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## Multicultural Education vs. Factory Model Schooling

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Every school reform effort promises improvement. As I write in 2015, we have *Common Core Standards* and *Race to the Top*; before that, we had state curriculum standards and *No Child Left Behind*. Yet, despite proclamations of being new and better, most school reform efforts are variations of factory model schooling, which came to dominate school organization about one hundred years ago. I will argue that factory model schooling, anchored in a steeply hierarchical capitalist and racist structure, was never designed to benefit everyone.

Multicultural education as an alternative arose from social struggles of the U.S. Civil Rights movements. In this chapter, I will ground multicultural education in research findings that document its beneficial impact on diverse children and youth, as well as its development of communication and relationships across differences, which is essential to a multicultural democracy. Despite these impacts, however, since multicultural education challenges a hierarchical social order, and with it, established power relations, it will probably always need to be fought for. I offer research as one tool for advocacy of multicultural education over factory model schooling.

### FACTORY MODEL SCHOOLING

The factory model of schooling is very familiar. Under this model, children are products. Schools attempt to produce standardized products, differentiated by young people's predicted future, particularly in the

economy (Leland & Kasten, 2002). According to Kleibard (1995), Frederick Winslow Taylor, along with others such as John Franklin Bobbitt, were architects of the factory model that, based on Taylor's study of industrial factories, directed that schools be organized as efficiently as possible to maximize production. Core practices and structures for this purpose, still used today, include grouping students by age, distributing them into "egg crate" buildings, standardizing curriculum, measuring student learning for purposes of comparison, and standardizing teacher work. While other aims such as preparation of citizens or intellectual development had competing value, social efficiency reformers saw the main charge of schools as preparation for economic roles and maintaining social order. The standards movement that began in the 1990s and still drives school reform, gives new teeth to the factory model through its regime of high-stakes testing. Although factory model schooling has always been driven largely by the corporate sector, its corporate moorings are even more obvious today in its emphasis on market competition, partial-privatization (e.g., charter schools and vouchers), and infusion of profit-making into education.

There are many criticisms of the model; I will highlight three. First, this model is highly inequitable, reproducing social stratification based on race and class. Using structures such as tracking, factory model schooling sorts young people for unequal positions in the economic structure ranging from professionals and managers to unskilled workers. Society as a whole, being highly stratified and differentiated, does not need workers with the same skill levels: even if everyone wanted to be at the top, there is not room there for everyone, nor increasingly in the shrinking middle class. Ability grouping and tracking sort students inside schools; affluent parents use purchasing power to sort students into schools based on social class and race by buying homes in neighborhoods that have what they believe are the "best" schools.

When Oakes (1985) studied 25 secondary schools during the 1970s, she found upper-track classes disproportionately White and lower-track classes disproportionately students of color and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Upper-track students had access to more teaching time, varied teaching strategies, homework, and college-oriented curriculum than did lower-track students, who were taught didactically in classrooms where much teaching time was lost to classroom management. Tracking and ability grouping waned somewhat during the 1980s and 1990s, but have regained popularity with ascendance of the standards and testing movement. For example, Loveless (2013) reports a skyrocketing growth

in elementary school ability grouping since the mid-1990s, as teachers struggled to teach the mandated curriculum to heterogeneous groups of students. In high school, where tracking has always been fairly common, particularly in math and language arts, the practice is growing.

A second and related problem with the factory model is that its curriculum is standardized, based on a White upper-middle class worldview that limits perspectives, funds of knowledge, and intellectual inquiry, and bores the diverse students in schools. In 1991, Sleeter and Grant systematically analyzed 47 elementary textbooks published between during the 1980s in social studies, reading/language arts, science, and mathematics, for racial/ethnic representation. They found that Whites consistently received the most attention, were shown in the widest variety of roles, and dominated storylines and accomplishments. African Americans appeared in a more limited range of roles and usually received only a sketchy account historically, mainly in relationship to slavery. Asian Americans and Latinos appeared as figures on the landscape with virtually no history or contemporary ethnic experience, and Native Americans appeared mainly in the past. Recent textbook analyses indicate some progress, but within an overall pattern of adding “contributions” to the predominantly affluent Euro-American male, hetero-normative narrative. While texts have added African American content (such as depictions of racial violence directed against African Americans during slavery), they continue to disconnect racism in the past from racism today, and to frame perpetrators of racism as a few bad individuals rather than a system of oppression, and challenges to racism as actions of heroic individuals rather than organized struggle (Alridge, 2006; Brown & Brown, 2010). The few analyses of Latinos find limited improvement. History texts have added material, but they vary in quality, and Latinos collectively make up only about 3% of texts sentences (Noboa, 2005). Literature texts have added Latino authors, but generally feature the same few and bracket their work as “multicultural” rather than American (Rojas, 2010). Texts show Native Americans more positively, but portrayal is still very limited (Sanchez, 2007).

