

Why do we need multicultural education? Reclaiming our roles as professionals in a democracy

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The trouble is not that schools don't work; they do. They're excellent machines for achieving historically accepted purposes. ... What is now encompassed by the one word "school" are two very different kinds of institutions that, in function, finance and intention, serve entirely different roles. Both are needed for our nation's governance. But children in one set of schools are educated to be governors; children in the other set of schools are trained for being governed. ... In suburban schools are children of the rich, who grow up to privilege and anesthetic oblivion to pain - and who then use the servants produced by ghetto schools. The former are given the imaginative range to mobilize ideas for economic growth; the latter are provided with the discipline to do the narrow tasks the first group will prescribe.

Jonathan Kozol¹

Pre- reading Activity:

Reflect on your K-12 education. To what extent did your education perpetuate or interrupt the stratification described by Kozol in the quotation presented above?

Notes on reading this chapter.

To the extent that is possible, please read this chapter as if you were participating in a dialogue with me, the writer. Talk back; pause to reflect; ask questions; agree or disagree; consider your emotions as you read. My hope is that you are cognitively active, not passive, as you read. You should read all your texts in this way.

Author biases:

I believe that ...

- Education is our single best hope against bigotry. Yet it has also been a particularly effective tool for the perpetuation of bigotry and discrimination.
- Educators operate on the front lines of our quest for a better world. Thus it matters, how educators think, what they know, and how they are supported. It is a matter of national importance and global survival.

What are your beliefs about education and the role of educators? How might we educate the next generation of students (and their educators) for a democratic and justice-oriented world?

The rationale and context for multicultural education

Scholars have framed education as an essential facet of the public good. That is, they view the purpose of education as serving not only the individual learner but also the public who benefits from a well-educated citizen, professional and leader (Baldwin,

1963; Dewey, 1916; Giroux, 2013). For these scholars, education is central to the maintenance and preservation of democracy, because an informed voting public is key to successful governance of, for and by the people. Yet, an examination of the historical and contemporary experiences of a diverse range of people reveals that education has fallen short of these ideals (Bigelow, 2008; Spring, 2013; Zinn, 2003). Although for many school is/was a place of pleasant memories, intellectual safety and profound growth, for others, it has been a site of intellectual and psychological violence, negligence and/or boredom (Acuna, 2014; Adams, 1995; Anderson, 1988; Gonzalez, 1996; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006; Takaki, 1989; Watkins, 2001; Woodson, 1933). These discrepancies are indicators of injustices that ought to be remedied by education, not caused by it. This chapter draws on these discrepancies in historical and contemporary educational experiences to provide a backdrop for understanding why and how multicultural education should be implemented. Critical multiculturalism is presented as a central organizing framework for our identity as a professional and a typology that illustrates the potential framing of multiculturalism in schools is offered. As you review these ideas, consider how your own educational experiences, including your educator preparation program, resonate with the observations made and/or provide an alternate view for how education for a democratic and socially just world might be pursued. Consider also how you can ensure that your future classroom instruction embodies the principles of critical multiculturalism rather than blindly perpetuating problematic and fundamentally inequitable practices.

Contemporary concerns about stratification in education emerge in the context of the standardized testing and accountability regimes that have exacerbated the historic disparities between/ among students of diverse groups (Alquist, Gorski & Montano, 2011). Although for many years, scholars have sounded the alarm against standardized tests (Karp, 2016; 2014; Kohn, 2015; 2000; 1999; Kozol, 2006; 2005; Meier, 2003), it is only recently that many educators, parents, students and now, even politicians have finally agreed that our children are tested too much and that the recent accountability movement that has swept public education in the USA in the form of high stakes standardized tests has led to a narrowed curriculum, joyless classrooms and punitive systems of assessments (Ravitch, 2014; Rose 2011; School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida, 2014; Watkins, 2012; Zernike, 2015). Few, beyond private testing companies, have experienced long-term benefits. The fact now remains that we have sacrificed the education of many students, particularly those of historically marginalized backgrounds, by turning them off the love of learning through test-prep oriented curriculum that required diverse students to demonstrate standardized, yet narrow learning outcomes in high stakes, culturally and linguistically inhospitable conditions. Students in private schools, where most policy makers send their children, have not had to perform or learn under these circumstances. Thus we are witness to a two tiered system built on inequity and hypocrisy: what is good enough for your child, is not good enough for mine.

