and scholarship because that Woman does not represent the majority of women in the world. bell hooks (1984) argues that the contemporary feminist movement is largely by, for, and about "a select group of college-educated, middle and upper class, married white women — housewives bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life" (p.1). hooks maintains:
... white women who dominate feminist discourse today rarely question whether or not their perspective on women's reality is true to the lived experiences of women as a collective group. Nor are they aware of the extent to which their perspectives reflect race and class biases, although there has been a greater awareness of biases in recent years. Racism abounds in the writings of white feminists, reinforcing white supremacy and negating the possibility that women will bond politically across ethnic and racial boundaries (1984:3).

The intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and national identities together create different and varying life experiences for individuals. Our quality of life, social status, and lifestyle -- our values, behaviors, and expectations -- all reproduce and reflect our simultaneous and intertwining group memberships. An upper class white woman cannot expect to speak for a working class Latina, nor can a middle class Asian American man expect to understand the plight of a poor black mother and her children. Evidence of different social relationships due to various intersections of race, class, and sexuality can also be seen in the long history of tension and hostility between the black and white working classes in the United States, while relationships between black and white members of the middle classes are much less strained, as well as in the internal conflicts within and among various gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities.

Controversy over a range of diversity issues -- from the dismantling of affirmative action to movements to make English the only official language -- is likely to increase. However, while the debate over the value of multiculturalism rages on, the demographic reality remains that by 2025 in the states of California, Texas, New Mexico, and Hawaii Americans of color will constitute the majority of the population. Furthermore, New York, New Jersey, and Florida, along with five other states, are projected to be more than 40 percent people of color. What does this mean for American students and teachers? No later than 2040, the U.S. educational system will be predominantly composed of students of color (Feagin and Feagin 1999:472). Such population changes will provide major challenges to the traditional structure, process, and curriculum of public schools. Critical scholars Feagin and Feagin (1999) argue "As voting constituencies change, the
composition of juries and justice systems, educational systems, and other government agencies are likely to change as well" (p. 473). When students and teachers of color gain more and more organizational and political power, discrimination against previously marginalized groups is not likely to be tolerated.

However, we cannot rely on legislation to yield morality. All too often antidiscrimination decisions and laws have gone unenforced, and civil rights laws do not incorporate — and therefore cannot eliminate — many forms of subtle discrimination that persist today. Critical multiculturalism is imperative to contemporary education because it emphasizes the importance of respecting and understanding the many racial and ethnic groups and subcultures — especially non-Europeans — that have contributed to U.S. development. Despite protests from conservative educators, it is inevitable that schools become more concerned with issues surrounding diversity. Even former critic Nathan Glazer (1997) concedes in the title of his new book that We are All Multiculturalists Now. Though he continues to argue against new government action to end persisting discrimination, even Glazer nebulously accepts the end of white European dominance in the U.S.

As educators, we need to begin to see social, economic, and political issues in global and relational terms, i.e., in the context of what Wallerstein (1990) calls "World System's Theory." A world systems approach to social movements, for example, calls attention to the interrelatedness of Americans with the rest of the world. McCarthy and Willis (1995) maintain "the civil rights movement in the United States has had profound multiplier effects on the expansion of democratic practices to excluded groups in Australia, the Caribbean, Africa, and England, as well as in the United States itself" (pp. 75-76). The increasingly multicultural and global nature of our society and the complex interrelations of social systems demand that we address how the university classroom can become a site for cultural democracy. Critical multicultural educators need a language that emphasizes how social identities and categories are constructed within unequal power
relations in societal institutions. For example, "Westernness" is a powerful ideological construct which is difficult to fully understand without being familiar with the concepts of "hegemony" and "privilege". McCarthy and Willis (1995) assert, "a new approach must begin with a more systematic critique of the construction of school knowledge and privileging of Eurocentrism and Westernness [italics added] in the American school curriculum" (p. 74).

DISCUSSION

Social science became interested in education during a period of previously unprecedented growth of public expenditure on schools and universities. Motivations to advance a "sociology of education" included (but were not limited to) the collection of relevant information in order to develop, legitimate, criticize and reform social policy. Due to a lack of respect for education as a field of research, the institutionalization of the sociology of education was greatly facilitated by the prestige derived from borrowing theories, procedures, and substantive concerns from the larger and more respected fields of stratification and general sociology. Because of rapid technological advancements the U.S. urgently needed new scientists and society looked to our systems of education to provide "human resources." Functionalists emphasized the need for "army upon army of skilled technicians and professional experts" and looked to education to provide the increasingly specialized and differentiated training specific to the technologically determined changes in the occupational structure. Human capital theorist maintained that individuals who invested time and money in education and training would increase their productivity, and thus their worth. During the post-WWII expansion, this belief brought students flocking into higher education by the millions -- largely motivated by the anticipated high rate of return to individuals with college degrees.

Research in the sociology of education has consisted largely of quantitative studies funded by government organizations with the intention of developing and/or legitimating
social policy. The attraction of functional approaches for government and administrators was its "scientific" approach and alleged value-neutrality. However, contemporary conflict and interpretive theories of education were a natural progression of the social and political upheaval of the 1960s — emerging as a fresh new way of looking at old data. Finally, a synthesis of these perspectives emerged resulting in a theory of education which makes the micro- macro link examining the cultural transmission of certain types of knowledge and the social basis of language and classroom interaction with an integrated analysis of the structure and process of class reproduction.

Researchers have found that regardless of an increasing parity in educational attainment, there continues to be income and occupational equality for many ethnic and racial minorities and women. Rather, these groups have had to face income and occupational segregation which has led to less job security, less autonomy on the job, fewer benefits and less income for marginalized groups in the United States. With respect to income and occupational inequalities, minority group members and women have consistently earned much less than dominant group members, i.e., whites and males.

As I have demonstrated, the perpetuation of these inequalities involve complex, often latent, processes of the transmission of cultural capital, differential socialization, tracking, and cultural biases in standardized testing. Once channeled into a system of socialization, segregation, tracking, and discrimination, these structured and institutionalized inequalities serve to reproduce capitalistic values and to legitimate social stratification, while preparing certain marginalized students for lives specific to differential socioeconomic statuses. Given the changing racial and ethnic demographics in the American educational system, critical multicultural educators have demanded that our educational institutions and their representatives take seriously the implications and consequences of living in a multiracial and multicultural democracy. Critical multiculturalism not only promotes understanding of our diverse society, but also supports efforts directed toward attaining social, cultural and emotional harmony.
In addition to an emphasis on equality, democracy, intersectionality and social change, a critical multicultural approach to education requires a far more nuanced discussion of the racial and ethnic identities of minority and majority groups than currently exists in the multicultural literature. Critical multiculturalism is imperative to contemporary education because it emphasizes the importance of respecting and understanding the many racial and ethnic groups and subcultures -- especially non-Europeans -- that have contributed to U.S. development. The increasingly multicultural and global nature of our society and the complex interrelations of social systems demand that we address how the university classroom can become a site for cultural democracy. Critical multicultural educators need a language that emphasizes how social identities and categories are constructed within unequal power relations in societal institutions.

NOTES

1 Due to the limitations of census data regarding Latinos and other minority group members, the focus of this discussion is disproportionately centered around statistics for African Americans and women. Additionally, the Hispanic origin population consists of many distinct groups which differ in socioeconomic characteristics, culture and recency of immigration. Since there are differences among the individual groups, data users should exercise caution when interpreting aggregate data for this population group.

2 The poverty threshold for a family of four was $16,400 in annual income in 1997 and $12,802 for a family of three.


4 1991 figures

5 1991 figures

6 1991 figures
CHAPTER THREE

WHITHER A POSTMODERNIST PEDAGOGY?: THE EVOLUTION OF CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM

One obvious place for educators to address inequalities in education is in the classroom. However, before I discuss trends in contemporary pedagogical approaches, it is necessary to briefly discuss the relationship between postmodernism and contemporary critical education. In the following chapter, I trace the evolution from critical, feminist, and multicultural pedagogies to what I call critical multiculturalism — a pedagogical approach that is both praxis-oriented and postmodernist. Contrary to what many believe about postmodernism, a good deal of social theory produced from within this perspective is not only praxis-oriented, but downright radical. In fact, the controversy surrounding postmodernism — especially its appropriateness for social change — continues to transform academic and intellectual debate.

In Postmodernism, Reason, and Religion, Gellner (1992) complains "Postmodernism is a contemporary movement. It is strong and fashionable. Over and above this, it is not altogether clear what the devil it is" (p. 22). To be clear, postmodernism — and the adjective postmodernist — is a cultural, intellectual and aesthetic orientation, while postmodernity is a historical state or condition (Ashley 1997:5). Waxing and waning in popularity for a good part of the 20th century, both are complex and fluid concepts which resist -- if not defy -- simplistic explanations or definitions. We can never singularly define postmodernism, not only because it is used by scholars in a variety of different ways, but because to do so would be a modernist enterprise. This having been said, a general description of postmodernism's cultural outlook include: a fascination with the
dynamics of symbol systems; an abandonment of universal narratives of progress; a sense of both personal and public fragmentation; an acknowledgment of the subject's ironic involvement with its knowingly manufactured environments, and; a critique of objective, totalizing or grand theories (Ashley 1997:3).

This perspective poses an interesting problem when embarking on a postmodernist analysis of U.S. education because American educational theory and practice are founded in modernity and therefore embody a certain set of assumptions from Enlightenment thought. Indeed, many view education as "the vehicle by which the Enlightenment ideals of critical reason, humanistic individual freedom and benevolent progress are substantiated and realised" (Usher and Edwards 1994:24). Lyotard (1992) maintains that education played a significant role in the project of modernity which argues that progress will emancipate "the whole of humanity from ignorance, poverty, backwardness, [and] despotism," and thanks to education in particular, "it will also produce enlightened citizens, masters of their own destiny" (p. 97). In fact, the very philosophy from which our educational system was born is founded on the two humanist ideas that (1) there is an authority, a keeper of knowledge, i.e., the educator, and (2) individuals (i.e., the students) are rational subjects who are capable of exercising individual agency and who have the inherent potential to be self-motivated and self-directed. The task of the modern educator, then, is to impart knowledge and to help the individual realize his or her potential. However, by sharing authority and by questioning traditional curricula and conventional pedagogical approaches, contemporary educators have turned the modernist notion of schooling on its ear.

WHITHER A POSTMODERNIST PEDAGOGY?

Before embarking on a discourse analysis of contemporary pedagogies it is necessary to address what some would argue are inherent political and ethical contradictions within a postmodernist pedagogy. A postmodernist orientation includes: a suspicion of grand
narratives and authority: a disbelief in an objective Truth, Knowledge, Morality, or Justice, and; the demise of false dichotomies -- including that of subject/object. Knowing this, critics may ask: *If there can be no grand theories of pedagogy, no Truth or objective Knowledge, no Authority, no Justice, and no subject (i.e., no agency) in postmodernity, then how can there be a postmodernist pedagogy?* True to the larger context of much of postmodernist discourse, many contemporary educators reject the notion of grand narratives and make no claims to developing an "alternative discourse," e.g., a "poststructuralist feminist pedagogy." Rather, they "emphasize the inappropriateness of pedagogical prescriptions, arguing for pedagogies that remain specific to the multiplicities of particular contexts" (Gore 1993:32). As for the acquisition of Truth or objective Knowledge, these are modernist goals. The postmodernist educator's goals include helping the student learn how to think for his or herself and how to adapt and survive in the fluid and fragmented world in which they live. Once a student acquires the ability to think critically and inclusively, he or she may use that knowledge for the rest of his or her life and participate in positive social change.

The modern idea of the teacher as authority figure is also called into question in the postmodernist classroom. The instructor is not the omniscient leader -- the keeper of all knowledge. Rather, authority is shared and the responsibility for producing knowledge is dispersed among students and teacher(s) alike. This is accomplished through democratic classroom environments and a constant emphasis on critical thinking. While Lyotard sees the death of the Professor in a postmodernist pedagogy, Rorty "assigns the Professor the crucial role of edification based on imagination, a sense of poetic wonder, and conversational engagement -- a kind of socialization" (in Peters 1995:xxxvii). Although there will always be a need for *some* authority in the classroom, Gore (1993) emphasizes an "authority with" approach rather than an "authority over" approach. She points out that even when unintended, traditional teacher/student power relations in the classroom are often retained.
The potential for relations of power operating within feminist pedagogy to have dominating effects becomes clearer; for example, when feminist perspectives or "readings" become the only valid course content, we can see how the power relations of men and women, teacher and student, feminist and non-feminist become actualized (p. 80).

Gore asserts there is always going to be the situation of teacher exercising power over students, the differences are, however, how much power and what is produced through this relationship. Many postmodernist pedagogues alter the traditional teacher-student power relation through democratic classroom environments.

The issue of power in the classroom brings with it the issues of justice and ethics. The postmodernist rejection of totalizing systems of thought seems to be at odds with the goals of critical educators. If there is no justice or universal ethical code how can we enlighten or empower -- not to mention emancipate -- others? David Harvey (1993) argues

The effect of the postmodern critique of universalism has been to render any application of the concept of social justice problematic. And there is an obvious sense in which this questioning of the concept is not only proper but imperative -- too many colonial peoples have suffered at the hands of Western imperialism's particular justice, too many African-Americans have suffered at the hands of the white man's justice, too many women from the justice imposed by a patriarchal order and too many workers from the justice imposed by capitalists, to make the concept anything other than problematic (p. 95).