Several interview studies with students of color find this curriculum to gradually turn students off to school, starting at the elementary level (Epstein, 2001, 2009) and accelerating in middle school, then high school (Epstein, 2009; Ford & Harris, 2000; Martinez, 2010; Wiggan, 2007). Yet, this is the curriculum by which students’ academic abilities are usually judged. In addition to turning off students of color, the standardized curriculum substitutes consumption of knowledge for inquiry.

A third problem with the factory model is that it is oriented around compliance with and maintenance of the status quo, rather than social transformation, despite use of the term “reform.” For example, consider grading systems many states use for schools. The main standard by which schools are graded is student test scores. In states using this system, schools located in affluent neighborhoods are most likely to receive high grades, and schools located in impoverished neighborhoods, low grades (see for example, DiCarlo, 2012). Failing schools are required to use approved “turnaround” models, doing things such as replacing school staff, intensifying teacher professional development for standards-based teaching, contracting with tutoring companies, and so forth. In all of this, what is solidified is what Freire (1970) termed the “banking concept of education,” in which students are presumed to know nothing, and are taught to consume knowledge produced by those in power. The students on whom the “banking” model falls most punitively are those in communities of color and/or poor communities.

### THE MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION ALTERNATIVE

Alternatives to factory model schooling have long been proposed, such as inquiry-driven teaching based on the metaphor of classrooms as villages (Leland & Kasten, 2002). This chapter proposes multicultural education as an alternative.

Contrary to the way many people view it, multicultural education is not a program or curriculum unit to add on, but rather a process of holistic reform of schools that directly counters the factory model. Multicultural education grew out of long struggles for education equity that were connected with broader social struggles for justice. Most directly, it grew from the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, but its roots extend further back. James Banks (1996) traced its antecedents to the ethnic studies movement of the early twentieth century, and particularly the work of African American scholars; Lei and Grant (2001) trace its roots to the cultural pluralism and progressive education movements of the 1940s; and Cherry Banks (2005) examined its roots in the intergroup education movement of the 1920s-1950s.

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights movement opened the door for groups who had been excluded from schools, or from decision-making about schools. Gay (1983) described the ensuing process of movement building:

The arenas of activity moved from courtrooms and the southern states to the northern ghettos and the campuses of colleges and schools. The ideological and strategic focus of the movement shifted from passivity and perseverance in the face of adversity to aggression, self-determination, cultural consciousness, and political power. (p. 53)

As Gay noted, when schools were initially desegregated, parents and community leaders of color began to demand that curriculum reflect their communities, and that teachers expect the same level of academic learning of their children as they did of White children. African American parents and educators, joined later by Mexican American, Puerto Rican, American Indian, and Asian American parents and educators, were deeply concerned that their children were being sent to schools that taught an all-White curriculum, and in which the teachers and White students were ignorant of communities of color.

What became a multiethnic movement was quickly linked with additional movements for equity. The women's movement challenged patriarchy in its myriad forms; the bilingual education movement challenged the hegemony of English; and later, the disability rights movement and the gay/lesbian movement challenged legalized and institutionalized assumptions about normalcy. Multicultural education became an umbrella arena for working on equity across multiple forms of difference (Grant & Sleeter, 2011).

