The Politicization of University Schools of Education

The Long March through the Education Schools

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Few institutions receive more attention and more funding than our education system. And it certainly warrants that attention; after all, education plays a big part in determining the future.

Reformers abound, for both higher education and the K-12 system. But they have largely missed one of the most crucial components of education, our schools of education, where future teachers are trained. They are out of sight and unapproachable for the K-12 reformers, and too technical and too much on the periphery for those who focus on higher education's shortcomings.

That has proven a grave error. Education schools are fundamental to all education. They are serving the nation badly, and it's not just about test scores and graduation rates. Teacher education has become one of the most politicized corners of academia, an institution that is already out of step with the rest of the country politically. Education schools are leading the charge to "transform" the nation, and that transformation is not leading us to a better, freer, more prosperous, more humane society.

This politicization of the education schools is not new, it is not invisible, and it is not occurring through random happenstance or by good ideas pushing out bad ones. It started over 100 years ago in the Progressive era, when the education schools first emerged as a body of experts who focused on "teaching" as a science; many of those experts were socialists who were open about their intentions to change the nation.

But even the damage done to the education system by the twentieth-century Progressives pales compared to more recent efforts by multiculturalists and cultural Marxists in the colleges of education. Politics is now so engrained in the education schools it seems almost impossible for reform to occur. And while not every education professor is politicized, almost no professor of education objects to the wildest schemes of his or her radical colleagues.

The following report, *The Politicization of Education Schools*, will reveal the extent of that politicization using two approaches. One is historical and operates at the theoretical level, showing how education schools were ideological from the start and became more so over time.

The second is empirical. Education school syllabi were obtained from three leading schools of education: the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Recommended and assigned reading selections were quantified to discover the most popular authors.

The results are unequivocal: the "long march" through the education schools has been successful; the most influential thinkers in our education schools are political radicals intent on transforming the nation to a collectivist, utopian vision.

While the situation in schools of education may seem hopeless, that doesn't mean education itself must be in the same dire condition. The capture of our education schools by the those armed with some of the worst ideas ever conceived happened while the nation looked away and allowed it to occur; today, the nation is more willing to push back and find alternatives. Still, there is no time to waste.

The Politicization of University Schools of Education

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Part I: The Long March through the Education Schools

INTRODUCTION

Education's importance can hardly be overstated. It seems almost a tautology to state that as the next generation is taught, so they will believe and act. It is therefore imperative that education be constantly examined with an eye toward correction and improvement.

And there are indeed many eyes upon the world of education, studying, quantifying, assessing, and policy-making. But one facet of education remains largely unexamined: academic schools of education. Much of this neglect is caused by two inherent problems.

The first is that the academia and K-12 education are exceedingly different institutions; knowledgeable observers of one may find the other somewhat opaque. The world of higher education deals with ideas far beyond those expressed in K-12 education. The production of new knowledge is often regarded as important as education itself.

And the pedagogy of K-12 education, especially at the primary level, is much more technical. The process of learning and teaching is often considered as important as the subject matter, whereas the opposite is true in universities.

Because of this division, few policy analysts attempt to deal with both institutions. But there is one place where the two worlds come together (or collide, if you prefer). That is in schools of education, where academic theory is translated into K-12 classroom practices; academic schools of education determine K-12 education. And because they have one foot in each institution, schools of education often

escape the close scrutiny required to ensure proper direction and practices.

The second problem is that much of the analysis of education is produced by those who were themselves educated and groomed by the established system. Furthermore, policy-makers seeking advice in educational matters look to the experts produced by academia, at a time when higher education is becoming closed to alternate views.

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Because of this divide and this insularity, truly original independent analysis of education schools is rare. And that is troubling indeed, because education schools have been for decades heading down a frightening path. They have succumbed to some of academia's most radical theories. Even at a first glance, when perusing education school websites, faculty biographies, syllabi, research titles, and texts, one sees the words "critical," "multicultural," and "equity" with alarming frequency. They are the revealing buzzwords of radical politicization: "critical" is aligned with cultural Marxism, "multicultural" with a rejection of individual rights, and "equity" with a redistribution of wealth.

These disturbing and harmful ideas have not only become accepted in schools of education, but their acceptance may have reached a critical mass that makes turning back impossible, or nearly so.

The following report will reveal the extent of education school politicization using two approaches. One is historical and operates at the theoretical level, showing how education schools were ideological from the start and became more so over time.

The second is empirical. Education school syllabi—290 in all—were obtained from three leading schools of education: the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Recommended and assigned reading selections were quantified to discover the most popular authors.

Together, these approaches present an alarming situation. The historical approach reveals a clear intention by leading educators and intellectuals to transform society—one might say "subvert," depending on his or her perspective—through education. The empirical results show that their agenda has largely been successful, as many of the most popular authors assigned in schools of educations are indeed left-wing radicals.

1. Ronald Reagan, "Encroaching Control Speech," Phoenix Chamber of Commerce, March 30, 1961
https://archive.org/details/RonaldReagan-EncroachingControl

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION: A PROGRESSIVE INSTITUTION

The United States is a child of the Enlightenment, founded by those with a deep regard for learning. Universal democracy was ill-favored by the founders, who saw it as the rule of the unlettered mob; they were well aware that an elective form of government would only be as good as those doing the voting. It was thought that our republican version, in which a large body of men of property and education would constitute the electorate, was best suited to walk the tightrope between democracy and elitism.

But change was built into the system, and Thomas Jefferson in particular saw that the electorate would necessarily become more inclusive over time. His solution—and that of many others—was to spread learning to the common man and teach him to exercise restraint upon his passions. The American ideal at the nation's founding was a man who would plow his fields during the day and pore over Locke and Montesquieu at night.