Critiques such as these illustrate how any notion of empowerment or social justice which appeals to some higher order criteria is necessarily subjective and contextual, and has no meaning apart from "whatever individuals or groups, given their multiple identities and functions, at some particular moment find it pragmatically, instrumentally, emotionally, politically, or ideologically useful to mean" (Harvey 1993:96). If there are no universal ethics -- if there is no higher authority to appeal to -- then how do we as teachers, students and citizens know right from wrong? Bauman (1995) argues that once an individual learns to think for him or herself -- free from hegemonic influences -- he or she will develop his or her own ethics, what he calls morality. According to Bauman, morality is more authentic than ethics and so-called practical reason. Guided by our
individual morality we will make decisions based on our own ethics and not the ethics of the dominant group which serve to perpetuate the status quo. Bauman believes that "the demise of the power-assisted universals and absolutes has made the responsibilities of the actor more profound, and, indeed, more consequential, than ever before" (1995:6). Examined from this perspective, the individual has more agency than he or she did in modern times. Agency and social change, then, are not unreasonable goals for the postmodernist educator. Regardless, many critics of postmodernist thought continue to argue that with the deconstruction of modernist dualisms came the death of the subject, that without subjects we cannot have agency, and without agency there can be no social change. Contrary to this argument, there is a political edge to a good deal of postmodernist educational thought. Issues of ethics and politics are not swept under the rug, but rather become central to the process of learning.

Ashley (1997) writes "the traditional verities of the academic establishment are undermined, and the opportunities for expanding and developing new kinds of expression and inquiry (and with them new kinds of expertise) are endlessly developed -- particularly within the already fragmented, hyperdiversified, and hyperdisoriented American system of higher education" (p. 20). Postmodernist educators demonstrate that it is possible to give-up on the idea of universal truths, moral and ethical imperatives, and a single educational philosophy without giving-up on the idea(1)s of critical education, morality, and democracy. As Harvey puts it, we don't have to "throw out the living baby of political and ethical solidarities and similarities across differences with the cold bathwater of capitalist-imposed conceptions of universality and sameness" (quoted in Bauman 1995:114).

TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY PEDAGOGIES

Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching, including not only the process and content of what is taught and learned, but also the principles and philosophies which
inform educational techniques. It includes not only how something is taught, but also how it is learned. Since Paulo Freire's (1970) revolutionary work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, critical, feminist and multicultural educators have endeavored to change the face of education by altering the student-teacher power relation toward a more democratic, emancipatory form and by including the work and experiences of previously under- or un-represented groups. Critical pedagogues tend to take a theoretical and political approach to education, focusing on the needs and autonomy of individual students, and emphasizing the importance of critical thinking (Freire 1970, 1973, 1978, 1994; Giroux 1983, 1988a; McLaren, 1989; Shor 1980, 1992).

While feminist and multicultural educators share these theoretical and political concerns, they concentrate their focus on linking macrosocial elements of gender, racial/ethnic, and sexual discrimination and oppression with the microsocial elements of the classroom (Aptheker 1993; Kanpol 1995; Lewis 1990; Luke 1994; Maher and Tetrault 1994; Rich 1979; Scanlon 1993; Schieder 1993; Spelman 1985). Despite their sometimes subtle differences, each perspective is critical of the conventional student-teacher power structure and traditional teaching methods, and is motivated toward social change. There are many different strands of contemporary pedagogies and none is wholly inclusive or mutually exclusive. The labels and categories used in this chapter are merely constructions for purposes of analysis and should not be considered as representative of any single pedagogy or pedagogue. They are not to be viewed as separate paradigms, but rather as incremental shifts in development.

**Critical Pedagogies**

Critical pedagogy is exemplified in the work of Paulo Freire, Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, and Peter McLaren. The goal of these educators is to change the face of education by altering the teacher-student power relation toward a more democratic, emancipatory form. This pedagogy stands in opposition to traditional -- what Freire refers to as
"banking" — education, i.e., the teacher "deposits" knowledge into students' minds, who can then "withdraw" that information when they so desire. Whereas banking education is aimed at preserving the authority and expertise of the teacher as the omniscient leader, critical pedagogy emphasizes the needs and autonomy of individual students. It conceives of learning as a process and not merely the acquisition of specific knowledge. It assumes students' minds are capable of development, and envisions teaching as simply guiding this development.

Barry Kanpol (1995), Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations at Pennsylvania State, Harrisburg and author of *Towards a Theory and Practice of Teacher Cultural Politics* and *Critical Pedagogy*, praises the work of his colleagues in critical education:

Through the multiple uses of the concept of difference, these critical educational theorists have viewed how the constructions of race, class, and gender disparities exhibit signs of oppression and hope: oppression when these incongruities exacerbate forms of subordination and alienation, and hope when new constructions and cultural resistances possibly create new social relations which are not subordinating or alienating (p. 177).

However, as pointed out by feminist pedagogue Jennifer Gore (1993), the writings of Giroux and McLaren are more directly related to the academic study of educational and social theory than to actual teaching experiences. The language used by Giroux and McLaren is reminiscent of that used by Marxists, and so is their corresponding social vision. McLaren (1989) writes of his vision of educators who work to create "a politicized citizenry capable of fighting for various forms of public life and informed by a concern for equality and social justice" (p. 158). Similarly, Giroux (1988) aims to "illuminate the specifics of oppression and the possibilities for democratic struggle and renewal for those educators who believe that schools and society can be changed and that their individual and collective actions can make a difference" (p. 36). Though inspiring and honorable goals, it is hard to translate them into pedagogical prescriptions for the classroom. Many educators agree that democracy and critical thinking should be
significant parts of the educational process, but the question remains: *How do we go about achieving these goals?* Gore (1993) argues that the work of Giroux and McLaren "is not critical pedagogy, but critical educational theory, which is aimed at enabling 'teachers as intellectuals' ... to develop their own critical pedagogy" (p. 42). She criticizes their neglect of actual classroom practices, and accuses them of philosophizing about "grand theories."

In contrast to McLaren and Giroux, the pedagogies of Freire and Shor are particularly well-balanced between their classroom practice and their social vision. Their goals of enlightenment, empowerment, and ultimately liberation are similar to those of McLaren and Giroux (see Freire 1970, 1973, 1994; Shor, 1992), but they supplement this social vision with concrete suggestions and examples taken from their own pedagogical experiences (see Freire 1978; Shor 1980, 1988). Freire (1978) writes, "Without exception, every book that I have written has been a report of some phase of the political pedagogical activity I have been engaged with ever since my youth" (p. 176). Similarly, Shor (1992) asserts, "The goals of this pedagogy are to relate personal growth to public life by developing strong skills, academic knowledge, habits of inquiry, and critical curiosity about society, power, inequality, and change" (p. 15).

Freire and Shor offer techniques and practices which help to demystify power relations in the classroom, including: students creating their own texts and media; collective and cooperative work styles; peer and group evaluation; self and mutual instruction, and; exchanging self-discipline for hand-raising. Additionally Shor argues that the teacher must play many roles to facilitate a democratic classroom, including initiator/coordinator; peer-discussant; convenor; facilitator; advocate; adversary; lecturer; recorder; mediator; and librarian. Shor (1992) maintains:

> The teacher is the person who mediates the relationship between outside authorities, formal knowledge, and individual students in the classroom. Through day to day lessons, teaching links the students' development to the values, powers, and debates in society (p. 130).
The pivotal idea here is the mediation of relationships between students and traditional authority, as opposed to the perpetuation of that authority. This issue of authority remains a troublesome dilemma for the postmodernist pedagogue. Educators are required to make a variety of decisions regarding course content, structure and process, discipline and evaluation. The tension arises when we inevitably must ask ourselves where to draw the line of authority. Radical pedagogue and founder of the Red Feather Institute T.R. Young (1998) advises "Authority of knowledge is acceptable, authority of position is not." For example, we may construct a foundational course curriculum and let students vote on supporting materials, exercises, projects, etc..

To summarize, the educational approach of Freire and Shor is holistic in nature — emphasizing both theory and practice — and sets them apart from the more abstract, political, and theoretical approach of Giroux and McLaren. In general, critical pedagogues (and, by definition, all radical educators) share a similar social vision of a democratic, liberatory education and a belief in egalitarianism. They differ only in their specification of classroom practices and techniques. While Giroux and McLaren offer a more abstract political view of emancipatory pedagogy, Freire and Shor supplement theory with prescriptions for achieving these abstract goals.

**Feminist Pedagogies**

Feminist pedagogues guide students in understanding the interaction between culture and gender, and as a rule refuse hierarchical elitism and competitive scholarship. These educators share with critical pedagogues the goals of a more democratic, emancipatory classroom, and like Freire and Shor, focus on actual classroom experiences. Current research in feminist pedagogy includes: Frances Maher (1987), who compares 'liberation' and 'gender' models for teaching learning, and also with Tetrault (1994) discusses the importance of Positionality, Voice, Mastery and Authority in the feminist classroom; Jean Shackelford (1992), who fosters less hierarchical, more participative assignments in
economics courses, and; Torri Thompson (1994), who reinserts domestic text with Shakespeare to help students understand the interaction between culture and gender. Other related research areas include: teaching feminist pedagogy (Bright 1993; Robertson 1994; Schniedewind 1993) particularly in the high school classroom (Roy and Schen 1987); using the media as classroom text (Fisher 1987, 1994; Luke 1994); and feminist pedagogy and political activism (Eddy 1995; Finke 1993; Scanlon 1993).

The harshest critique feminists and others have leveled at critical pedagogy is that it is androcentric — the literature is largely written by, for, and about males. Feminist pedagogues criticize the notion of Freire as the "father" of critical pedagogy, and question the absence of a "mother." They argue that little attention has been paid to female educators and their accomplishments since the last part of the nineteenth century (see also Apple 1979, 1986, 1993). When women are mentioned in critical pedagogy, they are "added-on" to the literature/research about males and not really given due thought, analysis, or attention. Feminist pedagogues assert not only is the content sexist, but so, too, is the structure. Kenway and Modra (1989) urge educators to take a good long look at the institution of critical pedagogy itself. They write, "At the moment it looks very much as if Freirean idolatry is taking the place of the development of critical consciousness in the very project of liberatory education itself" (p. 12).

Feminist pedagogues attempt to link the macro social elements of gender discrimination and oppression to the microsocial elements of classroom experience. Feminist pedagogy is different from critical pedagogy in that it: (1) grounds women's specific social and educational needs as women and as students in terms of their status and identity within a largely male-dominated university culture; (2) foregrounds feminist scholarship and critical practice in efforts to connect women's experience to ways of knowing which validate, theoretically extend, and politicize women's lives and possibilities, and; (3) because of feminism's sensitivity to the impossibility of an essential Woman and its commitment to the plurality of women, differences among women
students are taken into account through inclusive content in teaching and assigned readings, assignments, and evaluation strategies.

For the purpose of analysis, I will address two fundamental schools of feminist pedagogy. The first is concentrated in women's studies departments and emerged out of the women's movement of the 1960s. These educators tend to "emphasize the instructional processes of teaching, focusing on pedagogy in terms of how to teach and what to teach" (Gore 1993:20). The primary target for this school is undergraduate women in Women's Studies courses. Classroom techniques include the presentation of new, previously marginalized or omitted texts that are produced by and about women; drawing on personal experiences of both teacher and students as the basis of knowledge production; cooperative and non-didactic classroom processes, and; a focus on classroom processes and principles (Boxer 1988; Maher 1987; Mumford 1985). Like critical pedagogues, instead of pouring knowledge into empty vessels, "the feminist teacher needs to bring [feminist] readings to the attention of her students in order to empower them. The emphasis on participation and stories is consistent with the notion of authority as authorship" (Gore 1993:79). Seats are more likely to be arranged in a circle to avoid the more hierarchical traditional setting, and power is often shared to emphasize this more egalitarian atmosphere.

The second school of feminist pedagogy is grounded mainly in departments of education and relies upon feminist theory as its foundation. It is a reaction to the long history of educational thought and practice which was dominated by scientism, professionalism, technical rationality, and patriarchy (Gore 1993:25). These educators have a more abstract and macro approach than that of women's studies scholars, emphasizing how gendered knowledge and experience are produced, drawing both males and females into the process of learning. This strand of pedagogy aims "to help students and ourselves listen to and come to terms with our differences and the multiple capacities and social responsibilities within ourselves" (Maher 1987:192). It is a middle ground...
between the token references to women in the critical pedagogy of Giroux, McLaren, Freire, and Shor and the exclusively women-centered environment of feminist educators in women's studies departments, where male students are often informally excluded due to the gynocentric nature of these classrooms.

Overall, these feminist educators supplement traditional classroom material with previously marginalized text, they engage conventional readings in new and critical ways in search of the "hidden curriculum." These pedagogues may ask students: Whose knowledge is being taught and what are their political, academic, and social goals? Which (marginalized) groups are not represented? Whose voice is being heard, and whose voice is suppressed? What ideology can be found between the lines? These questions lead to discussions about knowledge, power, and dominant ideologies and their roles in the lives of individuals.

THE EVOLUTION OF CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM

One goal of the liberatory classroom is that members learn to respect each other's differences rather than fear them. Such a perspective is ecological and holistic. The classroom becomes an important place to connect to our roots, our past, and to envision the future (Shrewsbury 1987:8).

The most recent trend in educational theory encompasses the oppositional and emancipatory goals of critical and feminist pedagogies, while supplementing these goals with a multicultural and global emphasis. I use the term critical multiculturalism in the spirit of Kanpol and McLaren (1995) to refer to this latest wrinkle in the art and science of teaching. This approach places an increased emphasis on difference, the local, the global, and the particular, and has evolved from critical, feminist, multicultural, and postmodernist thought (Ellsworth 1989; Giroux and McLaren 1994; hooks 1994; Lather 1991; Lewis 1990; Luke and Gore 1995). This philosophy parallels a broader shift in women's and multicultural movements from focusing on commonalities to a perspective which addresses differences. Critics have argued that the focus of recent "alternative
"pedagogies" which had so long been on, for example, the "essential Woman," ignored
differences within and among all women, thereby excluding women of color and ethnic
minorities, lesbians, Third World women, and women in the lower economic strata.
They maintain liberatory movements have traditionally reflected a white, middle-class
value system and have excluded minorities, the oppressed, the marginalized, and the
poor. Movements based on commonalities, critics argue, are unlikely to have either a
lasting influence on attitudes and behaviors or to have radical implications beyond the
school. Critics argue there is little engagement, discussion, critique or analysis of the
discourses of feminist and critical pedagogies themselves.