Essentially, multicultural education can be viewed as a process of transforming education to serve diverse populations well, and to build cross-group dialog and action that can become the foundation of social transformation. Various theorists elaborate on transformed schooling, particularly at the classroom level (e.g., Gay, 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 2009). Banks' (2008) five dimensions of multicultural education serve as a useful framework. The dimensions include:

- *Content integration*, which “deals with the extent to which teachers use examples, data, and information from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate the key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area of discipline” (Banks, 2008, p. 31). Banks points out that content of historically marginalized groups can be infused meaningfully into all subject areas, although some lend themselves better than others. Sleeter's (2005) framework assists teachers in infusing historically marginalized knowledge in relationship to content standards

teachers are expected to teach, while also critiquing those standards.

- *Knowledge construction process*, which refers to “the procedures by which social, behavioral, and natural scientists create knowledge and how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it” (Banks, 2008, p. 31). In other words, teachers help students examine how knowledge is constructed, and biases or points of view that are inherent in that process, so that students understand that knowledge is not neutral, while learning to see themselves as both knowledge creators and critical knowledge consumers.

- *Equity pedagogy*, which refers to teaching processes that create “learning opportunities for all students,” (p. 34), requiring teachers to become sufficiently familiar with the cultural backgrounds of their students that they can appropriately facilitate high levels of learning. Use of teaching styles that build on how students learn at home and in their communities is an example.

- *Prejudice reduction*, which refers to “the characteristics of children’s racial attitudes and strategies that can be used to help students to develop more positive racial and ethnic attitudes” (Banks, p. 17). Prejudice reduction also guides teachers in strategies for addressing attitudes about additional forms of difference, such as sexual orientation, disability, and gender.

- *Empowering school culture and social structure* refers to “conceptualizing the school as a unit of change and making structural changes within the school environment so that students from all groups will have an equal opportunity” (p. 35). Assessing students in ways that are fair and helpful, and eliminating unfair and inequitable tracking are examples.

In what follows, I review research in each of Banks’ five dimensions of multicultural education (beginning with the third dimension and synthesizing the first two), focusing on outcomes for students, then suggest the kind of research that is needed as we go forward. I view research as helpful for advocacy. While research does not (and probably never will) drive policy, it is a useful tool for critiquing unjust policies and

supporting alternatives, and for mobilizing popular support, particularly among parents who are justifiably concerned that their children receive the best education possible.

### *Equity/Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

Banks (2008) describes equity pedagogy as instructional modifications that enable students from marginalized backgrounds to achieve at high levels. Equity pedagogy means much the same as culturally responsive pedagogy, which Gay (2010) defines as teaching “to and through [students’] personal and cultural strengths, their intellectual capabilities, and their prior accomplishments” (p. 26). It is important to recognize that classroom teaching processes and interactions are always based on someone’s culture, but not necessarily the ways of learning and interacting, frames of reference, and experiences that students bring. Teachers using equity pedagogy intentionally shape their practice in relationship to their students for the purpose of engaging them in learning. In practice, equity pedagogy is often connected with curriculum integration and knowledge construction, discussed later.

Most research on the impact of culturally responsive pedagogy takes the form of case studies. A useful set of case studies uncovers practices of teachers nominated by school administrators and/or parents as exemplary with students from marginalized backgrounds. An excellent example is Ladson-Billings’ (1995) well-known study of eight highly successful teachers of African American students. By studying, then collaborating with the teachers, she identified core features of their pedagogy. The teachers (whether African American or not) saw themselves as members of students’ communities and linked teaching with students’ community-based knowledge. Their pedagogy shared three dimensions: persistent support of students to reach high academic expectations; action on cultural competence by reshaping curriculum, building on students’ funds of knowledge, and establishing relationships with students and their families; and cultivation of students’ critical consciousness regarding power relations, particularly racism. Similarly, Irizarry and Raible (2011) studied ten teachers nominated as exemplary with Latino students. Like Ladson-Billings’ teachers, their primary source of learning was extended engagement with the local Latino community, particularly through relationships with the students and their families. The teachers became familiar with local knowledge and resources, which they regularly brought into the classroom. They took seriously the impact of racism on students’

lives, and viewed school as a useful place to engage in conversations about it, and to help students develop skills to navigate and disrupt it. In both studies, teachers built trust by linking high academic expectations with strong relationships with students, and with serious commitment to learning and working with the funds of knowledge they brought from their homes and communities.