AMERICAN EDUCATION BEFORE THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

At the end of the nineteenth century, roughly 95 percent of American children attended school (or were privately tutored) for at least a few months out of the year. While elementary school attendance was near universal (at least among white students), there were few high schools.[1]

Despite the fact that public education was strictly a local affair, without federal or even state involvement, it had developed along common lines rather than haphazardly. This was in a large part due to the ubiquity of standardized textbooks; publishers tended to copy whatever had been successful or popular elsewhere or in the past, so they tended to vary only slightly.[2]

This similarity across regions was also partly pragmatic, since the goals of elementary education were the same everywhere in the country—to prepare children for participation in a democracy and free market economy as rapidly as possible. Instilling discipline and character were paramount; children were to be tamed while young. Activities such as memorization were assumed to produce a mental discipline that would prove advantageous throughout life. There was great reverence for the past, especially the classical Greek and Roman periods. Though schools were secular, the Bible had its place in the classroom, and many school days began with a prayer.

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The basic skills of literacy and numeracy were emphasized. The latter included performing numerical calculations mentally to prepare students for conducting business transactions.

There was a political edge to education before the twentieth century, for reading selections and cultural subjects were geared toward attaching students to the nation and Western culture. American history was important, and it was unabashedly patriotic, teaching that the United States was a great and special nation. As Diane Ravitch wrote, "The textbooks described American history as a stirring story that demonstrated the importance of liberty,

independence, and resistance to tyranny."[3] There was, however, an absence of the "politics of the day" and partisanship.

Furthermore, students were introduced at a young age to the great works and folklore of Western civilization through textbooks such as the once-heralded *McGuffey's Reader*.[4] Most nineteenth-century educators had high expectations for children from all classes; as one U.S. Commissioner of Education, William Torrey Harris, suggested, education was to elevate, not merely train students for manual trades.[5]

The big debate in the decades after the Civil War was whether to continue to focus on the classics and classical languages or to introduce more science, history, and modern literature and languages.

Teachers had little formal training in pedagogy. Most attended two-year "normal schools," at which the intention was to make sure prospective teachers knew the body of knowledge they were supposed to teach. Pedagogy was something they learned on the fly in the classroom.[6]

The system (or lack of one, since it was localized) appeared to have worked quite well; America had, for that era, a highly literate population, despite being largely rural and ethnically diverse. The nation was also becoming an economic powerhouse, not just because of its vast resources, but because the population was highly inventive and entrepreneurial.

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

The Jeffersonian ideal was not to last forever. As the Progressive movement gained momentum early in the twentieth century, reformers perceived that the household was diminishing in importance as families left farms for the factories and towns; school was to fill the void left by this transition. Traditional education came under attack from three different directions.

- One was a strain of anti-intellectualism. With so many roads to build, mines to dig, trees to cut, and fields to plow, frontiersmen and farmers scoffed at bookish Easterners and Europeans with their effete manners and impractical theorizing. Practical skills were demanded; an appreciation of man's higher purpose was not. Ironically, this frontier anti-intellectualism blended well with the most bookish of Easterners and Europeans, the American Transcendentalists and Romantics who idolized nature.[7]

- The second was a growing preference by intellectuals for "Rousseauean" natural learning, in which children directed their own educations according to their interests, somewhat guided by adults—but unhindered by adult demands. According to Ravitch the early Progressives sought an education that was more humane, that acknowledged different learning styles of children, and that would unleash natural creativity.[8]

- The third direction came from the Progressive desire to be scientific and to promote corporate efficiency. Progressives favored differentiated learning that divided students into tracks according to background or ability. Traditional academic subjects were reserved only for those few who would go on to college, with the rest learning trades or "life skills."

There were also major shifts in the way teachers were trained. Around the start of the twentieth century, many normal schools became four-year colleges or attached themselves to major universities as at Columbia and Vanderbilt Universities. Teachers College at Columbia, where many of the top reformers taught, such as John Dewey and William

Kilpatrick, became the most influential source of early twentieth-century educational ideas, dominating the field for many decades.

The early twentieth-century was a time of greatly increased demand for public education. In 1890, fewer than 5 percent of the population attended any high school—by the 1950s, 70 percent did so. With students rushing into the public schools, many from very different backgrounds than those of the educated members of previous generations, educators were open to the suggestions of experts from the new education colleges.

The experts were more concerned with pedagogy and psychology than subject knowledge. Education became an entirely new subject of study, focused on "how" to teach, not "what" to teach.

Additionally, university-trained experts sought to "professionalize" education by replacing local school administrators who had risen from the teaching ranks.

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Behind these seemingly apolitical pedagogical changes was an intensely transformative political agenda. Many early twentieth-century school reformers were not merely attempting to improve education, but to recreate society according to Progressive or socialist visions through indoctrination of the next generation.

As Diane Ravitch said about Dewey, to the new wave of educators schools were to be "a fundamental lever of social progress and social reform."[9]

CHILD-CENTERED EDUCATION

The roots of American education's radical transformation began in Europe with the publication of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile, or On Education* in 1762. Before then, it was fundamental to all societies that a child was to be molded away from nature. Rousseau, however, turned this self-evident custom on its head. A child was a gift from God, and therefore would grow best if left according to his or her nature, "unspoiled" by "social prejudice and convention" artificially imposed by corrupted prior generations.[10]

Emile was only the opening salvo in a war on both reason and convention in education. Rousseau's intellectual heirs, the European Romantics, advanced his ideas on education throughout Europe and then to the United States. There, they were widely adopted by the American Transcendentalists, who shared the Romantic reverence for nature. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his journal:

> We are shut up in schools and college recitation rooms for ten or fifteen years and come out at last with a bellyful of words & do not know a thing . . . . Far better was the Roman rule to teach a boy nothing that he could not learn standing.[11]

His sentiments were matched by the early Progressive educator, Colonel Francis Parker:

> The spontaneous tendencies of the child are the records of inborn divinity. We are here, my fellow teachers, for one purpose and that purpose is to understand these tendencies and continue them in all directions, following nature.[12]

Child-centered educators disliked the teaching methods of the nineteenth century for being authoritarian. They felt rote learning, memorization, recitation and other methods led to mindless submission, whereas democracy calls for a highly independent spirit.