Contemporary social and political realities in the USA also reveal the urgent need for curriculum reform in the direction of multicultural education. The anticipated demographic shift where those of White racial identities will no longer be majority in the

USA among children by 2020 and adults by 2045 (Ware, 2015), highlights the urgent need for a significant reconceptualization in the role of educators in preparing us, individually and collectively, to successfully live and work in this multicultural, multilingual, multi-religious globally interconnected world. In contrast, each of the following speaks to the adverse effects social and political realities have on particular communities while privileging corporate and economic elites. Individually and collectively, they reveal a searing and sobering revelation about our nation's underlying attitudes towards diversity and democracy.

- Social and political discourse about difference (see Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016)
- Recent social advocacy movements such as the Occupy Movement (see Giroux, 2012) and Black Lives Matter (see Gray & Finley, 2015; Hoffman, Granger, Vallejos & Moats, 2016)
- DREAMers in support of Immigration Reform (see Preston, 2012), together with legislative and judicial (in)action on a range of issues including restricted access to voting and the dismantling of key race-based protections in the Voting Rights Act (Rutenberg, 2015),
- Restricted access to reproductive health services for women even as we are bombarded with advertisements for products supporting men's reproductive health (Joffe & Parker, 2015),
- Opposition to access to affordable health care (see Ungar, 2010),
- Corporatization of incarceration (Alexander, 2012),

- Environmental (in)justice (Taylor, 2014),
- Political intransigence on gun violence and gun sales, despite the multiple mass shootings (see New York Times Editorial Board, 2016; Gabor, 2016; Kristof, 2016)
- Deliberate political negligence in cities that have caused gentrification in Chicago (Stovall, 2014), lead poisoning in the water in Flint (Ganim & Tran, 2016; Kennedy, 2016), and
- Urban blight and entrenched corruption in US cities; for example, Ferguson and Detroit (Friedersdorf, 2015; Zavatarro, 2014)

These examples highlight the need for leaders to be well-educated on and capable of working with diverse constituents and advocating for the needs of all groups. We can no longer afford leaders who are inept and/or bigoted in their decision making in the context of diversity. The question, then, is who is responsible for this education? And how will it be implemented?

Historical legacies and contemporary realities

Critical multicultural education also responds to the long history of discrimination and its ongoing legacy still experienced by groups such as Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos and Asians. Ladson Billings (2006) discusses this legacy in terms of the historical, economic, sociopolitical and moral debt owed to these groups for the inequitable policies that have prevented them from equal participation in US democracy; this includes the lack of access to an equitable education. The pursuit of equity in the context of historic patterns of educational discrimination lies at the center of the social

justice imperatives of education. Achieving this goal involves a process that Freire (2000) has dubbed conscientization: becoming critically aware of these patterns of power and marginalization, the methods by which they are enacted and the potential for individual and collective agency to struggle against them. Freire revealed how traditional education perpetuated patterns of oppression among politically marginalized groups and called for education to be emancipatory, where one acquired the knowledge and skills for transformation of inequitable systems. While such an injunction applies to all aspects of education, this imperative is particularly salient in the education of future teachers and administrators.

While multiple examples of institutional discrimination in education abound in US educational history, two cases are presented as a contextual backdrop for understanding the ideas presented in this chapter. The first is historical, focused on the Native American Boarding Schools set up in the USA in the late 1800s. The second is the more contemporary case of the Mexican American Studies program in Tucson Unified School District that was banned in 2012. As readers you are encouraged to learn more about these cases through additional research, as what is presented is only a ‘snapshot’ of a more complex set of decisions and experiences. Each case offers us an opportunity to consider how perspectives of white supremacy play a role in educational policy and practice and to contemplate the role that educators play in these circumstances.

Learning from our past: Native American Boarding Schools

In 1819 the Civilization Fund Act paved the way for the use of education as a means for cultural transformation designed to strip Native American children of their native culture and identity. This model for Native American education called for the establishment of off-reservation boarding schools, an arrangement deliberately designed to separate Native Americans children from their parents. This occurred despite the existence of bilingual schools among the Choctaws and the Cherokees where the literacy level was higher than the white populations of some states. By the end of the century, congress had made school attendance mandatory for Native American children and families were penalized for non-compliance.

Multiple, interconnected rationales governed this educational policy. Education offered a more efficient and economic alternative to war as the government's way to "deal with" the Native American populations. Political rhetoric framed Native Americans as "uncivilized" and as "savages" allowing for education to be viewed as a process of "civilizing" as well as "Christianizing" the students. There was the possibility that education could, in a generation, cause Native Americans to accept White American Protestant capitalistic values governing trade and property to facilitate smoother and efficient transfer of lands away from Native American ownership. Thus, education became a tool of oppression where cultural genocide was perpetuated.