Only a few studies have directly investigated the impact of teachers' use of culturally responsive pedagogy on student learning. An example is research on The Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP), which works to improve literacy achievement of Native Hawaiian students, based on research on communication and participation structures in Native Hawaiian families and community settings (Au, 1980). The project has trained elementary teachers to organize literacy instruction to capitalize on Native Hawaiian culture and interaction patterns, such using as "talk story," which is common in Native Hawaiian children's lives. Over time, the project has added additional features, such as student ownership over literacy, and constructivist teaching. Much of the research on the program's impact is reported in the form of technical reports. In a published study involving 26 teachers, Au and Carroll (1997) found students to move from 60% below grade level and 40% at grade level in writing, to 32% below and 68% above grade level.

The Standards for Effective Pedagogy, which built on KEEP, grew out of research on socio-cultural pedagogical practices that improve student academic achievement in classrooms serving culturally and linguistically diverse students. The standards include: (1) facilitating learning through "joint productive activity," or conversations with students about their work, (2) developing language and literacy across the curriculum, (3) connecting new information with what students already know from home and community contexts, (4) promoting complex thinking, and (5) teaching through dialog. Classrooms that are organized through centers for multiple, simultaneous, diversified activities best support teaching through these standards (Tharp, et al., 2000). Experimental research studies have found improved student achievement when teachers use these standards, such as Hilberg, Tharp and DeGeest's (2000) study of its use in mathematics with eighth grade Native American students, and Dougherty and Hilberg's (2007) study of its use in reading with predominantly low-income Latino students.

The Cultural Modeling project links language reasoning skills of African American English speakers with the English curriculum. Cultural Modeling "is a framework for the design of curriculum and learning



environments that links everyday knowledge with learning academic subject matter, with a particular focus on racial/ethnic minority groups, especially youth of African descent” (Lee, 2006, p. 308). Pedagogy leverages the ability of speakers of African American English to interpret symbolism, a skill students use in rap and Hip Hop, but not necessarily in English classrooms. Cultural Modeling moves from analysis of specific language data sets students are familiar with and that draw on Black cultural life, such as Black media, to more general strategies of literary analysis and application to literary works. In a study comparing four English classes taught using Cultural Modeling and two taught traditionally in two African American urban high schools, Lee (1995) found Cultural Modeling classroom students’ scores between pretest and posttest to grow more than twice as much as those taught traditionally.

These examples all point toward pedagogical processes teachers can learn to use that make a difference with their students. They also suggest that when teachers learn how to learn from and with communities students are from, and then to use that knowledge to inform pedagogy, students from communities that have been historically under-taught, benefit.

### ***Multicultural Content Integration and Knowledge Construction***

Equity pedagogy is more powerful when the curriculum integrates knowledge from multiple groups, including marginalized racial and ethnic groups, women, LGBTQ communities, people with disabilities, and the working class and poor. To date, there is no systematic research on the impact of multicultural curriculum on student learning, although rich qualitative case studies depict it in practice (e.g., Legaspi & Rickard, 2004; Weis & Fine, 2001). Empirical research does, however, examine the impact of ethnic studies curriculum, taught through culturally responsive pedagogy, on students of color.

Ethnic studies centers curriculum around the knowledge and perspectives of a marginalized ethnic or racial group, reflecting narratives and points of view rooted in experiences and scholarship of that group. Well-designed ethnic studies not only reworks disciplinary content, but also probes who constructs knowledge and what difference that makes. Opening space for knowledge from marginalized communities, ethnic studies typically positions students and their communities as knowers and knowledge producers. A review of research of the impact on students of sixteen ethnic studies curricular interventions that reported data (which ranged from single lessons to full semesters) found a positive impact of

fifteen of them in three areas: academic engagement, academic achievement, and personal empowerment (Sleeter, 2011).<sup>1</sup> Below are examples.