They especially disliked the concept of "mental discipline," which was a major justification for requiring memorization-intensive subjects such as Latin. The idea of "training the mind" conflicted with the natural learning theories of Rousseau and the Progressives, who believed that a child's mind was intrinsically inclined to pursue knowledge.

The education school experts conceived experiments to demonstrate the uselessness of mental discipline.[13] Such inability to train the mind could be overcome by an emphasis on the process of learning, they believed.

In time, they were shown to be wrong. As Ravitch wrote, one of the great virtues of the academic tradition is that it organizes human knowledge and makes it comprehensible to the learner. It aims to make a chaotic world coherent.[14]

With child-centered learning, there is no such organization. As often as not, when students follow where their interests lead them, their education ends in an incoherence that disproportionately hurts the great majority of students who need structure. According to Terry Stoops, an education researcher for the John Locke Foundation, child-centered education can work well with highly intelligent children from families that aggressively prepare them to learn. But for other children, it can be disastrous.

CONSTRUCTIVISM

Education schools long ago adopted the learning theory from the field of psychology known as constructivism, in which people are perceived as actively constructing knowledge rather than memorizing it, storing it, and retrieving it. Consider that remembering is not perfect retrieval but a reconstruction that changes with time.[15] The same occurs with learning—people assemble new facts with old in such a manner as to constitute new meanings.

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The theory of constructivism has stood up well under investigation—as a way of understanding mental processes. In fact, as suggested by E.D. Hirsch,[16] constructivism "characterizes all meaningful learning, no matter how derived." This includes reading, listening to a lecture— even rote memorization of meaningful facts. As Hirsch says, "if we want our schools to produce competent persons, then constructed, meaningful learning is best."[17]

But it has been misused, according to Hirsch. "Constructivism is an uncertain guide to teaching practice," he warned.[18] Because almost all learning is constructivist, it can mean many different things.

Terry Stoops wrote that, while the theory itself is "appealing," most teachers find it to be "unworkable in practice, a fact that is lost on the schools of education that trained them to adopt constructivism in the first place." [19]

For one thing, by itself, constructive learning methods tend to be inefficient: student's conclusions about what they encounter through

active learning are often wrong, and a teacher's help is needed to guide them and help them work through rough patches. In a class of more than a few children, there is not enough "teacher" to go around to keep them all on target.

Perhaps more important is that constructivist learning theories tend to produce suspect teaching methods. So-called discovery learning, in which the focus is on the learner's method and not the results, is at times advantageous. But when over-used—as is often the case—it can prove to be a detriment.

For another thing, constructivism is highly dependent on a student's knowledge base. If he or she must constantly construct knowledge that could instead be drawn from memory, such as the multiplication tables, minor tasks can be turned into difficult ones, and multi-layered tasks can become overwhelming. As one anonymous educator suggested in a private conversation, "you memorize simple facts to free the mind to deal with more difficult concepts and operations."

Even some of active learning's most ardent proponents, including Dewey himself, realized that it was better to combine techniques—including rote memorization—rather than relying on just one. Memorized subject knowledge and vocabulary help tremendously with constructing knowledge.[20] By reducing the content of an education in favor of its processes, much is lost. For example, despite the Progressives' professed love of democracy, students became less aware of how our government is supposed to work without the former focus on our founding history. And simple mental calculations can become an ordeal rather than automatic.

Yet that has not stopped educators from using constructivism as a justification to favor child-centered active learning over more traditional methods.

SOCIAL EFFICIENCY

Dewey's child-centered method was not the only form of Progressive education for long. The publication of the "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" by the National Education Association in 1918 signaled that a competing theory known as "social efficiency had become the reigning ideology of the educational profession."[21]

The document urged change for three primary reasons:

- "the schools had to respond to social and economic trends" (particularly the increased employment in factories instead of farms and small shops).

- "the high school enrollment had become larger and more diverse" (implying that the new students were less capable).

- "advances in educational theory, particularly psychology, had made educators aware of the importance of 'applying knowledge to the activities of life'" instead of treating knowledge "'as a logically organized science.'"[22]

Instead of education in the traditional sense, or having each child follow his or her own interests, school was redefined to serve seven goals: Health, Command of Fundamental Processes, Worthy Home Membership, Vocation, Citizenship, Worthy Use of Leisure, Ethical Character.

"The driving purpose behind the seven objectives was socialization, teaching students to fit into society," wrote Ravitch.[23] Part of this socialization was for everybody to know his or her place in the planned economy. Dividing students into tracks according to aptitude

or even socioeconomic background became the norm, with the great majority eschewing traditional academics for vocational or domestic training. Students were to explore possible choices for vocations at age 12 or 13, dropping general academics once they made their choice.

> Rugg . . . envisioned a "Great Technology," in which "social engineers" would plan and design the new society, and the educational engineers would produce the mass understanding necessary for the new order to succeed.

A central figure in the shift to a focus on social efficiency was John Franklin Bobbit of the University of Chicago, who helped establish the curriculum as a field of expertise removed from subject knowledge. He "believed that a curriculum maker was an educational engineer who could establish precisely what students needed to learn in order to function effectively in life."[24]

And like other Progressive educators, Bobbit believed that schools were agencies of social progress and that they must endeavor to overcome and prevent deficiencies in the social order. Bobbit's writing partner, W. W. Charters of the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie-Mellon University), said in 1923 that the time had come to "frankly accept usefulness as our aim rather than comprehensive knowledge."[25]

There was a powerful political aspect to the Progressives' takeover of the nation's education. They viewed nineteenth-century American education as elitist and authoritarian.

They wished to "democratize" the curriculum by making it more accessible to all. The classical learning of the Roman and Greek poets and such was perceived to be of little utility for the great mass of students. There was already a longstanding drive initiated by earlier reformers to make schools focus less on Ovid and Latin and more on modern academic subjects such as history, science, and modern literature and languages.

But even that advance was not enough for the Progressives—many wished to do away with the entire academic curriculum for all but the tiny percentage of students who would go on to college at the turn of the twentieth-century. The students now entering the high schools in large numbers—often immigrants or native rustics moving into the cities—needed vocational training and training in modern living, they theorized.