Feminist pedagogues have been criticized for relying on such essential notions as
"authentic womanhood," (Friedman 1985:205) "the true knowledge of women," (Rich
1979:245) or any sort of "authentic voice." Gore (1993) asserts the "reliance within
feminist pedagogy discourse on totalizing notions of power and 'The Patriarchy' is
paradoxically the source of inconsistencies within feminist pedagogy discourse" (p. 31).
In reaction to comments such as this, many contemporary pedagogues have been inspired
to redraw the borders of meaning, desire, and difference, as well as to emphasize the
importance of the contingent, the specific, and the historical.

Recent research in this broad and characteristically fragmented field addresses
historically marginalized groups including Jewish women, women of color, white
lesbians, and lesbians of color (Aptheker 1976; Beck 1982; hooks 1984; Omolade 1993;
Schieder 1993; Sedgwick 1990). In addressing students' differences, research has
become highly specialized. For example, research topics have included: teaching about
African-American women writers to mainly white students; teaching women's studies in
Third World countries; teaching math and sciences to children with special needs;
bilingual education; teaching the Native American student, and; research in multicultural
pedagogy (Kanpol 1995; Shrewsbury 1987). Three major threads that tie all of this
research together are the celebration of diversity, the emphasis on voice, and the questioning of textual authority.

The Concept of Difference

Contemporary humanity speaks in many voices and we know now that it will do so for a very long time to come. The central issue of our times is how to reforge that polyphony into harmony and prevent if from degenerating into cacophony. Harmony is not uniformity; it is always an interplay of a number of different motifs, each retaining its separate identity and sustaining the resulting melody through, and thanks to, that identity (Young 1993:284).

In contrast to the hidden agenda of modernity to ignore context and to reassert science and religion as universal forms of knowledge (Toulmin 1990), postmodernity affirms diversity of all kinds: religious; ethnic; political; economic; familial; cultural; and even relational. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) point out that from the postmodernist perspective, modernism's claim to authority "partly serves to privilege Western patriarchal culture, on the one hand, while simultaneously repressing and marginalizing the voices of those who have been deemed subordinate or subjected to relations of oppression because of their color, class, ethnicity, race, or cultural and social capital" (p. 115). In postmodernity, every perspective is subjective and unique to particular contexts, circumstances and life experiences.

Critical educator Joe Kinchloe (1993) argues that a "homogenous community often is unable to criticize the injustice and exclusionary practices that afflict a social system" (p. 67). Recent research on multicultural small groups supports this claim, revealing that heterogeneous (culturally diverse) groups produce solutions of higher quality than do homogenous groups (Schaefer and Lamm 1995:148). Instead of basing ideas, discussions, and/or decisions in the classroom on purist categories, in a heterogeneous group concepts become hybrid constructions of ideas which allow for many different voices to be heard. This, in turn, allows for coalition politics, where members of different groups can come together and work toward a particular task without abandoning
their individual group identities. Addressing criticisms of essentialism in identity politics, Young (1993) advises that we remember we are not only different across groups but also within groups.

**Voice**

'Voice' refers to the ways in which students produce meaning through the various subject positions that are available to them in the wider society. In effect, voice is organized through the cultural resources and codes that anchor and organize experience and subjectivity. It is important to stress that students do not have a singular voice, which suggests a static notion of identity and subjectivity. On the contrary, student voices are constituted in multilayered, complex, and often contradictory discourses (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991:100).

Education is part of a discourse that is sensitive to power, and usually those who have the power have the "loudest" voices. Voice draws attention to the ideological and cultural dynamics that enable people to define themselves and to speak out as part of a broader social and cultural context. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) argue "... voices forged in opposition and struggle provide the crucial conditions by which subordinate individuals and groups reclaim their own memories, stories, and histories as part of an ongoing attempt to challenge those power structures that attempt to silence them" (p. 101). They assert students need to find their own voices so they can retell their histories in their own words, based on their own experiences and not the experiences of the dominant group. In so doing they may "check and criticize the history [they] are told against the one [they] have lived" (p. 104).

**Textual Authority**

A related goal of postmodernist educators is to provide students with an understanding of how knowledge and power come together in the reading and writing of texts. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) assert

... teachers must be concerned with the interrelationship of text and language as a form of cultural politics that opens up the notion of reading and writing to the
study of wider considerations of institutional power and the struggle for social and economic justice (p. 104).

According to this view, students should take up a critical analysis of any document or material by being able to recognize the plurality of meanings in a text and to challenge the obvious interpretations. They should read the text from the position of their own experiences and should examine the ways in which the text is constructed within dominant social relations. Students may do this by identifying the cultural codes that structure an author's work; by using a variety of diverse interpretations that represent an alternative commentary on the text, and by analyzing the text in terms of its absences, thereby "explod[ing] the cultural codes of the text through assertions of the reader's own textual power" (p. 107). Only in this way can students free themselves from the text by finding a position outside the assumptions upon which the text is based.

The notion of textual authority can be used either to silence students by denying their voices -- that is, by refusing to allow them to speak from their own histories, experiences, and social positions -- or it can enable them to speak by being attentive to how different voices can be constituted within specific pedagogical relations so as to engage their histories and experiences in both an affirmative and a critical way (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991:101).

Critics of textual authority argue that a language of critique must be developed in order to contextualize and problematize the ideologies and normative underpinnings of the text. In other words, we are encouraged to read "against the grain" -- read between the lines and consistently utilize critical thinking.

Common Strategies Techniques

Despite differences within and among discourses of postmodernist pedagogies, a look at their central claims reveals many commonalities: they emphasize student voice and experience (Berry and Black 1987); they assert the objectives of self and social empowerment toward broader social transformation (Culley and Portuges 1985; Freire 1973; 1994; Giroux 1983, 1988a; Kanpol and McLaren 1995); they address teachers' authority and struggle with the contradictions inherent in the notion of authority for
emancipation (Bright 1993; Friedman 1985; Maher and Tetault 1994; Morgan 1987; Spelman 1985); they are linked to political and social movements that seek to erase multiple forms of oppression (Freire 1970; Giroux 1988a; hooks 1994; Luke and Gore 1995); and many suggest similar classroom practices (Bell 1987; Mumford 1985; Schniedewind 1993; Shor 1988).

Briefly, postmodernist pedagogical prescriptions include: journal keeping; action research, i.e., getting the students actively involved in producing new knowledge by working on original research with the other students or the instructor, or getting involved in local political struggles; discourse centered around empowerment and/or authority; an emphasis on a democratic (rather than an authoritarian) process; shared leadership, i.e., students may help prepare, lecture in, and/or "run" the class; periodic small-group sessions; the use of first names for instructors as well as students; 'reflection papers' in which students can analyze social and political issues -- or the class itself -- in a self-reflective manner; cooperative projects, and; collective modes of teaching with student participation. All of these practices are meant to alter the student-teacher power relation by engaging in a democratic classroom while assisting students in finding their social and political voices.

DISCUSSION

We need to combine the modernist emphasis on the capacity of individuals to use critical reason in addressing public life with a critical postmodernist concern with how we might experience agency in a world constituted in differences unsupported by transcendent phenomena or metaphysical guarantees (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991:117).

While many of the educators discussed here would not self-identify under any single category used for this analysis -- not to mention as "postmodernist" -- they all reveal postmodernist tendencies:

* They locate their pedagogical approaches in the broader social, cultural, and political contexts of postmodernity
* They resist modernist educational prescriptions (e.g., the absolute authority of intellectual-as-legislator)

* They have abandoned totalizing emancipatory perspectives (e.g., Marxism)

* They argue that difference and fragmentation are good in themselves

* Although they are knowledge-based, they see "knowledge" as relativistic and as irredeemably pluralistic

* They recognize that those who define what knowledge is help to determine how power is to be exercised (see Ashley 1997:77).

Despite critiques of an apolitical postmodernist approach, David Ashley (1997) argues "[i]n the final analysis, the ability to create flexible new group solidarities and identities will take precedence over everything else" (p. 73). Although he believes postmodernist social movements have "sanctioned a high degree of political abstinence," he argues "... by showing that justice is a special, rather than a generalizable, quality" the new academic programs have become "an important and ... particularly useful kind of ideological practice" (pp. 73, 74). Similarly, Todd Gitlin (1989) has claimed that "there is an intelligent variant [of postmodernism] in which pluralist exuberance and critical intelligence reinforce each other," (p. 359) and Ben Agger (1992) suggests "the more theoretical versions of postmodernism" are sometimes subversive and can "seriously engage with world-historical issues of social theory and social change" (pp. 74, 284).

Postmodernist educators — or critical multiculturalists — are by definition political and praxis-oriented. They are "attentive to developing a democratic public philosophy" and they respect "the notion of difference as part of a common struggle to extend the quality of public life" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991:117). The notion of a border pedagogy acknowledges the shifting physical, cultural, and political borders that both undermine and reterritorialize different configurations of power and knowledge; links the struggle to the pursuit of a democratic society, and; attempts to connect the emancipatory goals of modernism with a postmodernism of resistance. According to Aronowitz and
Giroux (1991) "students must engage knowledge as border-crossers, as people moving in and out of borders constructed around coordinates of difference and power" (p. 119). In this way education becomes linked to the constantly changing parameters of place, identity, history, and power — and contrary to what many believe about postmodernism — allows for the possibility of social change. A critical multicultural pedagogy, then, has the potential to educate and facilitate coalitions of like-minded people who are willing to base a sense of identity on the celebration of their own differences.
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter I would like to address not only my research goals and guidelines, but also my personal biases and some potential political, ethical, and methodological landmines which are inevitable in any research situation. The research I have performed has been necessarily political in nature. Though many social scientists spend their entire careers espousing objectivity in social research, I do not believe it possible to be completely objective. We are all affected by our past and present life experiences, not least of which are our socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, sexual and religious backgrounds, not to mention past and present relationships. I enter into social research in the classroom from a unique perspective: I am a 34 year old, heterosexual, married, white, female, graduate student; I believe in the equality of all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or ability, and; I believe in and support the struggle to end discrimination and oppression of marginalized groups. Coming from this very particular perspective, I have a large personal stake in the research I am conducting. The end of discrimination and oppression of women and other marginalized groups would affect me and my research profoundly.

Choosing a research method and conducting that research, writing up results, and teaching are all political acts, all informed by particular biased ideologies and epistemologies (Apple 1979; Harding 1991; Lather 1991). Given the political and social implications associated with research and writing, I would like to address the appropriateness of my overall goals and choice of research methods. There are several issues I have examined and several decisions I have had to make during the course of my research. I have taken into consideration a variety of goals and arguments proposed by
scholars speaking from different perspectives. Shulamit Reinharz (1992) states that feminist ethnography is consistent with three goals: (1) to document the lives and activities of women, (2) to understand the experience of women from their own point of view, and (3) to conceptualize women's behavior as an expression of social contexts (p. 51). There is however, some debate as to the process of achieving this goal, more specifically, the dispute between qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

While some scholars believe that aligning feminist research exclusively with qualitative methods simply perpetuates patriarchy, and the masculine perspective, and "does little more than reify dicotomies that have proven inadequate" (O'Leary in Reinharz 1991:47). Other feminist theorists perceive positivistic methods such as testing or large-scale surveys as skewing knowledge in an androcentric way (DiLorio 1989; Harding 1991; Smith 1975). "Science" has been based on the modernist rational/irrational dichotomy, where males have traditionally been considered rational, and therefore, objective, while females have historically been considered irrational and therefore unable to conduct "neutral" research. This has resulted in research conducted by, for, and about men. Feminist scholars refute this way of "doing" science, and advocate using the "standpoint of women" in an attempt to:

reject positivism as an aspect of patriarchal thinking that separates the scientist from the phenomenon under study. ... In this context, feminist fieldwork has a special role in upholding a nonpositivist perspective, rebuilding the social sciences and producing new concepts concerning women (Reinharz 1992:46).

John Van Maanen (1988) agrees that women's lives and perspectives have been largely overlooked in fieldwork. Van Maanen maintains that "most ethnographic writing was created by male fieldworkers concerned mostly with the comings and goings of male natives ... . One result of the growth of feminist scholarship is the realization that there are many tales of the field to be told" (p. 37). Storytellers are of every different ethnicity; men and women; young and old; gay, lesbian, celibate, and heterosexual; the
elite and the homeless. They include anyone who has an anecdote to share or a yarn to weave.

I do not reject quantitative approaches as valid and useful research methods, nor do I dispute their place in feminist research, though what that place is remains a matter of some controversy. However, by its very nature, this ethnography is entirely qualitative and has been multi-paradigmatic in approach -- drawing on feminist, multicultural, postmodern, and interactionist schools of thought. By employing multiple methods research, I have endeavored to combine the strengths and weaknesses of several methods to obtain an understanding of the application of some oppositional teaching methods (that is, methods that oppose traditional teacher/student power relations as seen in mainstream education) in the classes I have taught.

There are many different reasons why my research can be considered "feminist": (1) it is performed, analyzed and written up by a self-identified feminist (2) while it by no means excludes men, my research focuses on women and other marginalized groups, and (3) it is intended to supplement what we already know about feminist modes of teaching. This research is quite different from traditional research which would neither be performed by an individual who is in opposition to the status quo, nor be focused on the freedom and advancement of oppressed groups. This research tells the stories of many different students from many different backgrounds in their own voices -- traditional social science research usually tells just one story in just one voice, that of the researcher.

CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

[Ethnography] is a meditative vehicle because we come to it neither as to a map of knowledge nor as a guide to action, nor even for entertainment. We come to it as the start of a different kind of journey (Tyler 1986:140).