Math in a Cultural Context connects Yup'ik culture and knowledge with mathematics as outlined in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards, such as in the module "Parkas and Patterns," that works with geometric patterns. The program grew from collaboration between Alaska Yup'ik Native elders, teachers, and math educators to develop a curriculum supplement for grades two through seven. Ten modules supplement the math curriculum (see <http://www.uaf.edu/mcc/>). Quasi-experimental and experimental research studies find that students in classrooms using the MCC curriculum make more progress toward the state mathematics standards than students in classrooms not using it (Kisker, et al., 2012; Lipka, et al., 2005). Similarly, The Rough Rock English-Navajo Language Arts Program (RREN LAP) grew from collaboration between Navajo bilingual teachers, the KEEP program, the Navajo community, and the American Indian Language Institute at the University of Arizona. Because a written Navajo literacy curriculum did not exist, the teachers developed materials written in Navajo and relevant to the lives of the children. The interdisciplinary curriculum wove activities, events, and knowledge from Navajo culture with conventional literacy content. After two years in the program, students' reading scores on standardized reading tests rose steadily, and after four years, their achievement in English comprehension increased from 51% to 91%. Those who participated in the program 3-5 years made the greatest gains (McCarty, 1993).

The strongest demonstration of the power of ethnic studies on students was Mexican American Studies (MAS) in Tucson, Arizona, which grew from collaboration between Chicano studies teachers and the University of Arizona (Cammarota & Romero, 2009; Romero, Arce & Cammarota, 2009). Its four-semester high school curriculum was based on a model of "critically conscious intellectualism" that has three components: (1) curriculum that is culturally and historically relevant to the students, rigorous, focuses on social justice issues, and is aligned with state standards but designed through Chicano intellectual knowledge; (2) critical pedagogy in which students develop critical thinking and critical consciousness, creating rather than consuming knowledge, and (3) authentic caring in which teachers demonstrate deep respect for students as intellectual and full human beings. The curriculum, which taught about racial and economic issues and immersed students in university-level theoretical readings, included a community-based research project in which students gathered

data about manifestations of racism in their school and community, then used social science theory to analyze why patterns in the data exist and how they can be challenged. Cabrera, Milam, Jaquette and Marx (2014) compared achievement (using AIMS, the state's achievement tests) and graduation rates of eleventh and twelfth grade students who did, and did not, enroll in MAS courses. They found that, although MAS students began with lower average ninth and tenth grade GPA and achievement test scores than control students, by twelfth grade they attained "significantly higher AIMS passing and graduation rates than their non-MAS peers" (p. 1106). In short, Mexican American studies improved the achievement of mainly Mexican American students significantly more than the traditional curriculum, and the more courses students took, the stronger the impact.

Ethnic studies has also been found to be very empowering to students of color, countering alienation that many experience in school. For example, Halagao (2004, 2010) examined the impact of *Pinoy Teach*, a college-level curriculum that focuses on Philippine and Filipino American history and culture, and uses a problem-posing pedagogy to encourage students to think critically about history. Through a series of interviews, Halagao (2004) found that since none of the students had learned about their own ethnic history in school, this curriculum "filled in the blanks." But it also challenged their prior knowledge of Philippine history, learned mainly from their parents, particularly in relationship to the experiences of Spanish, then U.S. colonization. The curriculum helped students to develop a sense of confidence and empowerment to stand up to oppression and to work for their own communities. In a follow-up survey of 35 who had participated about 10 years earlier, Halagao (2010) found students to report that what remained with them was a "deeper love and appreciation of ethnic history, culture, identity, and community" (p. 505). The curriculum, through its process of decolonization, had helped them to develop a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy that persisted, as well as a life commitment to diversity and multiculturalism in their work as teachers, in other professions, and/or through civic engagement.

### ***Prejudice Reduction***

In a diverse democracy, it is critically important that people learn to respect and work with those who differ from themselves, and to dialog about issues and concerns across their differences. Paradoxically, despite regular news stories about cross-group conflicts (such as the persistence of White police officers shooting unarmed Black youth, gay families' struggles

to adopt children, and conflicts over undocumented Latino immigrants), factory model school reforms do not explicitly teach respect, dialog with, and work with people across difference. Yet, there is evidence that a well-designed multicultural education can do so.