Disparagement of the academic curriculum reached absurd levels. Dewey regarded the study of zoology no better than a course in laundry work: "either might be narrow and confining, and either might 'be so utilized as to give understanding and illumination—one of natural life, the other of social facts and relationships.'"[26]

THE PROJECT METHOD
A popular blend of child-centered learning and social efficiency was the "Project Method" proposed by Dewey's Columbia colleague William Heard Kilpatrick. It was based on beliefs that children learn best when they are intrinsically interested in a topic and when the subject is clearly useful to them. It was a forerunner of "interdisciplinary" learning: students were to attack a meaningful problem or project through a variety of techniques, rather than compartmentalizing knowledge into disciplines such as science, history, or geography.[27]

According to Ravitch, most of the projects tended to be activities that students had a natural interest in, such as "a girl making a dress, a boy producing a school newspaper, a class presenting a play, a group of boys organizing a baseball team."[28] Supposedly, said Kilpatrick, tasks that children often do on their own demanded initiative, spurred democratic thinking, and increased their attention spans.[29] Especially attractive to Progressive educators was the group aspect, which was expected to accelerate students' socialization.

This method also permitted Progressive educators to introduce a focus on current events and social issues—meaningful problems—into the curriculum by getting students to choose them for a project. This was not an insignificant tactic for those who sought to remake society according to collectivist visions. It also played into the anti-intellectual instincts of many educators.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION: COLLECTIVISM
At the dawn of the Great Depression at the end of the 1920s, the leading Progressive educators in the country were faced with a dilemma. They had seen their ideas make great inroads into American education, but they were faced with the possibility that the child-centered education they promoted could not really change society as they hoped due to a built-in conflict. While "child-centered schools were inherently individualistic," most Progressives held that "collectivism must replace individualism; that the profit motive was destructive; and that the economy should be planned and controlled by government agencies."[30]

Indeed, many of the biggest names in education reform were openly socialists, including Dewey, Harold Rugg, and George Counts, all of Columbia Teachers College. Many took trips to the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and 1930s, during a period when Joseph Stalin was tightening his iron grip. Dewey and Counts

in particular returned from their Soviet tours enthralled with what they had witnessed.

Counts became the leading educational advocate for transformation modeled on the Soviet model. According to Ravitch, he assailed the United States' "worship of individual success, its insistence on separation between education and politics, and its opposition to centralized social planning."[31]

Such opinions found a ready audience among America's intelligentsia, particularly in light of the Depression. As growing numbers of economists concluded that laissez-faire economics had failed, many of America's leading educators—including organizations such as the National Education Association—shifted from a foundation based on individualistic child-centered pedagogy to one of "building a new social order" through extreme tactics including intense political indoctrination.[32]

Many sought a complete transformation of education. Rugg, along with John Franklin Bobbit, envisioned a "Great Technology," in which "social engineers" would plan and design the new society, and the educational engineers would produce the mass understanding necessary for the new order to succeed."[33]

And while Progressive educators had long considered their reforms democratic, that ideal, too, was being distorted. "Rugg contended that . . . elections did not really produce the consent" of the people "because most people were not informed" and "true consent can only be given by people who understand their conditions."[34] It was up to educators to provide the understanding that led to consent of the people for a new economic and social system.

Yet not all Progressive educators saw Soviet-style indoctrination as the way to a brighter future. Many members of the Progressive Education Association, who had long

championed child-centered schools and individualism, rejected such extremism outright. Historian James Truslow Adams questioned whether educators were equipped to reorganize society as suggested by Counts,[35] and proposed that teachers' jobs were "not to indoctrinate their students but to help them become well-informed, free from prejudice and emotion, and able to use intellectual tools."[36]

In what would become a permanent circular problem in education schools, one faction of Progressives—those who had aggressively torn down the traditional academic education—were now the "conservatives" attempting to fend off radical change. Parents, lay board members, and teachers who wished for a return to a more traditional form of education were instead confronted by a choice between two waves of reforms, one of them falsely presented as traditional.

Progressive educators have been able to capitalize on this illusion of a traditional education remaining intact ever since. In the 1930s, it was even more confusing, since the new rigidly collectivist agenda was promoted by educators who were formerly "the most vociferous advocates of individualism, the new freedom, the child-centered school, and the sanctity of the child's ego," wrote Isaac Kandel, also of Columbia Teachers College.[37]

Progressive educator Boyd Bode identified this flight from American democratic traditions. Critiquing a report from the American Historical Association (in which Counts had a hand), he asked, "Does it seem reasonable to suppose that he [the student] should have some voice in determining what he is to believe and how he is to act? All our educational reformers seem to be agreed that the pupil is not to be trusted, but his thinking is to be done for him."[38]

Others were taking note of the disturbing move toward communist indoctrination in U.S. public schools. Twenty-two states enacted legislation requiring teachers to sign loyalty oaths.[39] The great mass of the public wanted nothing to do with collectivization, and local resistance prevented much of the radicals' agenda.

Events in the Soviet Union also reintroduced the Progressives to reality. First, that country returned to traditional forms of education after noticing that the American Progressive pedagogy produced disastrous results in achievement. Next came the exposure of Soviet show trials and purges of officials on trumped-up charges. Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others walked back their high praise for Soviet instruction.

Of course, the question must be raised whether it was only the heavy-handed means of the Soviet Union the American reformers objected to; their socialist goals may have remained the same. Another Teachers College professor in Dewey's and Kilpatrick's orbit, Jesse Newlon, wrote in favor of the Roosevelt administration's "incrementalism" toward these same goals.[40]

EFFECTS OF THE EARLY PROGRESSIVES ON THE CURRICULUM

Progressive educators had no shortage of theories about how to teach reading—the heart of primary education. Many of the theories were not only counterintuitive but disastrous. "Some educators insisted that it was literally harmful for parents to read to children," wrote Ravitch.[41] Supposedly it reduced the time children read to themselves and favored learning by ear over learning through sight. More recently, however, research overwhelmingly shows that reading to small children is a good predictor of future literacy.[42]

The biggest controversy in reading instruction is between the phonics method and various

techniques that come under the term "whole language." The difference is quite stark: in phonics, the language is pieced together from its most elemental components, the sounds represented by letters both individually and in combination. Students "decode" the language from these sounds to produce the words.