The "journey" that I have taken can be called postmodernist, feminist, and multiculturalist. I am not professing one objective truth, knowledge, or power, but rather the rejection of one privileged voice or discourse. Historically, ethnography has
exhibited a "rich tradition of providing depth analyses of social worlds from the members' perspectives" and "represent a viable and important mode of social scientific inquiry" (Adler and Adler 1987:17). The Adlers believe the way to improve field research and ethnography is to "reap the pleasures" of the experience and to "use your self, reflect on your past, and continue to involve yourself in your present" (p. 18). In order to accommodate this self-reflexivity, Marcus (1994) encourages the production of "messy texts." He believes that the true nature of ethnography juxtaposes different selves, various concepts, other texts (including television, radio, and computer-mediated communication), the local, and the global simultaneously. Therefore, it would be inappropriate, if not impossible, to do a neat and uncontaminated "write-up" or "representation" of "truth" or "reality" in ethnographic research.

Geertz (1988) has described ethnography as requiring "thick descriptions." What we must realize, however, is that descriptions are also inscriptions. An individual cannot divorce his and her writing and research from values, ideologies, or life experiences. Stephen Tyler (1986) asserts that the ethnographer should not explore, describe, explain, represent, or predict as is done in other types of research methodologies. An ethnographer writing in and/or about the postmodern should evoke the points of view (among other phenomena) of the Other through his or her self. The researcher's objective should be to give the Others voices and let them be heard. We can't describe the "real", for it does not exist. Gottschalk (1994) argues

Rather than attempting to convince the reader of the believability or reality of his/her account through the use of carefully constructed ideological arguments or proofs, the postmodern ethnographer seeks instead to evoke an understanding through recognition, identification, intuition, personal experience, emotion, insight, and other communicative forms which should reach the reader at other levels than the cognitive one alone (p. 10).

In this research, I have attempted to allow for a broad number of coexisting discourses, voices, and realities. For me, this has entailed trying to empathize with, if not to understand individuals' experiences through the eyes, hearts and minds of every
student in class. I have done this by providing a variety of ways in which students can voice their fears, feelings, and opinions. First, in-class discussion by students themselves was emphatically encouraged, and in fact stood-out in students evaluations as many of the most interesting, and favorite parts of the class. Secondly, a suggestion box was always kept at the back of class so those students who did not feel comfortable speaking out or asking questions in class could still have their voices heard. Lastly, students had the opportunity to make two semi-formal anonymous class evaluations so they could comment on any or all aspects of the classroom, text, instructor, or material.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) assert the need to be self-reflexive and resourceful while conducting qualitative research in the "Fifth Moment." Once submerged in the act of doing fieldwork, a researcher may need to devise, improvise or create methods to meet the challenges of the task at hand. An ethnographer should be flexible and be prepared to embrace each new situation uniquely. The bricoleur, the authors tell us, "reads widely and is knowledgeable about the many interpretive paradigms (feminism, Marxism, cultural studies, constructivism) that can be brought to any particular problem" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:2). The process of this labor is called a bricolage, "a complex, dense, reflexive, collagelike creation that represents the researcher's images, understandings, and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:2).

In the tradition of postmodern, feminist, and interactionist scholars, Denzin and Lincoln address the problem of authority in ethnographic research and the danger of speaking for the others. Along with an essential sensitivity to this issue, they also discuss the need to become increasingly action-oriented in our research. Peter Reason (1994) suggests addressing the problem of authority in ethnography by using "Participatory Action Research" (PAR). Reason emphasizes a way in which we may "understand the role of knowledge as a significant instrument of power and control" in ethnography and perhaps blur the line between author and subject in fieldwork. Although a noble and worthwhile cause, Reason's (1994) primary task of the "enlightenment and awakening of
common peoples' (p. 328) is somewhat problematic as I have previously stated. To "enlighten" Others implies that one "has the light" to begin with. This is a Western/modern view of knowledge, and is contrary to what I consider to be the goals of a contemporary (postmodern/feminist/multicultural) ethnography.

Methodological Landmines

Several practical issues exist when performing ethnography informed by critical, feminist, multicultural and interactionist theories. These issues include the debates surrounding over-subjectification, representation and authority.

Over-subjectification. While performing critical ethnography, the danger of over-subjectification is a real one. In an attempt to represent the voices of previously silenced subjects, researchers sometimes do too much invoking and describing and too little analysis. In social science research there is a time for objective science and a time for verstehen, the line between which is fluid and variable. Positivists would criticize that the subjective description of ethnographers is not science at all. Social scientific research, they would argue, should be able to explain, and therefore predict social phenomena, resulting in a science of society. Only when we can predict social phenomena can we find the general laws of sociology (if they exist). Many contemporary ethnographers would emphatically disagree with this approach. Researchers from feminist, multicultural, and poststructural camps argue that the prediction of social phenomena is impossible, there are too many uncontrollable variables involved. We should concentrate, these scholars would argue, on education and consciousness-raising, focusing on ways we can understand and hopefully help improve social conditions for marginalized and oppressed groups. My position is somewhere in between. I fully support the philosophy behind listening to all possible voices and letting them be heard in their own words, yet I understand the need for evaluation, and therefore for "objective" analysis at some point in the research project. By employing multiple methods research,
I hope to combine the strengths and weaknesses of several methods to obtain an understanding of the phenomena under study which is free from methodological -- if not completely from personal -- biases.

**Representation.** Many feminist researchers speak of "the ethical and epistemological importance of integrating their selves into their work, and of eliminating the distinction between the subject and the object" (Reinharz 1992:69). Self-reflexivity in ethnography allows for the evocation of more than one truth. The practice of self-reflexivity is not to "replace the 'self' with 'other' as the focal object of the ethnographic enterprise, but rather to show how knowledge is "interactionally constructed" between self and other (Balsamo 1990:50). To be self-reflective, the researcher must maintain sensitivity to the problem of representation, as well as to what some feminist researchers see as an inherently unequal and manipulative relationship between the researcher and the subjects (McRobbie 1982: Walkerdine 1986). At the same time, one must keep a precarious balance between "objective science" and subjective interpretation of data.

Balsamo (1990) writes "[t]he ethnographer disciplines -- lays down the law -- by virtue of the dynamics of interpretations in which she selects, represents, and re-orders the ethnographic talk to support her own reading of the encounter" (pp. 50-51). As researchers, we must constantly monitor ourselves, be aware of our thought processes, and the origins from which they arise. I have done this in my research by keeping a journal and asking myself the hard questions: How can I facilitate a more democratic classroom? Am I imposing my opinions on them? Who am I to tell them to think critically? Am I being too political? Too radical? Am I too easy on them? Too hard? Constant student input has helped to keep me continually thinking of these things.

Balsamo maintains we should be aware of the "dual nature of ethnographic 'interpretation'," which "rely upon both the personal biography and cultural history of those who are traditionally positioned as ethnographers, and those who are positioned as subjects" (1990:49). This synthesis of biography and history is inevitable. Frequent class
discussions helped to keep this issue on the front burner. We constantly connected our personal experiences to society and social problems, and myself and students alike benefited from the knowledge gained in these discussion sessions. As an ethnographer re-presents what she sees, feels, and hears she necessarily constructs her own interpretations. These interpretations will always be affected by historically-specific personal experiences, as well as by the resulting inevitable omission or transformation of some ethnographic data. By hearing the personal experiences of students I feel I am in a better position to see their points of view and to evoke their voices/experiences for the purpose of this project. Throughout my research I have remained sensitive to these issues, as well as to the issue of exoticization.

As Flax observed, "thinking is both subtly and overtly gender-bound and biased" (in Balsamo 1990:26). To this extent, a researcher should always ask him or herself what the relationship is between ethnography and autobiography (Clough 1990:36). One must ask: What are the effects of my cultural, social, religious, socio-economic, and educational background? What about my life experiences? And what of unconscious desires and the often undetected power issue? Each of these partially structures not only how I experience my interactions with students in my classroom, but also how I interpret them (see Foucault 1972). Patricia Clough (1990) examined the connection between feminism and the "task of relating case study/ethnography and autobiography/psychosexuality in the context of 'writing culture'". More intensive analyses can be found in Foucault (1970, 1978), Said (1978), and in Clifford's (1988) historical analysis of the relationship between ethnographic subjectivity and ethnographic authority.

*Authority*. When I speak about the issue of *authority*, I am referring to the extent to which a researcher uses and/or imposes his or her own voice on the voices of the Others of the research, as well as the distinction between author and subjects that were addressed in the discussion of the crisis of representation.
In the tradition of postmodern, feminist, and interactionist scholars Denzin and Lincoln address the problem of authority in ethnographic research and the danger of speaking for the Others. Along with an essential sensitivity to this issue, they also discuss the need to become increasingly action-oriented in our research. Gottschalk (1994) emphasizes the need for a "dialogic validity," whether "non-sociologist Others recognize, understand and identify with our texts; whether they are engaged in these texts and whether these texts engage them" (p. 14). The question then becomes: Is this valid social science? The answer is "no," at least not in the positivistic sense. However, according to the inductive-probabilistic model, observations are experiential data which can reveal patterns that explain social phenomena. Explanation, being the obverse of prediction (differing only in the knowledge the theorist has of "X" event, i.e., has it already happened?), can be interpreted as social science. The problem, however, is twofold: (1) just how much experiential data would an ethnographer need before he or she could reach a full and consistent explanation for "X" phenomenon, and therefore predict its occurrence in the future? and (2) is prediction of social phenomena even possible? However, these questions become moot since few, if any, ethnographers have the goal of predicting behavior.

To avoid the danger of speaking "for" the Others of my research, I have attempted to maintain a dialogue with members of the field (students) so that they may comment on my inscriptions and interpretations, as well as letting them speak for themselves through the emphasis on a discussion-oriented classroom; accessibility; suggestion box; reaction writings; mid-term and final evaluations. In addition to more objective measures, i.e., quasi-experimental design, I have made a conscious effort to enable as many students as possible to "speak." In this way they may contribute to the construction of knowledge, that is, after all for and about their lives and educational experiences. Consequently, the use of quotes, personal experiences, and autobiographical accounts have been put to liberal use. I have also tried to avoid sociological jargon in an attempt to present the process and "results" of my research in such a way that allows for easy access to subjects.
and readers. My goal is to produce sound social science research that is both a valid representation of the lives and experiences of my subjects, and a reliable source of information for future pedagogues. I will be actively participating in the learning and teaching of the many and various multicultural and global issues discussed, hopefully, as Reason puts it, "blurring the lines between author and subject." I have revealed myself as a researcher as well as a teacher, and have assured the students in my classes complete confidentiality.

Geertz (1988) has described ethnography as requiring "thick descriptions." What we must realize, however, is that descriptions are also *inscriptions*. An individual must be aware of the relationship between his or her writing and research, and values, ideologies, or life experiences. Stephen Tyler (1986) asserts that the ethnographer does not explore, describe, explain, represent, or predict as is done in other types of research methodologies. Gottschalk (1994) elaborates:

Rather than attempting to convince the reader of the believability or reality of his/her account through the use of carefully constructed ideological arguments or proofs, the postmodern ethnographer seeks instead to evoke an understanding through recognition, identification, intuition, personal experience, emotion, insight, and other communicative forms which should reach the reader at other levels than the cognitive one alone (p. 10).

There is no single, objective, external reality. However, an ethnographer can evoke the points of view (among other phenomena) of the Other through him or her self. He or she can give the Others voices and let them be heard. In this research, I have attempted to allow for a broad number of coexisting discourses, voices, and realities through multiple methods research and systematic observation and analysis of students comments, writings, reactions, etc. Through this process patterns have emerged that are - as much as possible - valid representations of students' learning experiences.
RESEARCH DESIGN

Key Concepts and their Interrelationships

Since this is exploratory, and necessarily inductive, I begin with sensitizing concepts which give "the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances." (Blumer 1969:18). Through constant dialogue between students' and myself and through the process of conceptualization, indicators of these concepts have emerged. This dialogue has been facilitated through (1) an emphasis on class discussion, (2) frequent in-class writings, (3) open-ended interview questions, and (4) the use of a suggestion box. These concepts have been refined "... through careful study of empirical instances which they are presumed to cover" (Blumer 1969:150). Concepts used in this research include: multicultural awareness; inclusionary and critical thinking, and; cultural relativism, and are broadly defined in the following section.

Multicultural awareness. Multicultural awareness, for the purposes of this research, is more than just understanding diversity or knowing that an array of different cultures co-exist. It requires analysis of what is frequently left out of multicultural debates, i.e., criticism of existing systems of power and privilege, and a recognition and analysis of the hierarchies and systems of domination that permeate society and that systematically exploit and control people. In this way we can make the broader point of understanding how racism, sexism, homophobia, and class relations shape our experiences. In addition, multicultural awareness is a broader concept which includes the concepts of inclusionary and critical thinking and cultural relativism.

Inclusionary and critical thinking. Inclusionary and critical thinking involve analysis, not just description. For the purposes of this research, these concepts include listening to, and giving validity to, the voices, experiences, knowledge, and opinions of previously silenced groups, as well as conceptualizing race/ethnicity, class, gender,
sexual orientation, etc. as interactive systems, not just as separate features of experience. Exclusionary thinking is increasingly being challenged by those wanting to include not only the diversity, but also the interlocking nature, of human experience in the construction and transmission of knowledge.

Because race, class, and gender affect the experience of all, it is important to study men when analyzing gender, to study women and not just men when studying race, Latinos and people of color when thinking about class, and women and men of color when studying gender (Anderson and Collins 1995:xvi).

Inclusive thinking allows for new possibilities in the way we view the world and highlights the knowledge and experiences of previously marginalized or excluded groups, making them more visible and central in the construction of knowledge.

Many critical scholars believe that multiple, interlocking levels of domination stem from the societal configuration of race, class, and gender relations. These structural patterns affect individual consciousness, group interaction, and group access to institutional power and privileges. The traditional problem-centered framework of most sociology classes tends to portray people (usually marginalized and excluded groups) primarily as victims, to see oppressed groups only through the perspective of dominant groups, and ignores agency. For this reason, discussions in my courses have included structural explanations for inequalities and have emphasized the privilege of whites, males, heterosexuals, the wealthy, etc. to augment and balance the conventional problem-based nature of (especially critical) sociology.