Curricula that simply depict or label individuals groups (for example, adding a picture of a person of color or pointing out a person's sexual orientation) are fairly ineffective at changing attitudes, since drawing students' attention to differences may invite stereotyping without engaging students in questioning their thinking (Bigler, 1999; Bigler, Brown, & Markell, 2001). Conversely, children can learn to describe human similarities and differences accurately, and to ask about others respectfully, when the teacher and/or curriculum addresses children's actual concerns (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999). Explicitly discussing stereotyping and bias, presenting strong counter-stereotypic models, and engaging students in thinking about multiple features of individuals (such as race and occupation), within-group differences, and cross-group similarities appear to make positive impact on children (Hughes, Bigler, & Levy, 2007; Hughes & Bigler, 2007). Studies find that elementary teachers can develop children's ability to think inclusively about gender, sexual orientation, and transgender experiences by using children's literature while encouraging questions and open discussion based on what children know and have experienced, think they know, and want to know more about (Ryan, Patraw, & Bednar, 2013; Schall & Kauffmann, 2003).

Okoye-Johnson (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of 30 studies that compared the impact of a multicultural curriculum or program, and the traditional curriculum, on racial attitudes of students at the PreK–2 levels. The 21 studies of the impact of a multicultural curriculum intervention reported a large effect size showing that it “brought about more positive changes in students' racial attitudes than did exposure to traditional instruction” (p. 1263). The remaining studies of the impact of extracurricular cross-cultural reinforcement interventions reported a much smaller positive effect size. This meta-analysis showed that multicultural curriculum that is part of the school's regular programming has a more powerful positive impact on students' racial attitudes than extracurricular cultural programming.

At the higher education level, there is considerable work teaching students to engage in intergroup dialog. Research indicates that by the end of a semester, students who participated in intergroup dialog have more insight into how others see the world, more empathy, and a greater

sense of structural inequality (Gurin, Nagda, & Zuñiga, 2013). In short, considerable evidence shows that cross-group respect and dialog can be built, and prejudice reduced, through multicultural curriculum that engages students in questioning stereotypes they have heard, and in learning to listen non-defensively to others.

### *Empowering School Culture*

An empowering school culture supports all students academically, culturally, and personally; it eschews the low academic expectations, poor student-teacher relationships, and marginalizing programming (such as remedial classwork) that commonly lead students to drop out (Avilés, et al., 1999; Hernandez & Nesman, 2004). In some models for building an empowering school culture, the school leadership team identifies issues and solutions; in others, students are the ones who do so; these models are not mutually exclusive.

Equity audits (Skrla, McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2009) form a well thought-out diagnostic system that costs little, and that helps school leaders identify changes that can be made (changes that are consistent with multicultural education), such as ensuring equitable representation of diverse groups in programs ranging from gifted and honors to special education, and ensuring that disciplinary referrals are not due to cultural stereotypes or unfair treatment of students of color. Schools that use equity audits as a diagnostic tool have had success in narrowing achievement gaps (Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004). For example, equity audits help to rethink tracking and ability grouping. While their main rationale is to facilitate teaching by reducing heterogeneity in the classroom, “there is ample evidence to show that tracks stratify students by race and class” (Burris, Wiley, Welner, & Murphy, 2008), then depress the achievement of students in lower tracks through a combination of lowered expectations for learning, rigid curriculum, and teaching processes that batch process students rather than using their heterogeneity strategically. Based on a study of a de-tracked secondary school, Burris, Wiley, Welner, and Murphy (2008) show that it is possible to teach heterogeneous groups of students to a high level of rigor if curriculum and instructional processes are designed to capitalize on students’ diversity and effort is made to ensure all students access to the best teachers and a rich curriculum. An equity audit can help school leaders identify inequities such as ability grouping or tracking, and their role in producing inequitable outcomes.