In the whole language or "look-say" method, students are taught to form a mental image of an entire word or phrase."[43]

The phonics method has become identified with the traditional academic philosophy and with rote learning. Reading materials can be widely varied, and are often taken from, as Charles Eliot Norton said, "the best literature, the virtue of which has been approved by long consent."[44] This included the *McGuffey's Reader* and Norton's *Heart of Oak* series. Often, these readers contained selections by the most heralded writers in America, England, and Europe: Aesop, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Dickens, Hawthorne, Hans Christian Anderson, and the Brothers Grimm. This was intended to develop a taste for good literature from the start of a child's education.

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Whole language, on the other hand, has been the preferred method for those who favor more naturalistic, child-centered learning. Additionally, it uses books, such as the Elson readers (the "Dick and Jane" series), with a simple vocabulary focused on the everyday lives of children, using words that are familiar to children.

According to Ravitch, Progressive educators wrought an equally severe shift in the study of history. Early childhood education traditionally familiarized students with the highlights of the history and myths of early Europe. Learning about Greek, Roman and Norse mythology and the great stories of the medieval period—King Arthur, Richard the Lionhearted, Joan of Arc, and more—not only gave students a grounding in the Western tradition, but inspired young imaginations and filled students with wonder.[45]

Gradually, this Western childhood canon fell by the wayside to make room for the Progressive focus on socialization. Schools replaced it with instruction in what was called "home geography," consisting of the study of "home, school, community, life, occupations, and industries, as well as nature study, the seasons, and weather."[46] With it came a considerable de-emphasis on individualism: from the 1930s to the 1960s, conformity and fitting into society became the standard.[47]

Tracking—the grouping of students according to backgrounds and abilities—was broadly instituted in a way that reflected the elitism of the Progressive education reformers. They believed that the new immigrants were intellectually inferior to natives, and that raising their aspirations beyond manual labor was somehow anti-democratic. So tracking was not used to enable students to learn the same material as others at their own pace, but to teach them completely different skills.

THE CASE FOR A COMMON CURRICULUM

A major flaw in the thinking of twentieth-century Progressive educators was that they failed to see how the cultural knowledge they had rejected promoted the egalitarian society they sought. Children from educated families were equipped with much of the cultural knowledge required to progress; the broader one's base of knowledge, the easier it becomes to add to it. By not giving low-income children

some grounding in the facts and vocabulary they would need to begin building cultural knowledge, the schools almost guaranteed that they would fall behind.[48]

These educators failed to see the readily apparent contradiction that they were hard-wiring elitism into the system by offering a dumbed-down curriculum for all but the upper and middle classes.[49] In calling for a common core of knowledge that is taught to all, Hirsch explains that teaching cultural knowledge shrinks the advantages of the upper classes. Since higher learning begins with a base of relevant prior knowledge, students who do not share in that knowledge—usually from lower socioeconomic groups—have a hard time progressing.[50]

THE PROGRESSIVE LEGACY

By World War II, the theories of the education school Progressives had brought sweeping changes to the nation's public schools. Testing for aptitude and tracking were ubiquitous, as were vocational and domestic education. There were frequent shifts away from academic subjects to courses for socialization.[51]

Despite its popularity in the education schools, activity education in its various forms, such as the project method or child-centered activities, did not gain the widespread implementation that other Progressive reforms did. It was still largely used in upper-class private schools rather than in public schools, which educated the masses. There had been quite a few experimental programs in the public schools, but they largely fizzled out over time.

At the same time, although there was not a wholesale flight to activity learning, many elements became part of the new educational consensus that was forming in the 1940s. Progressive ideas about child-centered or natural learning contained many fallacies—often taking a kernel of truth and building it into an absolute. Hirsch described a "developmental

fallacy" that suggested students can't learn much at early ages. Even the father of developmental theory, Jean Piaget, was concerned about going overboard with child-centered learning.[52]

> **It was the great irony of the early Progressive educators that almost everything they did in the name of democracy and equality hurt both democracy and equality.**

The same goes for the concept that learning should come naturally, through children's natural curiosity rather than through effort and practice. While this may work some of the time, neuroscience indicates that most learning requires effort.

Romantics and Progressives failed to differentiate properly between two categories of learning: primary and secondary. Primary learning consists of those skills we must obtain in order to survive, such as motor skills and language. They indeed come to us naturally, almost without effort. That is not true for secondary skills. They are not necessary; many generations managed to get along without literacy or numeracy. It is also unlikely that one will learn them without determined effort and training. One image that pops up is that of the savage Queeg-Queeg in *Moby Dick* flipping the pages of the Bible in imitation of reading without comprehending the concept of decoding the printed words according to their phonetic sounds.

It was the great irony of the early Progressive educators that almost everything they did in the name of democracy and equality hurt both democracy and equality. Whether it was child-centered education, the project method, vocational education, or tracking, upper- and middle-class students were the ones who

continued with the academic tradition, or who received enough cultural knowledge at home to rise above the lack of subject knowledge learned in school. Students from homes with low educational levels or from non-mainstream cultures suffered the worst.

One major mistake by the Progressives was their failure to grasp the underlying causes of the increasing demand for education in the early twentieth century. Despite realizing that knowledge was dynamic, not static, they missed the fact that the economy was every bit as dynamic as the growth in knowledge. They mistakenly perceived the employment trends of the late 1800s and early 1900s to be permanent, with industrialization causing a huge demand for low-skilled factory labor.

Yet industrialization also caused a growing demand for workers with advanced technical skills. Industrialization brought increased capitalization (the evidence for which was hidden during the Depression), which required more sophisticated financial and knowledge workers. What the nation really demanded was a new generation with a high level of academic skills and creativity, not merely factory drones educated to conform and follow orders.