*Cultural relativism.* Cultural relativism in this research can be defined very simply as understanding a people from the framework of their own culture. Implicit in this notion of cultural relativity is the overcoming of ethnocentrism -- the use of one's own culture as a yardstick for judging the ways of other individuals or societies -- which generally leads to a negative evaluation of the values, norms, and behaviors of marginalized groups. However, although this concept can be easily defined, the debate surrounding cultural relativism in the academic world is highly complex.
Most scholars fall somewhere in the middle of a continuum where radical cultural relativism is at one side and ethnocentrism (in the form of "objective policy science") is at the other. The problem with radical cultural relativism is that it precludes the researcher from getting involved in the "problems" of marginalized or excluded groups and consequently cannot enact positive social change. For example, female circumcision exists in many African cultures and is a "normal" part of their social interaction. If we are radical cultural relativists we would not try to "save" these girls and women from "female genital mutilation" because in many cultures this tradition plays a crucial role in the preparation of girls for marriage. Girls who do not have this procedure are often thought of as "dirty" and "impure," and therefore, unworthy of marriage. Many scholars, myself included, take a less radical approach to cultural relativism, which necessarily makes us a little more ethnocentric. I believe there are things that our culture can teach other cultures and ways in which we can help, however, I also believe there is plenty we can learn from others.

**Indicators of Key Concepts**

In ethnographic research, concepts and indicators are not as easily interpreted as in quantitative research. As previously stated, I have used sensitizing concepts (multiculturalism; inclusive/critical thinking; cultural relativism), and through trying to conceptualize these processes and issues through cumulative measures, indicators have emerged.

The concepts of multicultural awareness, inclusive/critical thinking and cultural relativism are not mutually exclusive. In fact, inclusive/critical thinking and cultural relativism can also be seen as indicators of the broader concept of multicultural awareness. These concepts are so complex and interrelated that it is difficult to discover where one ends and the other begins. For example, if a student consistently exhibits inclusive thinking, he or she is most likely also practicing cultural relativism, and both indicate multicultural awareness as defined in this research. The relationship between
these concepts is dynamic and dialectic. For this reason I have searched for indicators of the broader concept of multicultural awareness, which includes inclusive/critical thinking and cultural relativism. These have included, but are not limited to: comments and/or actions showing a sensitivity to the validity of the various voices, experiences, and opinions of previously silenced groups; the conceptualization of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. as interactive systems, not just as separate features of experience, (i.e., in an analytical vs. a descriptive way); comments and/or actions which reveal a skepticism of dominant forms of knowledge construction and transmission; any comment and/or action which takes into consideration other possible reasons or explanations for "X" than those given by authority figures or the dominant ideology; any action or comment which is based in a culture different than the student's own, etc. The following vignette is an example of a situation which indicated some of these key concepts.

When I teach, I do so according to the principles and philosophies of multicultural, feminist and critical pedagogies. This entails regularly engaging students in discussions over certain issues which allows me to see what material, strategies, and approaches help to broaden their multicultural awareness/sensitivities. One day in class we were having a discussion about radical cultural relativism, the "morality" of female circumcision, a.k.a. female genital mutilation, and the appropriateness of intervention by "outsiders." One student argued that we cannot criticize these people because it is a part of their traditional culture. Another student raised the issue of male circumcision in our country, and asked why it isn't called "male genital mutilation." I would interpret both of these students' comments as indicators of inclusive/critical thinking and cultural relativism, therefore of a multicultural awareness.

Reliability

I have not developed a tool, scale, or measure to evaluate "multicultural awareness" and so cannot proclaim I have a "reliable instrument" according to the doctrine of
positivist methods. However, measures of reliability in field research do exist which evaluate the internal and external consistency of empirical observations. *Internal reliability* has been measured by comparing students' actions and re-actions to lectures, discussions, assignments, films and readings. Are the students becoming more critically aware of the multicultural and multinational world around them? Do their comments and thought processes appear to be more inclusionary? Students' comments, questions, and reactions have been analyzed for the existence of critical and inclusionary thinking skills, cultural relativism, and multicultural awareness as defined in previous sections. To determine *external consistency*, I have consulted several texts (Maher, McKeachie, Freire, hooks) which offer much anecdotal evidence supporting the positive affects of critical, multicultural, and feminist pedagogies. A student of feminist pedagogue Frances Maher writes:

> Tipping things over and looking at them from an entirely different point of view has just opened up other channels of my mind. I can't even say what a mind-blowing experience it is to feel like I have the freedom and the confidence to look at things in a different way, to turn things inside out, and to write in a different way (Maher and Tetreault 1994:93).

Over the course of my research, many students' comments revealed a change in their awareness of themselves, society, and the world around them.

*Validity*

Historically, ethnography has exhibited a "rich tradition of providing depth analyses of social worlds from the members' perspectives" and "represent a viable and important mode of social scientific inquiry" (Adler and Adler 1987:17). Because of the nature of ethnographic research, subjects are given every opportunity to allow their "true" feelings or thoughts be known to the researcher. Thus, it is a research method that traditionally gets high marks in validity because it is said to be a good way to evoke the voices of research subjects themselves, often using their own words instead of speaking *for* the subjects as in traditional social research.

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In this research, multiple methods work together to enhance understanding by (1) adding layers of information and (2) using one type of data to validate or refine another.

Feminist descriptions of multimethod research express the commitment to thoroughness, the desire to be open-ended, and to take risks. Multiple methods enable feminist researchers to link past and present, 'data gathering' and action, and individual behavior with social frameworks. ... Multiple methods increase the likelihood of obtaining scientific credibility and research utility (Kirk and Miller 1986:30).

Multiple methods research can help link individuals to broader, complex social and economic issues. It recognizes that the conditions of our lives are dynamic and contextual. Research in this way must be a fluid and flexible process that responds to its subject matter by using appropriate methods.

The most fertile search for validity comes from a combined series of different measures, each with its idiosyncratic weaknesses, each pointed to a single hypothesis. When a hypothesis can survive the confrontation of a series of complimentary methods of testing, it contains a degree of validity unattainable by one method (Kirk and Miller 1986:30).

The methods used in conducting this research were: participant observation; open- and close-ended interview questions; content analysis of student comments (both oral and written), assignments and suggestions, and; secondary analysis of data collected by other researchers. Validity of the observational data will be based upon face value, i.e., how closely the indicators appear to reflect the concepts they were intended to measure. Instrumental/criterion validity will be assessed by comparing my observations of students' multicultural awareness with their own self-reflexive assessments to be obtained at the end of the term. I have promised confidentiality and encouraged total honesty in the classroom, but this will have to remain assumed. Some indication of reliability does appear in the measures of validity, as a measure cannot be valid unless it is also reliable (Kirk and Miller 1986).
Population and Sampling

The population being studied includes a total of 245 students who enrolled in my Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, and Social Inequalities courses. The units of analysis are individuals — the students themselves. I was not able to draw a random sample of students from the larger university population. This sample is self-selected according to various criteria known only to each individual student. However, even though I have no control over the population, there were subsequent choices to make about persons, places, events, and issues to observe.

Sampling choices within and across cases are powerfully determinative of just which data will be considered and used in analysis. Quantitative researchers often think randomly, statistically, and in terms of context-stripped case selections. Qualitative researchers must characteristically think purposively and conceptually about sampling ... (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:441).

As I got to know the students, I practiced purposeful selection of informants, (see Denzin and Lincoln 1994: 229) i.e., identify appropriate key informants who: (1) attend class regularly, (2) have the ability to reflect upon and articulate their experiences, and (3) are willing to participate in the research. In addition, I have practiced maximum variety sampling by deliberately selecting a heterogeneous sample and observing commonalities in their experiences. Two types of data were obtained using this technique: high-quality case descriptions, useful for documenting uniqueness, and; significant shared patterns of commonalities existing across participants (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:229). As data analysis proceeded, data were enriched by the purposeful selection of confirming cases and disconfirming (negative) cases.

Research Questions

Given the exploratory nature of this study, my research questions were rather vague. These questions include: (1) Does critical multiculturalism alter the traditional student-teacher power relation? (2) Does critical multiculturalism give voice to previously marginalized students? (3) Does critical multiculturalism celebrate diversity without
tokenism or exoticization?, and (4) Does critical multiculturalism motivate students to think critically and to participate in positive social?

NOTES

1 It is important when we (re)present our informants that we do not exoticize them, as marginalized groups often are typically stereotyped and distorted when they are put at the forefront of thought.

2 Otherwise it is just one more privilege for individuals with the most access to education.

3 The silenced voices metaphor often makes it seem as if an analysis is not complete until every single voice is heard. While this is true in a sense, it is hardly practical. In this research, then, analysis will be situated within a framework that recognizes the various influences of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, etc. on group experience without representing each and every possible voice. It is my hope that this will give students the tools for their own social analysis.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS/ANALYSIS: EVOCATIONS OF THE CRITICAL MULTICULTURALIST CLASSROOM

In this chapter I have relied heavily upon qualitative data gathered over the course of my research from student evaluations of the class, instructor and pedagogical approach; open-ended interview questions; comments dropped in the suggestion box, and; audio tapes of class discussions, in order to evoke the voices and experiences of my research subjects. In this next section, I will reveal and analyze students' comments, questions, concerns and observations in relation to (1) altering the traditional student-teacher power relation; (2) giving voice to previously silenced students; and (3) celebrating diversity.

ALTERING THE TRADITIONAL STUDENT-TEACHER POWER RELATION

Setting the Tone

The first day of class plays a pivotal role in setting the tone for the rest of the term. During the first class meeting I always try to provide and encourage a relaxed academic atmosphere. I introduce myself and tell the students they can call me by my first name if they wish -- although many still choose to address me by my surname. I discuss my research and their roles in it and I explain that the overall goals of this non-traditional teaching style are to be as democratic as possible; to include previously non- or under-represented and marginalized groups in the curriculum and discussions; to facilitate a student-centered classroom, and; to nurture and enhance critical thinking as a tool for social change. The syllabus reflects the critical/democratic theme of the course by emphasizing our focus on multiculturalism, critical thinking and social change and by

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giving the students options as to how they prefer to be evaluated. As I will demonstrate later in this chapter, the examination options proved to be an overwhelming success. Students loved having a choice and many said they wished they had this option in all of their classes.

At the beginning of every class meeting I put an outline on the board so students can get a general idea of the day's lesson plan. Before I introduce any new material I always ask for and address questions, comments, concerns and suggestions from previous classes, discussions, or readings. I consistently emphasize the importance of democracy, critical thinking and social change. We discuss that we all have a lot to learn from each other and that I -- as the instructor -- am not the omniscient leader or the "keeper of knowledge." I emphasize the importance of each and every one of their personal experiences and perspectives. I explain to students that throughout the term we will discuss and analyze different social issues, and that many of us will have different opinions and distinct ways of approaching situations based on our past experiences and our own worldviews. I stress the fact that each person's opinion is valid, that there is no right or wrong answer or question, and that given the discussion-based nature of the class we all had to be careful not to be cruel or insulting or to monopolize any discussion.

What I probably like best about the class is how open and honest we can be. I ... feel like my opinion is ... important and needed. Everything I have to say is always listened to and responded ... to. It's really nice to have the honest and appreciated feedback.

Denise's example of an open mind allows us to also see the world that way.

Ms. Dalaimo ... realizes that different students learn in different ways. She can alter her teaching habits to accommodate everyone.

There are two standing rules in my classes which I believe are imperative to the success of a discussion-based classroom: First, we all must be respectful of each other's lives, experiences, opinions, group memberships and feelings. Many educators are wary of a democratic classroom because discussions have the potential to get out of hand and
even hurtful. Having made this rule clear on day one, I am usually able to re-direct the
tone of the discussion by simply writing the word "Respect" on the board.

The second rule of class discussion is that students make their point and supporting
statements once and do not try to persuade others of your point of view.

Some discussions were a little touchy, but that's what makes up all the different
cultures and subcultures. I liked your point about, "state your fact and move on,
don't keep restating" trying to convince everyone your point is correct.

This technique works fairly well in keeping students from arguing with each other and
from going off on tangents, but like the respect rule, needs to be reiterated from time to
time.

Power Authority

The goal of altering the traditional student-teacher relationship deals directly with
issues of power and authority. As I have discussed in previous chapters, critical
multiculturalists seek to share power and authority with students. This is done in a
variety of different ways, many of which I have employed in this research. Overall,
students recognized and appreciated the opportunity to contribute to and have some
control over their own educational experiences.

This class is very open to discussion and freedom of thought. It's nice to know we
can come in and state our own opinions and attitudes towards a subject without
being penalized. I've really enjoyed your style of teaching and it's refreshing to
have a professor that actually shows respect for her students.

It was interesting to see how thoroughly the traditional power structure has been
internalized by the students. The following comments subtly reveal this apparently
subconscious internalization (emphasis is mine):

[The instructor] is very open-minded and actually allows opinions.

Even though it is more work for you, you let us choose our best method for exams.

The instructor was open-minded and permitted the students to state their
opinions.
Ms. Dalaimo allows discussions in class, how our thoughts relate to class.

One objective of sharing this power with students is to encourage them to assert their own voices in the classroom and perhaps even take control in other aspects of their lives, i.e., the social and/or political.

Democracy

Overwhelmingly, students believed the class to be more democratic than others they had taken in the past. They appreciated the fact that we voted on many issues, and many felt more comfortable participating in class construction and discussion due to the casual atmosphere.

Continue the democracy/voting. What a change from other instructors! We do have choices in life and thanks for giving them to us in class.

The [democratic] way in which the class is run is in the best interests of both the professor and students and could not be improved upon.

I have found that a casual and accessible demeanor goes a long way to make students feel more comfortable in the classroom. These students commented:

This class is very open to discussion and freedom of thought. It's nice to know we can come in and state our own opinions and attitudes towards a subject without being penalized. I've really enjoyed your style of teaching and it's refreshing to have a professor that actually shows respect for her students.

The instructor gives a feeling of welcome to the class. It's a relaxing atmosphere and [she] is very open-minded.