The educational alternative to war appeared to be a more humane alternative to the military edict, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian." Instead, General Richard Henry Pratt advocated that through education one could, "Kill the Indian and save the man [sic]." The Carlisle Boarding School, founded in 1879 by Pratt, was the first of many Native American Boarding Schools set up around the nation. Boarding schools were harsh, traumatic, militarized experiences. At these schools, students pursued agriculture and basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. They were penalized for speaking their native languages. At many schools the children were undernourished and were engaged in labor more than they focused on education and academic achievement. In 1928, the Meriam Report was commissioned to review practices in the boarding schools, resoundingly criticized their practices. This education had failed to prepare students academically, socially, psychologically or vocationally for life either in reservation or non-reservation contexts.

Students who were subjected to these experiences speak of the trauma they experienced and loss of identity that drove further social wedges between the generations. They also describe their own youthful ways of resistance to this indoctrination, including a refusal to speak at all when deprived of their mother tongue. Teachers who worked at these schools clearly assumed they were doing their duty as they administered what hindsight would reveal as brutal, racist and unjust.

What lessons might we learn from this history? How do contemporary attitudes towards cultural assimilation to a mainstream identity, or bilingualism mirror this history? What are the different ways in which to view student resistance to an unjust or irrelevant curriculum?

Learning from recent history: the Mexican American Studies Program

The Mexican American Studies (MAS) program of the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) was initiated in 1998 in the context of broader historical concerns about commitments towards desegregation and racial integration amid persistent academic

achievement gaps between White and Latino/a students. Launched in 2002 in one high school classroom and later expanded to multiple high school classes, middle schools and elementary schools, the curriculum focused on Mexican American history and culture. At the high school level, courses were offered as electives, but counted towards core class requirements in social studies and language arts.

The program was grounded in the principles of critical pedagogy and was explicitly dedicated to developing Latino/a identity, history and culture where the indigenous funds of knowledge of students, their families and communities were viewed as integral to academically rigorous curriculum, pedagogy that supported social engagement through respectful relationships among teachers, students and parents.

Although more likely to have lower 9th and 10th grades GPAs, speak English as their second language and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, the MAS participants who had initially failed the state standardized tests prior to enrolling in the program outperformed their non-MAS peers on the re-take of the tests and in graduation rates. Despite this success, a state bill [HB 2281] explicitly designed to eliminate the program was passed in 2010 and, threatened with a 10% cut in funding, the Tucson Unified School District was forced to disband the program. The bill stipulated against classes that: 1. Advocate ethnic solidarity, rather than treating pupils as individuals; 2. Promote resentment toward a race or class of people; 3. Are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group; or 4. Promote the overthrow of the US government.

Although a state audit supported continuation of the program, and despite protests by the community, the threat of funding cuts ultimately resulted in the banning of the program in 2012. Documentary and media reports reveal primary source evidence of high levels of student intellectual and social engagement, curricular rigor and vitality, educator talent and commitment as well as alarming expressions of racism, bigotry and ignorance by key decision makers. Efforts are under way to re-introduce culturally relevant studies into the district's offerings, while versions of the MAS program are being adopted in other parts of the country.

In this case, we see how students, including those of non-Latino backgrounds, responded positively to the curriculum and pedagogy; yet state officials operating in a political climate hostile to Latinos saw it fit to target what has been viewed as one of the nation's best exemplars of ethnic studies. What lessons might we, as multicultural educators, learn from this case? Why would a policy such as HB 2281 be developed? Why would a program that supports academic achievement be targeted?

A comparison of the nature of curriculum and experiences of student learning in the two cases reveals that education is never a politically, culturally, or philosophically neutral process and that education has a powerful potential to oppress or empower. Oppression was evident in the case of the Native American Boarding Schools while empowerment emerged in the Mexican American Studies program. Education as a process of conscientization facilitates a clearer understanding of whether – regardless of

its accompanying rhetoric - an educational policy or practice further perpetuates a stratified educational experience for students in increasingly re-segregated schools or interrupts such inequity. It is crucial that all future educators develop a critical awareness of this history so that egalitarian and open-minded educators do not unintentionally and blindly replicate these patterns of institutional discrimination on the one hand and, on the other, are equipped to handle the successful implementation of and struggle for critical multicultural education.