Furthermore, their insistence on specific pedagogical techniques blinded them to empirical evidence that these techniques do not work. The techniques themselves may have no element of politics in them, but they are foisted on students because ideologues favor them and have educated non-political educators to favor them. Historian Richard Hofstadter concluded that the "misuse of experimental evidence" by opponents of mental training "constitutes a major scandal in the history of educational thought,'" wrote Ravitch.[53]

In fact, as Hirsch pointed out, the best empirical evidence suggests that the traditional techniques assailed by Progressive educators

are in fact superior to natural or process-oriented learning. For one, the nations that today perform best on international tests rely heavily on traditional education. [54]

THE MID-CENTURY CONSENSUS

A mid-century consensus emerged. For the most part, the traditional academic education of the 1800s was gone—but so were radical politics. The campaign by the early Progressives such as Dewey, Kilpatrick, Rugg, and Counts to transform America into a collective society had failed. But their campaign to transform American education was a smashing success. While parents, lay school boards, and front-line educators had been able to stop the most extreme measures, the traditional academic education that focused on transferring knowledge, skills, and the best of Western culture to new generations had been gutted. And the new generations of teachers would be trained according to the vision of the Progressives in education schools that looked down on the traditional methods.

What remained was an entirely new pedagogy: new ways of teaching reading and arithmetic, less focus on knowledge and more on social skills, and less regard for Western culture. Increased enrollment brought a drop in intellectual rigor—while more students were going to college, the colleges were adopting new disciplines and new standards themselves. Indoctrination was widespread, although it was patriotic rather than socialist, with most school days starting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dick and Jane had chased McGuffey from the classroom. Shop and home economics were now mainstays of a public secondary education. Pilgrims and American Indians were now front and center, while the ancient Greeks and Romans were nowhere to be found (although Bible instruction was still commonplace in public schools until the early 1960s).

It wouldn't be long before the education schools would be flooded with those who looked down on America itself. Today's radical educators serve their lesser-privileged students no better than did their Progressive-era predecessors. Not only do they no longer provide the structure and discipline needed by such students, they feed them nonsense instead of serious knowledge.

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THE ROOTS OF TODAY'S RADICAL EDUCATION

The Progressive reformers indeed transformed education in the United States. While they had an underlying political agenda, they were also making a sincere, if misguided, attempt to improve the way children are taught.

Soon after, however, a new wave of reformers arose who did not share their concern for American education except as a means to their political ends. Their ideas did not grow out of American traditions or American pragmatic philosophy, as did those of the Progressives, but out of European Marxism.

CULTURAL MARXISM

In the aftermath of World War I, many Marxists were in a quandary. Standard Marxist theory had predicted that working-class soldiers, in the event of a major European war, would reject nationalism and turn their guns on their bourgeois officers. This failed to happen in the First World War, and many communists were at a loss as to why.

> " Lukacs took advantage of his position to conduct what he termed "cultural terrorism" upon Hungary's education system. A major part of this campaign, intended to undermine Hungary's traditional culture, was introducing sex education into the schools. "

Some of the postwar generation of communists theorized that Western culture was too strong for a spontaneous revolution to break out; interlocking associations of churches, schools, and local organizations held people back from radical transformation of society. So the ground had to be prepared for revolution by undermining the culture through a "long march through the institutions."[1]

The credit for conceiving this political philosophy, now known as cultural Marxism, is often given to two people, Antonio Gramsci and Georg Lukacs (although Vladimir Lenin was also an important influence). The Italian-Albanian Gramsci is best known for his definition of a now-popular word, hegemony. This is the cultural process by which political entities control people without overt coercion but by manipulating language and institutions to create allegiance and conformity. The Italian Fascist Party considered Gramsci so dangerous that he was kept in prison from 1926 until his death ten years later. The prosecutor in his case state "we must stop this brain from functioning."[2]

But while Gramsci's intellectual work is of paramount importance, it is from the Hungarian-Jewish Lukacs that most of today's leftist educators draw their intellectual lineage. After World War I, Lukacs was an assistant deputy commissar for culture in Hungary's short-lived communist government headed by Bela Kun. Lukacs took advantage of his position to conduct what he termed "cultural terrorism" upon Hungary's education system.[3] A major part of this campaign, intended to undermine Hungary's traditional culture, was introducing sex education into the schools.

When the Kun government fell in 1919, Lukacs went underground but reappeared in 1923 at a "Marxist Study Week" in Germany. There he met Felix Weill, heir to a grain importing fortune, who had turned to Marxism and,

inspired by Lukacs, funded a think tank based at the University of Frankfurt.[4] It was initially called the "Institute for Marxism" and focused on "conventional Marxist issues such as the labor movement."[5] The name, however, was changed to the more benign-sounding Institute for Social Research, ostensibly to conceal the institute's "real nature and objectives."[6] Eventually, it became known simply as "The Frankfurt School."

The original generation of Frankfurt School scholars was largely Jewish. When the Nazi Party rose to power in Germany, the group disbanded, and most of its members fled to the United States. Their initial home was the same Columbia University that had served as the launching pad for Progressive educators' attempts to transform the country.

The Frankfurt School's main thrust began in 1930 when Lukacs's acolyte Max Horkheimer assumed its leadership. While still agreeing with many of the ideas of Marx, Horkheimer made dramatic shifts from classic Marxism. One of his main themes was the shared suffering of humanity and the natural desire to avoid suffering.[7] He believed that capitalism creates irrational social conditions that lead to suffering. A just society, in Horkheimer's view, could only be created through conscious efforts to direct the economy systematically.[8]

Capitalism's seeming irrationality—think of the "Invisible Hand" concept—led him to dismiss the historical inevitability of revolution forwarded by Marx; capitalism was too confusing to justify such predictions. Instead, in the early years of the Frankfurt School, he and others thought that theorists must lead the proletariat to revolution rather than expect workers to achieve it on their own.[9]

Historian William Lind cites "three major advances" made by Horkheimer that highlighted his break with traditional Marxism.[10]

• First, he elevated culture to an importance equivalent to that of the economy. In contrast, for Marx everything flowed from the economic structure.