I really enjoy the way that you run the class sessions with a little more relaxed atmosphere than other classes. I think that there will be more student input.

I feel the information is presented to us in a professional manner and without the need to intimidate us. We are able to interact with you and other members of the class which allows us to apply the knowledge we have learned and helps us to develop critical thinking skills.

If students are intimidated by the instructor, they will not feel as comfortable participating in class discussion or even asking questions. Granted, my status as a
graduate instructor was helpful in putting the students at ease because they tended to perceive me as "one of them."

I have never been in a class where a grad student teaches, but what a difference. You have a fresh approach to the subject you are teaching which makes the learning much more interesting.

Some professors are intimidating just by the way they act, but you seem to relate to your students.

It was clear that the democratic and student-centered approach was distinctly different from what students were familiar with.

I think the idea of teaching while working with us instead of preaching to us is a step in the right direction [towards a democratic classroom]. I've had a couple of classes where there was no student interaction and it just doesn't keep my attention or interest.

It is good when the students are able to speak their mind; that helps to see the whole picture. ... Authoritative classrooms, I feel, make a student feel less of a person. You teach like you are one of us.

By giving the students more control over what and how we learn I hope to alter the teacher-student power relation in the classroom. As students become more comfortable, they participate more in class and subsequently get more out of it. I do not believe we would have such great discussions if the students were made to feel powerless or subordinate to me or to each other.

Voting. While I decide which texts we use in class and provide a skeleton course outline, students vote on particulars at the beginning of the term, including: which readings will be omitted; how many and what types of exams we will have (i.e., objective/multiple choice exams, in-class essays or take-home essays); whether attendance and participation will count as part of the overall grade; the length and focus of the term paper; whether or not students have to turn in definitions of key concepts and issues; what portion of the overall grade will writings, exercises and exams be worth, and; whether or not there will be extra credit, oral presentations, or student teaching. In addition, students have the opportunity to raise issues and propose a class vote at any
point during the semester. One semester it became apparent we were trying to cover too much material in too little time. While I insisted on covering the chapters on Race/Ethnicity, Class, Gender, and Social Change, the class voted on which of the remaining readings we would omit (which included Population/Demography and Aging). This was one of those rare times when I felt I had to exercise my authority over them as opposed to having authority with them. However, the overall goals of the classroom could not have been met without discussion of the issues found in the chapters I insisted on (un)covering. Overall, voting on class issues and structure made the students feel they had a voice in their education.

I think the instructor is willing to hear options and we do have a vote. However, although students were not always happy with the way the votes went, they were still pleased with the process.

I was disappointed that we cut out three chapters in the class, but it was democratically voted and I wouldn't want to have cut out any of the other activities.

I think a lot of students vote to make it easier on themselves instead of really trying to learn something.

*Examination options.* The option for students to choose the method by which they were evaluated was an overwhelming success. To reiterate, students were able to choose how many (two or three) and what type of examinations (objective, in-class essay or take-home essay) they would take. In each class I have taught, students voted to have an individual choice of exam type, i.e., students could take the same type of exam each time, or they could choose to blend their options among the three choices. Between 66% and 75% of students chose to take objective (multiple-choice) exams. Of those who took essay exams, roughly 20% chose to take the more lengthy and complex take-home exam. It is a lot of extra work having to write and evaluate three different exams, but the rewards are well worth it. Students are given the power to choose the method by which they will be evaluated and this makes them feel more responsible for their own learning.
The idea of choosing your own way of being graded is very interesting. Once you've chosen the testing method, I think it gives you a challenge. You made the choice, now make it work.

I have never experienced [evaluation options] before and feel it is the most "fair" way to grade.

The grading options are different, but it made me feel like I had more of a decision in my education.

Many students who chose to be evaluated through the take-home essay exams commented on how much more they learned during this process versus in-class exams.

The evaluation options are the best part of this class and make it more democratic. For myself, I am not a memorizer of terms or ideas. It is much easier to bring together knowledge learned in a reaction paper rather than cramming for an essay or multiple choice test.

Again, not everyone was completely happy. This student commented she was made to feel like a "slacker" by choosing the objective examination option.

The method of picking our own way of being evaluated is very interesting and exciting, however, I felt as if the people who took the objective exam were made to feel not as "smart" or "achieving" as those that chose the other options. I've really begun to buy into the fact that I am somehow a "slacker" because I chose the "easy" route. However, I don't think that you realize that you're doing this. Other than that, I appreciate you opening my mind to new topics.

On day one when the evaluation options were explained and discussed, we talked about the options as a way of allowing different students to excel in ways best suited to them. On the syllabus it states "Recognizing the different and varied ways in which each of us excel, and in an effort to be as fair as possible, students may choose between four alternative methods by which they will be evaluated for this class." When asked, I had mentioned that I would probably pick the reaction papers because it was less studying and memorizing the text book which I personally found more difficult than discussing and analyzing concepts and issues in an essay exam. I tried to convey the idea that no type of exam was better than the other. After I received this comment I read it aloud in class and reiterated that each evaluation option is different but equal. The evaluation options were a very popular part of class, and I would like to continue offering them.
Many students commented on feeling more involved in, and having more power over their education. However, in a class larger than 20 or 25 students, it may not be feasible to have evaluation options without teaching assistants due to the heavy workload it entails.

**GIVING VOICE TO PREVIOUSLY SILENCED STUDENTS**

The structure and environment of the critical multiculturalist classroom makes it more conducive to giving voice to previously silenced or marginalized students. In traditional classroom settings, the teacher-student hierarchy is perpetuated and students find themselves passive recipients of an authoritatively prescribed education. Once again, students appreciate the alternative approach of critical multiculturalism.

Numerous times the teacher said each student is entitled to their own opinion. All students were given the opportunity to speak and express their opinion.

We, as students, have had a big say in certain aspects of the class. This was encouraged by the use of a suggestion box that was constantly responded to.

The best thing about [class] is that you are open minded. You want us to have our own opinions and you encourage open discussion.

*Suggestion Box*

The suggestion box proved to be another favorite among the students. Many commented on how much they enjoyed the opportunity to have an *anonymous voice* in the class given the often sensitive issues that we discussed (i.e., race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexualities, etc.). Others mentioned they appreciated hearing what other students had to say, and the reading and addressing of suggestions and comments became a favorite ritual at the beginning of each class. In one class we went two weeks without any comments in the box, and finally a student dropped this one in.

Why haven't the contents of the comment box been read lately? This is another part of the class I like. It's good to hear what other students are thinking.
This comment was a good indicator of the role the suggestion box had taken in our class. It was nice to hear someone enjoyed that part so much that he or she missed it. Other students were thankful for the option to drop an anonymous question in and forego the embarrassment of bringing attention to his- or herself in class.

Being able to discuss issues and give opinions makes [the class] very student-centered. If you are too shy to speak up in class you can drop a question or comment into the box at the back of the room.

In most social science classes we are usually required to participate vocally in class for a grade. I personally am not comfortable speaking in front of class and learn more by listening. I was glad to see this wasn't required.

Critics of the suggestion box argue that it merely encourages students not to talk in class, but I have found it an essential tool to give voice to traditionally silenced students who may not participate in class discussion otherwise. I do, however, continue to encourage all students to participate vocally in class. The suggestion box is also beneficial when discussing sensitive issues such as race, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. Students can anonymously share personal experiences, ask questions or make comments without fear of reprisals from other students or myself. After a discussion of racial and ethnic inequalities and seeing the film "Ethnic Notions: Black Images in White Minds," these comments were left in the box:

I thought it was interesting how these stereotypical images of blacks helped to perpetuate the notion that slavery was somehow "okay." Isn't it interesting how our white ancestors really pulled the wool over their own eyes -- fooling themselves. I wonder what images we laugh at today that really serve to make immoral practices, such as slavery, seem "okay" -- do we even know that it is happening?

We as one race (the human race) cannot dwell on past mistakes. What we need to do now is work towards a happier and more peaceful future ... I nor anyone else can change the past, but we can make the future. Imagine the possibilities that we as a class could open up if the end of racism, towards all races and genders, started with us. A few deviants can do more than ever imagined.

This is the kind of thing I love to see. These students are actually thinking about the consequences of stereotypes and inequalities. A significant benefit of this approach is
that some students come to perceive a critical multiculturalist classroom as a springboard for social change.

This course was more sensitive to understanding differing cultural aspects and approaches to life. It ... expanded my ideas of other cultures and allowed me to be open to other different cultural aspects I may encounter later.

The teacher ... had a talent or gift in which she would make students evaluate themselves. A lot of times I found that there were ways about myself that I did not like. ... this affected my daily life.

I received this next note in the suggestion box, from a 20ish Hispanic male who had written some great reaction papers relating sociological principles to gang culture and rap music:

... Sociology shows the harsh realities of life and society. Even though the world is life and society, the world as a whole isn't ready for what sociology has to offer, which is reality. It's funny, people in higher, more "respected" places re-word stereotypes in order to address the public in a "proper" manner. Why? What better way to address people than with reality? In my old neighborhood as well as several others, there's a slang type of saying, "keep it real." I respect that about your class. You keep things real.

After discussing inequality in education, a male student of color dropped off this comment:

Your comment about school funding was great. Sometimes I think I'm one of the only people who realize that this is a fundamental problem of education. I had to move from my house in Los Angeles to an affluent suburb because I knew I would get a better education in High School.

As I have mentioned, despite critics' claims that the use of a suggestion box in the classroom encourages students not to speak, I have not found this to be true. Perhaps it is because of the student-centered and democratic atmosphere in our classroom. On the contrary, I have found a suggestion box facilitates dialogue on a more personal level, and it provides me -- as a teacher and researcher -- with some valuable feedback.
Student Evaluations

Twice during the semester — once four weeks into the class, and once three weeks prior to finals — I ask students for their feedback on specific questions and issues. Student input is pivotal to the goals of the critical/democratic classroom. Prior to the evaluations I explain that in keeping with the exploratory nature of critical multiculturalism it is imperative to get feedback for their sake as students and as citizens, for my sake as an educator, and for the sake of the research. Initially, the first evaluation was held in-class and the students were given 15 minutes to complete it. They were told that the evaluation was a voluntary and anonymous exercise, and that those participating should be completely honest — to give negatives as well as positives of the class — about the text, lectures, films, the instructor, and discussions. I then made some suggestions of things they might want to address. These included: test content and form; lecture content and form; teacher performance (knowledge, clarity, attitude, accessibility); how can the class be improved?; do you feel you have input?; comparison with other classes/instructors; thoughts on teaching method (critical thinking; evaluation options; democratic classroom?), and; is knowledge neutral? I emphasized that they should only address those things they had an opinion about and that they should not feel as if they had to say something about each of these issues. I let them know they could add whatever they wanted to this list, that this was simply a guideline.

Subsequent evaluations were taken home instead of given in class. This adaptation was in response to student input that they would have liked to have spent more time on the evaluation, as well as my own feelings that they may be more honest if they did not have to complete the evaluation while I was present. I will never know if this was the case, but I do know that the ratio of evaluations to students enrolled decreased significantly when it was a take-home exercise. In the following sections I reveal and analyze some class issues as they emerged through evaluations, discussions, and various comments throughout the semester.
Class Discussions

Overall, most students reacted favorably to the time we had for in-class discussions. For many, it was stimulating and enlightening to hear what their fellow students had to say on controversial social issues.

It is interesting hearing the discussions in class because I hear people that agree with me on various subjects and I hear opposing views. (I always wondered who the type of people were that had opposing views!)

I think the time we have for discussion is very valuable. It gives me the chance to know what others are feeling and thinking; it helps tune me in with the world around me.

Class discussion over debatable subjects makes you more open-minded and more understanding towards what goes on in society today and how we as individuals influence it. ... I feel comfortable participating in class because the instructor encourages it. It gives me more than one perspective about any given situation.

I liked this class because everybody had their own opinion. Even though I disagreed with some ... I was able to sit back and see the other side.

However, there is an inherent danger in having open class discussions and in the preliminary stages of my research the line between hearty debate and outright anarchy was occasionally blurred.

Open discussions provided for the best parts of the class, the student participation was intense, humorous, revealing, and at times frightening.

I wouldn't mind seeing [our classroom discussions] escalate in intensity and passion. I believe that students would retain information when they become passionate in debates.

On the heels of the Brown-Simpson/Goldman murders classroom debate became particularly tense after an emotional discussion about race, ethnicity and the justice system.

It seems the discussions are controlled by ... white males and they tend to dominate the discussion. Minorities are under-represented in the class and sometimes excluded from the discussion because of what is said.

I have participated in some class discussions, but we have some people in the class that tend to try and dominate during these discussions. You probably
cannot do anything about this, but perhaps this will change ... I hope more people will speak up!

It seems like whenever the class interacts it turns into everyone trying to defend their own race or gender or accuse others.

In one class there was a white male in his mid-twenties who continually made racist and sexist comments in a very vocal manner and a white female about the same age who sat next to him and always agreed with him -- sometimes making supporting comments herself. Various other students would try to explain their points of view to them, but they never seemed to hear what was being said and would only raise the volume while they reiterated their previous comments. Students were obviously exasperated by their inability to listen to other viewpoints as evident in the rolling of eyes, shaking of heads, and throwing up of hands. I had to repeatedly write the word "Respect" on the board and to reiterate that we were not here to persuade others of our opinions. These two students remained on my roster and turned in assignments, but did not show up for the last six weeks of class. After their departure, discussions improved dramatically and we all had a lot of fun and learned a lot from each other. This type of situation is somewhat common in classes that discuss sensitive issues and remains a fear of many educators in these situations. While I felt badly that these two students felt the need to boycott our class, I am -- by necessity -- teaching to and learning with the many, not the few. I realized that whenever the situation became precarious it was always the result of one or two outspoken individuals who tended to vociferously dominate class discussions. However, by changing the focus of the subject matter and specifically asking for diverse experiences and knowledges, these few boisterous individuals found they could not be "experts" on everything. Regardless of a few "bad eggs," students seem to understand the sensitive nature of class discussions and remain supporters of a student-centered approach.