Critical Multicultural Education

Not everything labeled “multicultural” is desired practice. Multicultural scholars have developed typologies that differentiate between approaches that represent restrictively targeted efforts or superficial adaptations and the desired approaches that are integrative and aimed at broad-based structural transformation (see Banks 2001a; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Nieto, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 2009). The desired approaches in each typology are based on principles of social justice and democracy and are referred to as critical multicultural education. Less desired approaches are based on perspectives of *cultural* differences (sometimes through deficit orientations) attributed to marginalized *individuals* or groups but with limited reference to positions of privilege, policies and/or practices that create difference. In contrast, critical multiculturalism “gives priority to structural analysis of unequal power relationships, analyzing the role of institutional inequities, including *but not necessarily limited to racism*” (May & Sleeter, 2010, p. 10; italics in original). Each of these typologies promotes a broad conceptualization of diversity, critical awareness of structural inequalities, the need for education to interrupt

these inequities through an explicit connection between education and its role in a democracy and culturally relevant pedagogy that draws on students' interests and funds of knowledge as a catalyst for knowledge generation and academic achievement.

Banks' (2001b) identification of multiple dimensions of multicultural education underscores the fact that multicultural education encompasses the content of the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, the goals of prejudice reduction, the understanding of the politics of how knowledge is constructed and whose knowledge is privileged and extends beyond individual teachers and classes to the culture of the school itself. The central idea here is that meaningful multicultural education entails more than a single lesson, unit, month, grade, teacher or target group. It must be central to the core philosophy of educational policy and practice within a given system; whether that system is a school, a district or an educator preparation program.

Too often these discussions of the implementation of multicultural education are presented as if they are a matter of individual educator choice, rather than as a program or institutional commitment. It is crucial that pre-service and in-service educators see a commitment to issues of social justice at a *programmatic* level, rather than at the level of individual and isolated classrooms. How might we integrate the principles of critical multicultural education as central to our institutions (e.g. schools or programs)? Drawing on the curricular typologies as a heuristic, a typology of the framing of multiculturalism within institutions, schools, and educator preparation programs and their impact on educators' perceptions and practices in contexts of diversity is offered. We, both pre- and in-service educators, are encouraged to consider how the explicit and implicit messages

about multicultural education shape our perspectives and practices as equitable educators in contexts of diversity.

Conceptualizing Multicultural Education: A Typology

Building on the curricular typologies in multicultural education, the following typology seeks to integrate diverse scholarship on what *should* be the conceptualization of multicultural education in institutional practice. The four levels of the typology highlight the assumptions about the purpose of education, values emergent in schools, institutions, and educator preparation programs, and the role of the educator in contemporary education. It highlights key ideational constructs to facilitate analysis and reflection on the philosophical underpinnings and social justice commitments of critical multicultural educators. Actual educational contexts may offer much wider variation than suggested the four levels of the typology. [See Table 1]

Not included in this discussion are approaches that adopt an explicitly deficit perspective of difference or those that espouse “color blind” perspectives where culture and difference are viewed as irrelevant. Educators might also espouse rhetoric supporting the success of “all” students without necessarily paying attention to the differences among them. This undifferentiated categorization glosses over difference or re-frames difference as a generic “other.” Educators who claim to “not see color, but only humans” fail to grapple with difference that lies at the basis of structural inequalities and interpersonal prejudice.