• Second, he dismissed Marx's strict emphasis on economic class struggle, in which the working class would inevitably lead a revolution over capitalism.

• Third, the psychology of Sigmund Freud was raised to equal status with the philosophy of Marx. Many of the leading members of the early Frankfurt School were psychologists, rather than philosophers, including Erich Fromm and Wilhelm Reich. They advanced a sense that workers were not just economically repressed in Western capitalist society, but "everyone lived in a constant state of psychological repression." Indeed, psychology has proved to be a powerful weapon in the war on Western culture.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

The Frankfurt School's central philosophy is called "critical theory." "Horkheimer presented the aim of Critical Theory as nothing less than 'building a new world,'" wrote Ilan Gur-Ze'ev, an expert in critical theory who taught at the University of Haifa.[11]

Like progressivism, critical theory is a movement seeking infinitely incremental improvement, rather than one centered on achieving a specific vision of a good society. It purports to promote justice by destabilizing injustice—perhaps without considering that humans do not thrive in a destabilized environment.

Like much of the Frankfurt School's work, critical theory is not easily accessible to laymen. At the theoretical level, it pulls ideas from

a wide array of sources, requires extensive knowledge of philosophy, and does not offer the ready-made solutions of prior collectivist movements, such as Marx's predictions of a collapse of the capitalist system followed by a revolution of the proletariat leading to a worker's paradise.

> " . . . theorists should look to human potential rather than current reality—to a utopian morality in a world in which social justice rules. "

And yet, critical theory is also designed to have widespread popular appeal at lesser levels of understanding. At times, it can appear to be little more than incessantly criticizing society in order to undermine the traditional culture. It is also not merely theorizing but a plan for activism. One major element of Marx's thought retained by Horkheimer was the belief that it is not enough for philosophers to describe the world—the point is to change it. Action—or praxis—is coequal to thought.

Additionally, critical theory also adopted Nietzsche's concept of "transvaluation of values," in which the Christianity-based Western moral system "inverts" mankind's natural morality; "all the old sins" of more nature-based moral systems (such as paganism) "become virtues and all the old virtues become sins."[12]

It is also important to emphasize the relativism that is central to critical theory. The Frankfurt School's methodology under Horkheimer used the dialectic critique of Marx as the main tool for advancing thought. That is, reasoned argument begins with a thesis, which is challenged by an antithesis; the results of this conflict determine a synthesis, and the process repeats. The process is perpetual, requiring

"constant reflection." And because the new synthesis—the new "truth"—unfolds over time, truth is not universal but changing.[13]

Perhaps the defining work of critical theory is Horkheimer's "Traditional and Critical Theory," a lengthy essay in which the author tried to differentiate critical theory from other paradigms. According to Horkheimer, traditional theories—the natural and social sciences—are "grounded in self-evident truths."[14] Critical theory rejects their allegiance to the pursuit of objective truth. Instead, it starts with the idea that theorists should look to human potential rather than current reality—to a utopian morality in a world in which social justice rules. In this view, knowledge is not based on the objective "fact," but on service to mankind. As such, it is as dependent on the subjective observer as it is on the empirical facts, and therefore changes according to historical time and cultural changes.

This is not to say that critical theory was entirely idealist. Horkheimer acknowledged an objective reality existing outside human thought, but felt that this reality must be perceived through a lens of human and historical change. Whereas truth may be grasped empirically, it is only advanced when it is used in the dialectical fight against reactionary views.[15] Horkheimer believed that "the production of knowledge is not detached from social and power relations."[16]

Hence, critical theory is as dogmatic as any revelation-based religion. Despite the claim that it is the "fulfillment of the Enlightenment," it turns the Enlightenment on its head. The Enlightenment began as a search for truth through proper method, while critical theory begins with a radical conception of morality and demands that knowledge and method serve those ends.

It also permits critical theorists to choose which knowledge suits their purposes and disregard everything that does not help their rise to power as "oppressive" and "hegemonic." This is essentially nonsense, albeit of a dangerous sort. Especially false was the claim to represent "the real interests of the proletariat." Eventually in the 1950s, the obvious conflict between the Frankfurt School's perception of the needs of the prosperous working class of capitalist nations and the workers' actual needs came to a head. American workers' willing participation in their nation's political and economic system forced the critical theorists to seek a new proletariat, and they created one by merging together an array of groups who, unlike the working class, were outside of society's mainstream.

Horkheimer moved further from Marx with time. While much of the Marxist project was jettisoned, its dialectical historicism—the process of moving to new epochs with new truths—remained an essential part of critical theory. "The historical struggle itself is conceived as an educational process of humanity to which Critical Theory makes an irreplaceable contribution," he wrote.[17] Revolutionary Marxism was abandoned for "a commitment to education" as the driving force for social justice.[18]

ADORNO'S THEORY OF HALF-EDUCATION
Horkheimer's frequent Frankfurt School collaborator was Theodor Adorno. A central theme in Adorno's thought is the belief that the goal of education needs to be making sure that a tragedy similar to the Holocaust never again happens. To that end, education should be geared toward making people resistant to the mindset that permitted totalitarianism to thrive. In his best-known work, *The Authoritarian Personality*, Adorno described this mindset as having these characteristics: "authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, anti-

intraception [dislike of subjectivity and imagination], superstition, and stereotyping, power and toughness, destructiveness and cynicism, projectivity, and exaggerated concerns over sex."[19]

> **"**
> The cruel irony is that, in its attempt to craft a new autonomous individual, the Frankfurt School created education theories that produce the exact opposite mindset in people.
> **"**

In his 1959 article, "A Theory of Half-Education," Adorno's blamed "a disconnection in the educating process" that can occur when "the dominant groups in society define the aims of education, while ... neglecting the true interests of the subjects of education."[20]

Education, according to Adorno, is a "persisting area of conflict between an individual's autonomy and their adaptation to the demands of society. Education therefore entails an ongoing dialectic process between individual emancipation and the demands for submission to culture and society."[21] Education is not, in his view, something intended to provide useful skills for material aims. "Rather, it is designated to the long term interest of the subject and its personal development."[22]

Such a focus on the psychological needs of the individual is a far cry from those of the 1930s Progressives, who were largely concerned with how students would fit into society in a practical sense. And it hardly serves to make individuals autonomous. True autonomy comes from having the skills to make one's own way in life, regardless of the obstacles. But practical skills, including reading and writing, were of little concern to the Frankfurt School. It was all about

inculcating a specific set of beliefs and critical mindset from a specific perspective.
The cruel irony is that, in its attempt to craft a new autonomous individual, the Frankfurt School created education theories that produce the exact opposite mindset in people. One can see in today's radical educators the very characteristics likely to bring about the most vicious sort of totalitarian society, of the sort Adorno thought he could prevent.