I admire [the instructor's] effort in trying to understand everyone, although the issues we discuss are touchy most of the time. I appreciate the opportunity to speak out and share the opinions of others especially on the important social issues.
I love hearing everyone's views on different subjects, although I wouldn't want to be in your position having to try to keep peace.

It is nice the way you direct the class into an area and let us discuss different aspects of the topic. Hopefully we will all gain knowledge from each other.

Many class discussions about sensitive issues were initiated by a question dropped anonymously in the suggestion box. I do not believe this comment would have been made were it not anonymous.

One question I have wanted to ask is why some people find it acceptable to have interracial marriages. I personally don't think it is appropriate for Blacks and Whites to marry. I don't see anything wrong with Whites marrying Asians, North American Indians or Mexicans. But when it comes to Blacks and Whites marrying it just seems wrong to me. If there is any way you could offer any opinions in class I would be very interested in hearing an objective way of looking at this.

I addressed this comment in the next class meeting, when we were discussing family. We had a great discussion about interracial marriages during which almost everyone in class participated. It was enlightening and very productive. The best part was that the emphasis was on cross-cultural norms and trends, not just what happens in the U.S. Also, we heard from two students (one male, one female, both in their early twenties) who were products of interracial marriages. We discussed how they were treated by their families, friends, society, etc., and also how ethnocentrism, socialization and the institution of marriage played a role in our beliefs on the issue. After this discussion, one student put this note in the suggestion box.

I would like to see more interaction like the question about interracial marriages. It is one of the few times when almost everyone participated in the discussion.

This comment came early in my research. That day we had heard from several students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds who did not regularly participate in class discussion. I immediately began to make a greater effort to focus discussion questions on topics more salient to multicultural issues. By specifically asking for diverse perspectives we shifted the focus from dominant group members and their experiences to the equally valid experiences of previously silenced students. The
decision to focus on inclusive class discussions was significant because it changed the
dynamic and made many more students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts.
However, not everyone liked the discussion-based environment and would have preferred
traditional "banking" teaching methods. Some students still prefer the structure of the
traditional classroom setting with the instructor in control at all times.

The class is long enough without all the long drawn-out irrelevant opinions of
narrow-minded individuals. I am more interested in what the teacher has to say, which I find very informative and interesting. ... the teacher does not make me feel like I'm on a lower level.

I liked least some of the self righteous tirades people had when it came to race &
ethnicity. I don't think the purpose of the class was to attack any one group for
their beliefs or actions, but to learn about them & understand them for
enlightenment purposes. I felt like if I were to bring up a subject I would be
attacked for my way of perceiving things (not from the teacher but from the
students).

Overall, in-class discussions were a success. Many students reacted positively to the
time we spent discussing social issues, and I believe it was an enlightening experience for
all involved, including myself. I will definitely strive for more multicultural and
discussion-based teaching experiences in the future.

Student Teaching

In an effort to share power and authority between student and teachers, I
experimented with student teaching. Each student was responsible for teaching one
small section of our textbook, about one to three pages. Students were given a sign-up
sheet and each picked the subject that he or she would most like to teach. As much as
the evaluation options were universally liked, student teaching was universally disliked.

The student teaching ... is too distracting at times. The students aren't as prepared
as the teacher ...

... cut down on the amount of student teachings. It is easier to comprehend through
the professor's explanations.
I don't particularly like the student teachings because it really is hard to pay attention. Maybe if we could pick a partner and team teach ...

[I liked student teachings] least. You were right about knowing the material more when you have to teach it ... I got a lot less out of other people's instruction than when you'd teach.

It seems that although the students did agree that having to teach was a good way of learning the material, it was highly unsuccessful as a way to impart knowledge to the class as a whole.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

... All brains ... should be equally valued regardless of sex/gender, race/ethnicity, class, etc..

As this student's comment demonstrates, a critical multiculturalist approach celebrates diversity of all kinds, including religious, ethnic, political, economic, racial, familial, cultural, and relational. This type of pedagogy encourages students to consider and analyze traditionally marginalized perspectives and worldviews according to their own terms rather than interpreting them through the lens of any single culture. Students welcomed the critical multiculturalist emphasis on diversity.

The examples of other cultures viewed both ethnocentrically and in terms of cultural relativism have really helped.

[This class] gives a different view. Living in the U.S. we tend to think we have all the answers and they are the right ones.

... everyone participates in class — this mixture of ideas helps to get diverse feedback from a multitude of ethnic and racial backgrounds.

We've not only discussed our own culture, but compared it to others while not judging ours as better or worse. We've criticized and praised certain ways of life while trying to understand why we do the things we do.

This affirmation of difference supports the attempt to de-center knowledge and power while giving voice and validity to previously marginalized individuals and perspectives. Given the rapidly changing racial demographics in public education it is imperative that teachers and administrators address these dynamic intercultural
relationships, as well as attempt to come to some understanding of them. However, bringing a critical multiculturalist perspective into the classroom can be risky. Many traditional educators denounce the inclusion of "politics" in the classroom, opting for what they believe is a more "objective" educational experience. Additionally, many students resist this approach -- especially when it is new to them -- because it openly challenges much of what they have been taught and have come to believe in.

It seems like in every lecture the issue of repressed minorities and women is brought up. Sometimes I think you're trying to make me feel guilty for being white and that white men especially are the cause of society's problems.

This is more of a feminist class than anything else. There is too much white male bashing going on ... I would like to know how old some of these studies are? Because I know some of them are wrong.

This last comment was dropped in the suggestion box after a lecture on Social Inequality. The next class meeting I brought all of the statistics and citations from the Bureaus of the Census and Labor and the FBI Crime Report — the oldest of which was from 1992. I read the comment to the class and used it as an opportunity to discuss the sources of social science data. We also considered reasons why many of us feel uncomfortable discussing racism, sexism and heterosexism in class, including the concept of "privilege" which I discuss in the next section. I also used humor to relieve the tension, making a joke about being perceived as a "Femi-nazi." The class as a whole laughed with me and a couple of students commented that I did not come off that way. Hopefully, this exchange eased some tensions about the alleged bashing of white males.

During the last round of evaluations one of these students wrote that although they thought I was "a little harsh on white males at the beginning" that he or she realized now it was an over-reaction and actually apologized for the comment. It seems to be quite a shock to some of the more conservative students when we start talking about dominant and subordinate groups and the existence of a ruling class in the United States. Many students commented they felt "guilty" about the plights of minority groups and some felt they were being "punished" for what their ancestors had done. I struggled with this for
some time and wondered if I should try to teach from a more "objective" perspective. I decided to address these issues in class by introducing an exercise which reveals the privileges of dominant groups in our society. The privilege exercise I adapted from Peggy McIntosh's (1998) article "White Privilege and Male Privilege," was an overwhelming success and helped many students gain a new perspective on privilege, prejudice and discrimination.

Privilege

Many scholars have criticized traditional "problem-based" approaches to diversity because they often focus on marginalized or minority groups and their members as having a problem, e.g., experiencing discrimination. By changing our focus from discrimination to privilege, we can turn the spotlight on dominant group members and explore ways in which they can adapt to the rapidly changing multicultural world around them. McIntosh asserts "[Dominant group members] are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow 'them' to be more like 'us'" (1998, p. 78). Even when dominant group members are willing to acknowledge obstacles for minorities, they will seldom recognize their own privileges. For example, most of us understand that discrimination puts others at a disadvantage, but few of us truly grasp a more subtle aspect of discrimination, i.e., privilege, that gives individuals who belong to dominant groups certain advantages in our society. Some of these privileges allow dominant group members to feel comfortable where they live, work, or play. Others let us escape fear, anxiety, hostility, abuse, violence, and sometimes even death. Denial by dominant group members protects privilege from being fully recognized or accepted, and thereby perpetuates social inequalities. Many of us who will admit that privilege systems are entrenched in our society will likely deny that this privilege has opened doors for us personally. McIntosh (1998) writes:
As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage. ... I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks (pp. 94-95).

Privilege is a difficult thing to face, because to do so we must give up the myth of meritocracy, a value so deeply embedded in our society that its very questioning brings accusations of "anti-Americanism." This exercise was designed to help students begin to identify some of the daily effects of privilege in their lives. It focuses not only on white privilege and male privilege, but includes all types of privilege, i.e., advantages we all enjoy based on race, ethnicity, gender, social class, culture, geographic region, physical ability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, etc. After reading McIntosh's article, students were asked to keep a "privilege journal" for two weeks in which they were to make a list of special circumstances, situations and conditions that certain individuals enjoyed based entirely on group membership. Using these journal entries, students were then challenged to make a list of privilege statements like those used by McIntosh, e.g.,:

* I can go into a book shop and count on finding the writing of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can deal with my hair (p. 97).

* I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin (p. 99).

* Most people I meet will see my marital arrangements as an asset to my life or as a favorable comment on my likability, my competence, or my mental health (p. 104).

Because it represents a whole new way of looking at their lives, this exercise is not easy for most students at first. However, once they begin to recognize privilege in everyday life the concepts of racism, sexism and heterosexism take on whole new meanings. By focusing on the intersections of various group memberships and the consequent privileges, we were able to further highlight the diverse experiences of a wide
range of individuals. For example, white females were able to recognize their race privilege despite their disadvantaged gender, and likewise this Korean-American male acknowledged his male privilege while understanding his lack of race privilege.

Being coherent about my privileges and non-privileges was a real eyeopener. I've always focused on the [existence of racism] of my life. Thinking I was always oppressed and not valued as an individual by my non-Korean peers. I've always recognized the non-privileged aspect of my life for not being White or Black. I never realized how much privileges I had for being a man. To be honest, it shocked me. ... I strongly believe that privileges I and others have has shaped our life experiences significantly. People are valued in society by what fits the social norms and expectations ... I know I make other people feel uneasy because of my race and action, and I feel uneasy because some people don't fit into my ideology of what the norms are. ... This class is helping me to recognize my fault, but most importantly, challenging ... my view points ... .

This student also focused on the intersections of various privileges in her life:

I definitely believe that certain privileges have shaped experiences in my life. ... I feel that because I am white I have had an easier life than a Black or Latino person. At the same time I have been in situations where I have been at a disadvantage because I was not male. As I did this assignment my awareness of this grew. I learned to open my eyes ... and see what privileges are out there and how they affect my life and the lives of others.

This next comment represents a success story -- an individual who plans to modify his behavior based on what he has learned and observed about privilege in society:

This assignment makes me take more notice of the treatment of people going on around me. It also helps me not to feel or want to act on immediate prejudice. These experiences help me to treat people more equally, regardless of my own feelings at the time.

Once students learn to identify privilege, many begin to see it as a pervasive aspect of social life -- from their personal experiences, to the media to professional sports.

I am an intelligent, college educated Black man and someone ... will automatically see me as less intelligent than a White man. I think this is due to ... my race being so often portrayed in a negative light in the media ... . Tiger Woods was not seen as just a ... skilled golfer, he was seen as the Black guy who won the Master's ...
It was interesting to see how students developed their privilege statements, and the journals were an excellent medium to document this progression. A journal entry of a young African-American woman read:

After being followed around suspiciously by a salesclerk ... I confronted her [and] she told me that basically it was common knowledge that "you people steal." ... I changed my mind about buying clothes and left the store. I was not angry with her, but I pitied her ignorance.

Her resulting privilege statement revealed a small part of what a person of color goes through on a daily basis.

Being white, it would be safe to assume that the sales clerk is there to assist you rather than suspect you.

This racially mixed male was "rejected" by a white girl which led him to observe in his privilege journal that:

Whites can go to Blacks with less fear of rejection (dating-wise).

After being made to feel very uncomfortable at a Neighborhood Watch meeting, this racially-mixed male stated if he was White he could:

... join the Neighborhood Watch and not become the neighborhood watched.

For some, the privilege exercise is profoundly heartfelt.

I have no experience with privilege. I am a Black woman. Immediately I have two strikes against me. All my life I have had to prove myself. When I was young, I wished that just once I could be white so that I could be welcomed at my friends' homes without any sarcasm. To be able to walk through a store and not be followed. To know that if I dated a white man, he would not be afraid to introduce me to his family. Now that I am older and understand the society in which I live, I am proud to be Black and a woman. I no longer strive to prove myself to others. My goal is to prove only to myself that I can stand with the best of them. The insults and ignorances of others only shows the abuse of their privilege and makes me that much stronger. Being Black, I learned as a child that I would be viewed as different and therefore I would have to work twice as hard as my white friends to achieve anything. Although I have had many negative experiences with privilege, I have also had many positives. The world is filled with all kinds of people, and many of these people are truly good. They do not abuse their privilege but instead use it to help others who are less fortunate. What does it matter if I am Black and you are White? What does it matter if I am rich and you are poor? What does it matter if I am female and you are male? ... if I am straight and you are gay?
What does it matter? I learned from this lesson that although we have taken one step up, we still have ninety-nine to go.

By affirming and celebrating diversity while acknowledging the existence and significance of privilege in our society, I have tried to provide an inclusive, student-centered and "safe" environment where students from all backgrounds feel like a part of the knowledge process. Some student comments reveal at least a modicum of success in this area.

The instructor presents the material in a way that one can understand, going over all issues in a way that one can relate to and using critical thinking to evaluate all issues from everyone's point of view and how it relates to the individual in society.

I believe that you attempt to reach every student, not just the ones who speak the loudest or shine the brightest.

**Critical Thinking**

As I have stated, critical thinking is a pivotal part of a critical multiculturalist pedagogy. If there could be only one goal in my classroom it would be that students learn to use their minds to critically examine all social relationships. I was glad to see that many students commented on this aspect of the class. Students felt that the focus on critical thinking made them look at society differently, and in many cases they found it a more interesting approach to the material than traditional education.

I have found that I see things differently. I notice inequality in the media, workplace, and other areas. I have noticed gender differences like who controls conversations, etc.

The book, lectures, and discussions are interesting enough that during the course of the week I find myself thinking about the topics and utilizing my critical thinking.