Table 1: A typology for understanding multicultural education

LEVELS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION
<p>Level 1: The Compliance Model <u>Target:</u> Students who are “different” from mainstream <u>Purpose:</u> Assimilation <u>Values:</u> “Equality” often guised as standardization; Tolerance/ accommodation of difference <u>Focus in educator preparation:</u> Pedagogy (differentiated instruction based on perceived “learning styles”); “strategies” focus. [i.e. change in teacher’s instruction] <u>Role of teachers:</u> Compliant; curricular technicians <u>Expected role of learners:</u> Expectations of passive (i.e. unquestioning) acceptance of status quo; dutiful followers of instructions. Students who do not fit this mold are labeled “rebellious” or “problems.” <u>Comments from scholars:</u> Such an approach has led to de-skilling of teachers; perpetuation of existing inequities.</p>
<p>Level 2: The Culturally Liberal Model <u>Target:</u> Students of all backgrounds. <u>Purpose:</u> Bi-/multi-cultural identity development; Acquiring ‘mainstream’ and culture-specific knowledge; Multi-perspectival knowledge <u>Values:</u> Difference as positive; self-reflection <u>Focus in educator preparation:</u> White/ “mainstream” teachers encouraged to engage in self-reflection; focus on pedagogy and curriculum adaptation. [i.e. change in teacher attitudes] <u>Role of teachers:</u> Facilitator of learning; teacher as curricular decision maker <u>Expected role of learners:</u> Active learners in student-centered curriculum; Cultural border crossers. <u>Comments from scholars:</u> The focus on cross-cultural differences alone will not address the fundamental bases for inequality.</p>
<p>Level 3: The Advocacy Model <u>Target:</u> Institutional practice (curriculum, policies, practices); the “system” <u>Purpose:</u> Critical consciousness building among educators <u>Values:</u> Equity <u>Focus in educator preparation:</u> Understanding empowering v. disempowering potentiality of school policies and practices; Social construction of difference; historical and sociopolitical perspectives. [i.e. change school policies, practices] <u>Role of teachers:</u> Equity leader; views education/ curriculum as a catalyst for equity and social justice. <u>Expected role of learners:</u> Caring and conscious about social/ structural inequities; engaged learners in democratically organized spaces <u>Comments from scholars:</u> The achievement gap will not be closed until the opportunity</p>

gap/ educational debt has been acknowledged and addressed.

Level 4: The Democratic Community Model

Target: School and community

Purpose: Education as democratic practice; development of democratic schools

Values: Community engagement; school-community partnerships; social justice

Focus in educator preparation: Experiential learning; Participatory Action Research;

Academic Service Learning; comfort with/ ability to engage with multiple community voices

Role of teachers: Engaged public intellectual; moral activist

Expected role of learners: Active engagement in/with the community; view their role as educated members of the community ‘giving back’ or ‘giving to’ the ongoing development of local communities.

Comments from scholars: Democratic schools that are linked with their communities (rather than merely individual teachers or classrooms) are the fundamental organizational unit for multicultural practice

Level 1: The Compliance Model

Educator preparation programs typically respond to diversity matters as a function of existing policies. While policies have been crucial for establishing equity, programs that seek compliance with externally-driven standards of diversity as their goal, frequently fall short of broader commitments to social justice, which are more difficult to mandate or require. Consequently, following Freire’s (2000) analysis of the pedagogy of the oppressed, compliance-oriented programs yield compliance-oriented educators who use externally-imposed requirements as their primary compass for professional practice. As a result, concerns about “closing the achievement gap” cause educators to focus on the achievement of students of diverse under-served groups, but largely because educational policies or accreditation standards require them to do so. As such, the focus becomes the test scores of diverse groups of students rather than, as Ladson Billings (2006) so cogently argued, the inequities in policies and practices that underlie those

numerical discrepancies. Committed to the value of equality, frequently translated into ‘one-size-fits-all’ assumptions, even well-intended educators make assimilation the goal of education, with little regard for the relevance or the fairness of those standardized outcomes.

Contemporary manifestations of the compliance model in classrooms may not be overtly hostile to students of diverse underserved backgrounds, as were the educators of the Native American Boarding Schools. Many teachers pursue pedagogical adaptation based on students’ cultural backgrounds, learning styles or perceived needs. However, school systems that adopt the compliance model are typically preoccupied with instructional “strategies” for addressing achievement gaps; yet they rarely question the relevance of the curriculum or its goals (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010). Both teachers and students increasingly are evaluated on observations of teacher behaviors based on pre-determined checklists and rubrics rather than assessing the conceptual complexity or instructional decision making of the teacher. What today’s uncritical educator might not realize is that engaging in strategies linked to students’ perceived learning styles, leading successfully to learning outcomes that are intolerant of or hostile to cultural identities or personal goals might actually be doing significant harm. Similarly, educators might draw on the use of culturally representative texts, but without questioning the authenticity of those representations for students in the class (see Zittleman & Sadker, 2002 for more information on curriculum biases). Concerns for parity in achievement may well yield “pull out” or “drill and kill” practices that have proven to be ineffective in long-term learning (Kohn, 2011). Such a quest may deny these students opportunities to participate

in art, music or PE, subjects deemed “extra” or “special” and therefore extraneous to the goal of compliance regarding the test scores of under-served students. Consequently, they run the risk of engaging in cultural assimilation more like the joyless, tedious and personally irrelevant practices of the Native American Boarding Schools, rather than moving towards successful academic achievement through a holistic approach grounded in critical multicultural education (more like the Mexican American Studies Program) that moves well beyond compliance with external mandates.