Student voice models of building an empowering school culture,

such as Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), involve students in identifying key problems and solutions. For example, Rodriguez (2014) describes results of a participatory youth-centered research project, PRAXIS, that he led in a school that had a dropout rate of about 50%. He, his team, and a high school partner teacher worked with students in the context of a course to identify the central questions around why students drop out, gather data through interviews and surveys of students, analyze the data and propose solutions. Based on their research, the students were able to identify strengths in their school as well as propose policy changes that would help the students. Following two years of the project, the school graduation rate substantially increased. Similarly, YPAR was a significant part of the Mexican American Studies program in Tucson, enabling youth to learn how to research issues in their own communities and schools, and to act on those issues based on an analysis of research (Cammarota & Romero, 2009). Critical service learning is emerging as a school-based empowerment process that engages youth in community-based social-justice change projects. Research on empowerment projects that link community and classroom have found a powerful impact on youths' development of critical consciousness, ability to think deeply, ability to work across lines of difference, and sense of agency (Epstein & Oyler, 2008; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Mitchell, 2007; Jarrett & Stenhouse, 2011).

### **WHAT RESEARCH WOULD MOVE MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION FORWARD?**

The factory model of schooling continues to dominate contemporary school reforms, which can be understood not as real reform, but rather as repackaging of an old model that serves economic elite's profit-making. I have argued that multicultural education presents a different paradigm for schooling. While some of the research in this chapter demonstrates its benefits in relationship to outcomes not normally associated with factory model schooling (such as personal empowerment, and ability to dialog across differences), much research also demonstrates its positive impact on student academic achievement as measured by the standardized tests of the factory model. In other words, paradoxically perhaps, students who are disadvantaged by factory model schooling do better, even on traditional measures, in schools and classrooms that are organized around principles of multicultural education.

To date, however, we simply have too little research documenting the impact of multicultural education. This is important to the extent that research can serve as a useful tool for challenging factory model schooling. I believe that research in the following areas is needed.

First, while research on the impact of ethnic studies curricula consistently find a positive impact on students, we need research that builds on this work, showing how a multicultural curriculum that is constructed around multiple forms of differences and multiple groups' knowledge, impacts on students. Constructing and teaching such a curriculum well is difficult, particularly in test-driven contexts that press away from doing so. Adding a layer of research on its impact magnifies that challenge. However, I am heartened by curriculum projects, such as the work of the Chicago Grassroots Curriculum Task Force, in which teams that include teachers, students, and community members are writing new curriculum. For example, the first Chicago toolkit *Urban Renewal or Urban Removal?* (Chicago Grassroots Curriculum Task Force, 2012) engages students in developing a politically sophisticated analysis of Chicago from diverse perspectives, and teaches them use academic skills to speak up for and work on behalf of their communities specifically, and social justice more broadly. This activist multicultural curriculum is being used in several Chicago schools now. Research on its impact, and the impact of other projects like it, would be very helpful.

Second, while standards-based factory model schooling leaves little room for dialog in most classrooms, given the growing diversity of the U.S. population and the widening chasms across communities (particularly those rooted in social class), intergroup dialog that leads to work bridging chasms and reversing policies and practices of exclusion may be essential to the survival of the U.S. Work in higher education addressing intergroup dialog should be applied much more widely to the K-12 level, and researched there. We know that multicultural education improves students' attitudes about people who differ from themselves by race/ethnicity and sexual orientation. To what extent can intergroup dialog as it has been developed in higher education lead to deeper levels of engagement among K-12 students, across their differences, when connected with other multicultural projects?

Third, empowerment aimed toward social justice and democratic activism is fundamental to U.S. values. While rich examples show the potential of schools becoming empowering spaces for children and youth from diverse backgrounds, and the potential of youth to identify and create

solutions to equity issues within as well as outside school, there as is as yet far too little research on the impact of such work on children and youth. It is quite possible that groups with power do not want young people from historically marginalized communities to become empowered. All the more reason why research is needed, especially research that is accessible to parents and community members of color and from impoverished communities, who have the most to gain from advocating for this kind of schooling.

Multicultural education offers a model for schooling that supports democracy and equity. It is beginning to develop a research base that documents a positive impact on students, even when using measures of achievement that are rooted in the factory model of schooling. What model of schooling prevails in the future will likely be decided more by political work than by research. But to the extent that research serves as a tool to support political work, this chapter has offered a synthesis of the research we have, and a sketch of the research we need.

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> In the only curriculum that did not show a positive impact, the curricular conception of African American culture clashed with Black urban students' conceptions.

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