Critical thinking has been a vital part of Sociology 101. It has changed my perspective of what I see and hear in the newspapers, T.V., radio, etc. My wife says I'm too critical about these things.

Even those students who were already critical thinkers found the critical multiculturalist approach useful.
My critical thinking skills have been refreshed. I thank the class for offering a variety of different opinions and outlooks on a variety of topics. I enjoyed the class interaction on questions posed by other students.

I believe that I have significantly improved in the area of critical thinking. The subject matter lends itself to more critical thinking and I believe that your teaching style has emphasized the concept.

Overall I was quite pleased with the apparent increase in critical thinking over the course of the semester. In one case a student argued that we should stop using the term "American" to describe people in the United States because it was ethnocentric and ignored Canadians and South and Central Americans. This comment was a great catalyst for a debate over cultural sensitivity and "political correctness."

Praxis Social Change

All people should have access to all knowledge. That is freedom (student quote).

An integral component of all critical multiculturalist pedagogy is the goal of positive social change. The goals of democracy, diversity, and giving voice to previously silenced students are a prelude to the main goal, i.e., getting students involved in their own lives -- academically, socially, and politically. Qualitative data reveal an increase in awareness of social and multicultural issues and a desire for positive social change.

I think Denise's critical evaluation of the status quo was an eye opener to a lot of students. We go around in our daily lives and a lot of circumstances do not affect us personally, but becoming aware of social issues people face every day is good as it challenges us to become more aware and not to accept the [status quo] ...

This course definitely affected my personal thinking. I feel I am much more understanding to those less fortunate than me, because it is not always their fault, but sometimes the fault of society.

... diversity is one of our greatest strengths. ... The circumstances of the world are changing with ever greater speed ... we must be diverse so we can adapt and survive.
Since being in this class I have looked at race and the community a whole lot differently. ... I have noticed a broadening of my perspective from an ethnocentric viewpoint to a more open one.

Some of my favorite student comments include those that exhibited an intention or desire to change their own behavior.

... the material on racism and discrimination were most enlightening. I think I will be more empathetic and conscientious of others in the future.

This course was more sensitive to understanding differing cultural aspects and approaches to life. It did expand my ideas of other cultures and allowed me to be open to other different cultural aspects I may encounter later.

I have become very analytical and spend more time analyzing someone's culture before I create an opinion of them. ... it makes you think about how you treat other people and why.

I believe it is important for everyone to be exposed to the inequality and prejudice present in our society. More education, less bigotry!

DISCUSSION

Though the debate over multiculturalism in education rages on, many critical educators have spent years developing a critical multiculturalist pedagogy. Objectives of a critical multiculturalist approach include (1) altering traditional student-teacher power relations, (2) giving voice to previously marginalized students, (3) celebrating diversity without tokenism or exoticization, and (4) motivating students to think critically and to participate in positive social. I have endeavored to meet these objectives by providing a safe, democratic and student-centered environment through: an inclusive multicultural curriculum; the use of a suggestion box; student evaluations; voting on course content and structure; examination options; frequent in-class discussions; an emphasis on critical thinking, and; an exercise highlighting the privileges of dominant group members. My teaching experiences over the course of this research were overwhelmingly positive. I received a lot of thoughtful and insightful feedback regarding my pedagogical approach, I met a lot of intelligent and inspiring people, and I discovered there is a lot more research to be done in this area.
I continue to use the critical multiculturalist approach as described in this chapter. The suggestion box allows everyone an equal opportunity to have their voice heard regardless of age, gender, or racial, ethnic, sexual, and/or religious backgrounds. Reading students' comments at the beginning of each class was a great way to "warm-up" and get discussion rolling. In addition, having the students evaluate the course and the instructor twice during the term remains a helpful tool in providing me with valuable feedback. Reading students' comments allows me to modify my approach, the class structure or content so that I can reach as many students as possible. After the first evaluation I address comments in class and we are able to come to a compromise on any issues raised. The evaluations also serve as another outlet for students to have their voices heard. I try to be as self-reflexive and responsive as possible, and hearing directly from the students helped this task immensely. As I have stated, the evaluation options were a huge success. However, the larger the class is the less practical it is to offer options due to workload and time constraints. In lieu of using evaluation options, I recommend keeping the classroom environment as student-centered and democratic as possible. Having frequent class votes, open discussions, and continuous student feedback helps students to feel more involved and in control of their education. It has always been my belief that the more involved students are, the more they learn.

True to form, there are always those individuals who would rather have an authoritarian atmosphere. One student in particular did not believe they were up for the challenge of critical multiculturalism.

The class is FAR too student centered. The structure is too liberal. We are Americans and in a group will take ALL we can get. En mass it's not the learning that's important it's how much can we get away with.

Though there were a few students who prefer the conventional lecture format of more traditional classrooms, the overwhelming majority enthusiastically endorse critical multiculturalism.

This class does affect the way I think. It allows me to see life from the perspectives of others.
I appreciate teachers who strive to progress in their respective fields. Knowledge is a lifelong goal.

Radical pedagogy is new to me but absolutely fascinating and beneficial to learning!

Overall, this research has revealed that students welcome the open and critical atmosphere encouraged by a critical multiculturalist approach and enjoy learning from different perspectives. Overall, practicing critical multiculturalism in the classroom alters the traditional student-teacher power relations, nurtures an appreciation for and an understanding of diversity, and empowers students to think critically about the world in which they live. While my research was performed in the sociology classroom, this approach is adaptable to any classroom environment. Once one understands the philosophies and basic objectives of a critical multiculturalist pedagogy, any course content can be adapted to the approach. Implications for future research and policy are discussed in the following chapter.
CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND POLICY

Because this has been exploratory research, evaluative work still needs to be done before suggesting specific social or educational policy. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations traditionally want to see numbers, i.e., quantitative data, before they part with money for further research and/or policy implementation. For this reason I will use this final chapter to discuss two different measuring instruments that might be utilized for evaluation and implementation of critical multiculturalism in higher education.

Overall, an overwhelming majority (99.6%) of student comments regarding the critical multiculturalist approach were positive. As I have discussed in previous chapters, a primary objective of my pedagogical approach has been to increase multicultural awareness in the college classroom. As the abundance of data I have collected on this issue reveal, this goal has been clearly met. The majority of students exposed to critical multiculturalism -- like the two who made the following observations -- appreciated the inclusive and diverse curriculum, and many praised the non-traditional approach.

I have never had a class that really talked about race and inequality in such detail. This was very refreshing knowing different issues and sometimes touchy issues can be discussed in an intellectual framework without biased judgment.

This course has helped me to look deeper at the multicultural and multinational aspects of social inequalities. ... I didn't realize how much inequality affects us as individuals and as a society.

A prerequisite for heightened multicultural awareness in the classroom is that previously marginalized students feel comfortable participating in class. Only then can all students experience -- if only fleetingly -- the lives and worlds of others unlike
themselves. It seems unbelievable, but for many students this class was the first one where they were made to think of their lives as one small part of a diverse global village.

This course was especially enlightening due to the fact that multicultural ... topics were discussed in an open fashion allowing the diverse people in our class to feel comfortable to express their viewpoints.

People should be encouraged to take this course, not because of pre-existing stereotypes but because of what they don't know about the people around them.

Many students admitted that they had never given thought to many of the issues raised in our classroom, and several commented they would never see the world the same again. Now that my research has revealed an increased multicultural awareness through exploratory and qualitative data, future research would benefit from an instrument that could quantitatively measure the effects of critical multiculturalism on students.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Hidden Prejudices Test

As I have stated, the next step in this research would be to develop a measuring instrument that would measure just how much an individual student's multicultural awareness has increased through exposure to critical multiculturalism. In the past, scholars have used surveys and Likert-scale type measurements to evaluate prejudice in individuals (see Figure 7.1). To measure a student's level of prejudice on this scale, one merely needs to total the number in each column — the higher the score, the less prejudice he or she is. A scale of this type might be used in a pre-test/post-test context to measure, for example, two Introduction to Sociology courses — one taught by a critical multiculturalist and the other (the control group) taught by a "traditional" pedagogue. The difference between the two classes could be attributed to critical multiculturalism.
Figure 6.1. Hidden Prejudices Test

For the following questions, please answer:

1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = No Opinion; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

1. I think people are too sensitive...they should accept the fact that ethnic jokes are an American way of life.
2. I am offended when people in public speak a language other than my own.
3. I trust people from other countries less than those from my own country.
4. I am uncomfortable with people who celebrate holidays in a different way than I do.
5. I find it difficult to understand hairstyles that are different from those in my own culture.
6. There's something wrong with people who eat snakes, fish eyes, cats, or every single chicken part.
7. Asians are indeed the "Model Minority."
8. People who have accents aren't trustworthy.
9. Hispanic men have great difficulty working for women.
10. African Americans are superior athletes.
11. I'm tired of people from other countries taking away "American" jobs.
12. More welfare money goes to Blacks and Hispanics than any other group.
13. I am quite uncomfortable seeing people of different races in a dating situation, especially touching and kissing.
14. I get angry when I find ATM and other services in two languages.
15. Minorities often see prejudice where none exists. They've got it "good," as far as careers go.

Source: Adapted from www.kgtv.com (December 1998)

Ethnocentrism Scale

Alternatively, I am currently designing a scale that measures ethnocentrism — the degree to which students perceive other cultures from their own worldviews. Though quasi-experimental designs lack the random assignment of subjects to control and experimental groups, they can play an important part in the tracking and evaluation of educational research. Although this design is not as "scientific" as one in which subjects are randomly assigned, rather than forego evaluation altogether the use of a multiple time-series design can offer some measure of whether my approach to pedagogy is an effective way of increasing multicultural awareness in sociology students.
Rather than doling out critical multiculturalism in doses, the reality is more of a holistic process. For this reason, the first evaluation will be a pre-test, administered on the first day of class before multicultural pedagogies begin to be implemented. The last four (4) evaluations will occur at four (4) relatively equal time periods over the course of the semester, measuring the progression of the effects of multicultural pedagogy on the students. Each evaluation will include five vignettes about people from different cultures experiencing different "problems" in different situations. The vignettes will be pre-tested for internal consistency with qualified colleagues and 25 will be assigned randomly, five to each separate evaluation. Though using the same vignette over and over may increase the reliability of the design itself, it is my belief that response effect would reduce this reliability and render the results less than valid. Students will choose solutions/reactions to these "problems"/situations from a list correlated to an arbitrary scale (aka attitude index), where the number one (1) represents solutions/reactions from a radical cultural relativist perspective, and the number five (5) represents solutions/reactions from a radical ethnocentric perspective. An example would be:

Nisa is a member of a tribe in Africa which performs clitorectomies on young girls. In your opinion, the best course of action is:

1. Do nothing, we have no right interfering.
2. Educate ourselves about the international issue of female genital mutilation, but do not approach Nisa and her people.
3. Invite representatives of Nisa's tribe and discuss the practice with them.
4. Send representatives from the U.S. to Nisa's tribe and discuss the practice with them.
5. Send representatives from the U.S. to Nisa's tribe and insist they stop this horrible practice immediately.

There will be five questions such as this on each evaluation. All 25 questions will be pre-tested with colleagues knowledgeable in questionnaire construction, and will be assigned randomly to evaluations one through five to avoid question order effect. The intent is to measure intensity along a continuum where radical cultural relativism is at one end and radical ethnocentrism is at the other. ¹

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A composite measure will be created for each of the five tests, i.e., a five on this scale would represent the views of a radical cultural relativist, and a 25 would represent the views of a radical ethnocentric. I will be looking for scores which decrease over time, i.e., that show the student is becoming more culturally relative while being exposed to multicultural pedagogies. When each student has five composite scores, these scores will be analyzed using a repeated measure design (aka a within subjects design) for ANOVA (analysis of variance) where every subject is exposed to the treatment conditions, i.e., multicultural pedagogy, and then measured. ANOVA will be performed using SPSS for windows. A repeated measures ANOVA is appropriate here because:

1. The population distributions are normal
2. Variances of the populations are the same
3. Observations of within treatment conditions are independent of each other
4. The variances of difference sources are homogeneous (Grimm 1993:355).

In addition, if I find significance with ANOVA, I will use a Fisher's LSD (aka protected t-test) multi-comparison of means test of each individual evaluation to locate the source of significance. This will be a post-hoc comparison that attempts to identify at what point the multicultural pedagogy appears to take affect.

Using a multiple time-series design in the evaluation of my research will allow me to (1) track the progression of multicultural awareness among my students, i.e., the research subjects, (2) evaluate the process(es) of multicultural pedagogies themselves, and (3) locate the source of significance (i.e., what is "working" and what is not) in the process of multicultural pedagogy.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Since the 1960s, multicultural educators have demanded that our educational institutions and their representatives take seriously the implications and consequences of living in a multiracial and multicultural democracy. Critical multiculturalists encourage students to see from a variety of perspectives so that they may begin to understand the complex web of intersectional and intercultural relationships in the United States today.
and in the future. These educators seek to promote democratic initiatives in curriculum, pedagogy, and social relations in the schools. Critical multiculturalism promotes understanding of and participation in our diverse society and supports efforts directed toward attaining social, cultural and emotional harmony.

Either of the two measuring instruments I discussed in the previous section would be useful in obtaining grants from governmental and non-governmental sources which would allow for the further development and implementation of critical multicultural programs. These quantitative forms of evaluative measures will likely support preliminary qualitative findings that critical multiculturalism is a valuable and necessary pedagogical approach in the college classroom. Once there is sufficient data to support a critical multiculturalist approach, educators and policy makers will be in a position to design and enact faculty and curriculum development and teacher training programs at all educational levels. Additionally, social and educational policy based on these findings would allow educators, policy makers, students, parents, and members of the larger community to evaluate and improve teaching effectiveness in our schools. Through the development of critical multiculturalist educational programs, young Americans will be better prepared to take active roles in positive social change toward a more democratic and egalitarian society.

NOTES

¹ Note: this question has not yet been pretested and is subject to change.
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