As the two cases reveal, state policies on diversity are often misguided as well. If policies regarding the education of diverse students are based on assimilationist or deculturalization models, compliance could well entail the perpetuation of inequity and institutional racism. In Florida, the state that ranks third in the nation as a host of immigrants, the revision of accomplished educator practices led to the deletion of *diversity* and *critical thinking* from the state standards that govern teacher preparation. What message does this send schools and educator preparation programs about what teachers need? It is therefore incumbent on school leaders, deans and educator preparation faculty to help professionals to question policies in ways that are appropriate to the contexts in which they work. However, compliance-oriented programs are less likely to support such questioning among their students.

As a teacher educator, I have witnessed the compliance orientation among my students, frequently engendered through years of conditioning through grading policies and external reward systems. These pre-service or in-service educators are typically pre-occupied with following directions dutifully, are disconcerted by flexible rules that

encourage creative, independent and critical thought, and express their frustrations with the unlearning of old learning habits with pleas such as, “Just tell me what to do!” Compliant educators are often de-skilled practitioners who are largely “transmitters” of received curriculum, whose interaction with curriculum is technical (how to) rather than conceptual (what should/could). Instead of developing educators as decision makers who use their professional judgment to identify the best course of action in a given unique situation, compliance orientations - a consequence of what Freire referred to as a “banking approach” in education - result in practitioners who are dutiful rule-followers regardless of the rule’s intent or impact. How does this characterize your teacher preparation and how do you think this would impact your future teaching?

To be clear, this critique does not advocate unbridled adversarial stances, nor does it condemn compliance with rules and regulations required for appropriate governance. It also does not rule out the value of mainstream knowledge that could serve as cultural capital for marginalized groups. It does, however, advocate for schools and programs that systematically prepare educators who are intellectually “wide awake” to the restrictiveness of rules, standards and policies, especially in the context of historically underserved populations. As evident in the model of the Mexican American Studies program, this entails preparing and supporting educators who will find ways to help students to acquire the cultural capital needed to survive in culturally inhospitable contexts without losing their sense of self.

Level 2: The Culturally Liberal Model

This model exemplifies classrooms that are responsive to students, rather than to external mandates or edicts, and is an approach to multiculturalism that is inclusive of the needs of students of a wide range of backgrounds. Consequently, those who belong to the White mainstream are also encouraged to examine their (often unexplored) cultural identities and the manner in which this heritage shapes their worldviews especially in the context of cultural diversity. Hence, it is not just the culture and identity of those traditionally underserved that is the focal point. In accepting cultural identity as shared and experienced by all human beings, difference, itself, also becomes less threatening and more comfortable. Educators who are able to model comfort with difference and who demonstrate how the presence of diversity is an asset rather than a challenge to institutional decision making, will advance crucial learning towards equity and social justice.

Unlike the compliance model, where we engage with diversity because we “have to”, here educators engage with diversity because we *want to* and are focused on the well-being of students. In this model, teachers are framed as facilitators of collectively generated knowledge, rather than as transmitters of fixed knowledge, while students recognize their legitimate and active role in the knowledge construction process, underscoring their own views as one of many. Students’ knowledge and backgrounds are deemed a catalyst, rather than a barrier, for effective learning and curricula representative of diverse perspectives and student-centered learning are the norm. Cultural relevance in content and in instruction was evident in the MAS program, whereas it was clearly absent

in the case of the Native American boarding schools. For students of historically marginalized groups, the injunction is that they become bicultural, learning their own histories as well mainstream knowledge (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Two leading proponents of cultural responsiveness, Ladson Billings (1995) and Gay (2013), highlight the importance of a humanizing pedagogy that results in academic success, cultural competence and critical consciousness that facilitates the questioning of an inequitable status quo. The student-centered and culturally-sensitive orientation of the culturally liberal model makes it appealing as an ultimate goal for multicultural integration in schools and educator preparation programs. However, many schools and educator preparation models focus on aspects of culture but do not adequately address the critical consciousness about structural barriers that maintain patterns of inequality. This aspect of cultural responsiveness is taken on by the next model.

Level 3: The Advocacy Model

This model frames multicultural educators as leaders and advocates for equity in education. Consequently, professional preparation of educators facilitates their critical conscientization to acknowledge that education is not neutral, that curricular and policy decisions frequently result in differential benefits across individuals and groups, and that the goal of education is to facilitate equity. The focus of this model is on institutional structures, including but not limited to educational policies and practices that contribute to inequitable outcomes for students. This underscores the assumption that it is the structures – rather than the students, their families or their teachers – that should change. Multicultural education efforts undertaken within this model espouse an explicitly

counter-hegemonic (e.g. anti-racist; anti-sexist; anti-classist; anti-homophobic etc.) standpoint and frame education as an inherently social justice endeavor.

Although scholars in the field of multicultural education have long advocated for this perspective, schools and teacher preparation programs have frequently fallen short in their ability to embrace multiculturalism at this level. Critical analysis of structures that privilege or marginalize groups have been central to the calls for social justice in education of leaders of underserved groups (see Ayers, Quinn & Stovall, 2009; Bogotch & Shields, 2014). However, the interrogation of and the rescinding of privilege accrued through the current system is much more difficult for those who have benefited from the status quo. Unlearning and re-structuring are daunting, despite our awareness of the egregious harm of mainstream education practices on students of underserved backgrounds. At a practical level, the status quo is, too often, the only familiar system of educational governance. Educators of the advocacy model recognize difference as socially constructed for the purposes of deliberate social stratification. For them, there is no option but to change. Such change is desired across the entire school/program culture and not isolated to particular classes, teachers or dimensions of educational activity.

The transformation advocated in this model is not necessarily unknown. The education afforded to the privileged already exemplifies choices and opportunities that should be made available to all students: freedom from the oppressive regime of standardized testing, curriculum that is culturally relevant and personally meaningful, opportunities for challenging curriculum such as AP and honors classes, the presence of highly qualified teachers, school environments that are physically and socially safe and

classrooms where learning is joyful, intellectually engaging and humanizing. In addition to the student-centeredness of the previous model, education for advocacy will require more effort in curriculum development, as curriculum is adapted to reflect principles of problem posing and critical pedagogy. Consciousness raising about whose knowledge is privileged, clear understandings of the philosophical underpinnings of curriculum, rigorous, engaging curriculum and an explicit commitment to principles of equity and social justice will be central goals of such educator preparation programs. Several exemplars of this work exist through organizations such as, Rethinking Schools (www.RethinkingSchools.org), Chicago Grassroots Network (<http://grassrootscurriculum.org>), Teaching for Tolerance (www.tolerance.org), and publications related to curriculum by critical multicultural educators (Sleeter, 2005; Grant and Sleeter, 2008; May & Sleeter, 2010).

Central to these exemplars is the role of the teacher as an autonomous and knowledgeable professional capable of developing and/or adapting curriculum, analyzing existing practice and advocating for students who are underserved by existing structures and policies. Consequently, the expected role of students is one of engaged equity advocates who see direct connections between their classroom-based learning and their social context. It is expected that the educational experiences of these students will serve them well as equity leaders in the future.

Level 4: The Democratic Community Model

This final model is somewhat different from the rest. Framed around the descriptions of democratic schools by Apple and Beane (1995), inspired by the work of

community educators such as Jane Addams (1910/1961) and Paulo Freire (2000), and drawing on the underlying philosophies of historical exemplars such as the Rough Rock Demonstration School (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002), the Freedom Schools of the 1964 (Emery, Braselmann, & Gold, 2004), and, contemporaneously, educator preparation programs of Center X, at the University of California, Los Angeles (Quartz, Priselac & Franke, 2009), this approach to multicultural education re-centers the school within the context of its surrounding community. Here schools reclaim their role as community centers that cannot operate separately from local communities. Schools and their communities serve as mutually beneficial resources. Curriculum emerges from and is responsive to the needs of the community and draws on the knowledge of community members as curriculum content. Students engage in learning activities that benefit the community and recognize their obligations, as educated citizens, to serve and contribute positively to building their communities. This stands in stark contrast to the Native American Boarding Schools, where schools made students irrelevant in their own communities.

Center X honors graduates such as Ramon Antonio Martinez, for his use of Spanish in the classroom despite Proposition 227, which banned the speaking of Spanish in CA's classrooms (<https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/our-work/ed-spotlights>). This is the antithesis of the compliance model. This conceptualization of the role of the school vis-à-vis its community is, sadly, alien to the conceptualizations exemplified in most educator preparation programs. Thus it is crucial for us to contemplate how educators might be prepared for such a context, especially when most educators have not experienced this

education themselves. It is unclear if most educator preparation programs even want to espouse such a model. And if they do, what might they look like? Ayers (2010) raised a parallel question when he asked, “What does it mean concretely – and distinctly – then, to be an excellent teacher in and for a democratic society? What makes a democratic classroom unmistakable?” (p. 3).

Reclaiming your own education

In his 1963 address to teachers, Baldwin, an African American well-aware of the ravages of institutionalized discrimination, noted,

The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he [or she] is being educated. The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself [or herself], to make his [or her] own decisions ... to ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he [or she] achieves his [or her] own identity. But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself [or herself] as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it - at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change (p. 42).

This chapter has attempted to follow Baldwin’s challenge to teachers by raising critical consciousness about the historical role of education in emancipating on the one

hand or maintaining stratification on the other. It is hoped that you have begun to ask questions about your own education, both current and past, and then make decisions about the questions you wish to ask and the changes for which you wish to fight. Thus, if as current or future educators we are to achieve the hopeful transformation that Baldwin envisions, we must first be able to ask questions of our own education and reclaim all lost opportunities for critical consciousness-raising.

The principles of critical pedagogy that underlie critical multiculturalism remind us that instead of relying on teachers as the source of received knowledge, learners must be active co-creators of the knowledge that emerges in programs of study and in schools. For many years, we have focused on constructing the role of the *teacher* in this dynamic. However, it is important that we first claim the role of *learners* as active partners in the democratic process of teaching and learning. Learners committed to the values of social justice will actively counter efforts that will de-skill, de-professionalize or disempower students and future educators. In so doing, these learners will also help their teachers move towards social justice practices as well.

A crucial early (and ongoing) step in resisting professional socialization that restricts our intellectual curiosity and/or moral capacity as we challenge the inequities of the system in which we work, is developing a critical self-awareness of our own biases and blinders and our role in limiting the potential for equity and social justice. It includes recognizing our own privilege (or positioning) in a stratified system, and consciously unlearning any previous or current socialization towards simple, unquestioning obedience (as Baldwin cautions) or training for subservience (as Kozol cautions). To what extent

has our own education – as teachers or students - been part of the problem(s) we are trying to address vs. the solution(s) we seek? In what ways might we reclaim the emancipatory and critical potential of the education processes in which we participate?

As teacher/ leader educators and as pre-service and in-service educators, we must view course content, instruction and assignments as opportunities for critical engagement and social justice advocacy in the democratization of education. This would mean not settling for minimal competency standards dictated by standardized syllabi, rubrics and assignments, but aspiring to additional levels of accomplishment commensurate with principles of critical multicultural education. Current trends and issues, whether they be standardized testing, accountability systems, teacher evaluations, performance-based funding, textbooks, accreditation and educator preparation standards should be scrutinized for their potential for democratization or stratification. Additionally, we should seize all opportunities for engagement in community-oriented democratic practice that links our work as professionals with our civic responsibilities to forge safe and hospitable communities dedicated to egalitarianism and inclusiveness

It might appear that the burden of history and legacies of discrimination could make teaching itself rather daunting. Furthermore, critical multiculturalism and the goals of equity, democracy and social justice represent lofty and idealistic goals. Under these circumstances, it is important for educators who understand the broader scope of multiculturalism not to give up doing the few things that they *can* do for fear of not being able to achieve everything that *should* be done. Through critical awareness of the historical legacy of educational discrimination, educators will be able to connect their

actions on the micro level of classroom practice or with individual students with macro level patterns of equity and justice. Conscientization alerts us to the need to uncover the philosophical and political rationales, both hidden and explicit, of the curriculum in which we participate, so that we might resist contemporary manifestations of historical patterns of marginalization and stratification. The urgency for the education system to support the development of professionals, leaders, and citizens who are comfortable with difference and committed to democratic practice is evident in the divisive politics, humanitarian crises and stratified access to basic human rights both in the USA and around the world. It will require, in part, conscious and explicit critical multicultural teacher and leader education programs to be adopted system-wide.

All multicultural educators participate in a journey towards the ideal levels of systemic change, even as we acknowledge current realities in our daily struggles and collective challenges. If one views one's professional responsibilities in terms of small but significant steps in a much longer journey, it would be possible to appreciate the small victories of everyday practice. Such a journey can begin at any time, in any context, at any level of action as an educator or as a student. What matters is our commitment as educators to engage in pedagogy that interrupts and works against the historic legacies of discrimination and stratification. As current and future educators it will be up to us to serve as society's leaders in this collective journey.

Endnote:

1. See: Jennes, G. (1976, August 9). Jonathan Kozol, Boston's fenced-out teacher, still slashes away at U.S. schools. *People*, 6 (6). Retrieved from: <http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20066758,00.html>

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