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CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

The ideas of Gramsci, Lukacs, the Frankfurt School theorists, and other radical leftists found a ready audience in U.S. education schools. "A radical theory of education has emerged in the last twenty years," wrote Peter McLaren, a UCLA education professor and leading theorist of critical pedagogy in 2007.[1]

He was speaking of "critical pedagogy"—an offshoot of the neo-Marxist critical theory philosophy discussed in the previous section. Critical pedagogy incorporates radical ideas about education originating from other roots as well, such as multiculturalism, deconstruction, and postmodernism.

AN EDUCATIONAL UTOPIAN VISION

According to University of Toronto sociologist and critical educator Roger I. Simon, "education always presupposes a vision of the future. In this respect a curriculum and its supporting pedagogy are a version of our own dreams for ourselves, our children, and our communities."[2]

So what is the vision of the advocates of critical pedagogy like Simon? It is, simply, a radical, collectivist, participatory democracy. It supports a particular idea of education that teaches people to be "free" to choose a specific egalitarian economic and political system. While paying lip service to the development of the individual, critical pedagogy subordinates personal characteristics of ability, creativity, and drive to membership in interest groups. The treatment of these groups is based on the degree to which members are perceived to have been oppressed (or, conversely, to have been oppressors).

In this vision, the voices of society's most desperate and least successful are raised above those of their more accomplished peers—as long as they express the ideas of the intellectual elite who created and promoted this inverted democracy. As do all visions, this one includes an underlying epistemology, or method of discovering and determining truth and knowledge. Naturally, the epistemology of critical pedagogy comes from critical theory, discussed earlier. McLaren describes it as "relational," in which truth depends upon "history, cultural context, and relations of power." In other words, truth can vary according to time, place, and the specific situation—or even depend on the need to acquire and maintain power.[3]

Furthermore, objective truth is not merely rejected, but wholeheartedly attacked: "Ethically, critical pedagogy requires an ongoing indictment of 'those forms of truth-seeking which imagined themselves to be eternally and placelessly valid,'" wrote education professor and cultural critic Henry Giroux, who may rank second to Paulo Freire among critical pedagogy theorists.[4]

Truth is replaced by power for Giroux, who writes that:

> the concept of knowledge as a social construct will have to be linked to the notion of power. On one level this means that classroom knowledge can be used in the interest of either emancipation or domination. It can be critically used and analyzed in order to break through mystifications and modes of false reasoning. Or it can be used unreflectively to legitimize specific sociopolitical interests by appearing to be value-free.[5]

The main thrust of critical pedagogy is not to make knowledge misrepresented by these

power relations more accurate, but to see how it affects the political goals. An example provided by McLaren is how knowledge "actually reflects the daily struggle of people's lives with a capitalist society riven by class antagonism."[6]

Another example is: "Do the texts we use in class promote stereotypical views that reinforce racist, sexist, and patriarchal attitudes?"[7]

As McLaren wrote, "Critical educators argue that knowledge should be analyzed on the basis of whether it is oppressive or exploitative, and not on the basis of whether it is 'true.'"[8] Above all, critical pedagogy is a political agenda; critical educational theorists "view curriculum as a form of cultural politics."[9] Critical pedagogy downplays what we ordinarily think of as the purpose of education in order to focus on the political.

PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED

Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, published in Brazil in 1968, is the seminal work of critical pedagogy, a field in which Freire occupies a hallowed position. "Since the 1980s there has been no intellectual on the North American educational scene who has matched either his theoretical rigor or his moral courage," gushes Giroux.[10]

"*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is not so much" a blueprint for how to create an educational system as a compass that points out the political direction educators should follow. Giroux described it as:

> offering a way of thinking beyond the seeming naturalness or inevitability of the current state of things, challenging assumptions validated by common 'sense,' soaring beyond the immediate confines of one's experiences, entering into a critical dialogue with history, and imagining a

future that would not merely reproduce the present.[11]

The main pedagogical thrust of Pedagogy of the Oppressed is a critique of the ordinary but serviceable lecture-and-response classroom technique in use all over the world, known as the "banking" teaching model. Freire called it a "paternalistic" education, in which an authoritarian teacher "deposits" accepted knowledge into passive "receptacles" (students) via lectures and other one-way teaching techniques.[12]

> "Critical educators argue that knowledge should be analyzed on the basis of whether it is oppressive or exploitative, and not on the basis of whether it is 'true.'"

Freire proposed instead a "pedagogy of the oppressed" as a counter to the hegemony of the dominant elite expressed through the banking model. His method is intended to prepare the people for their own liberation (and, he adds, the liberation of the oppressors from their own misguided thinking). To accomplish this, the teacher must become an equal partner with the students—not a "subject" delivering her choice of knowledge to captive "objects"—but one subject among equals engaged in dialogue with one another and learning from each other.

"The teacher's thinking is authenticated only by the authenticity of the students' thinking. The teacher cannot think for her students, nor can she impose her thought on them," Freire wrote.[13] Giroux expands on that:

> Under such circumstances, knowledge is not simply received by students, but actively transformed, open to be challenged, and related to the self

as an essential step towards agency, self-representation, and learning how to govern rather than simply be governed.[14]

Of course, student-centered methods of teaching have been circulating around in one form or another at least since Rousseau's *Emile*. In actual educational practice, Freire's theories resemble the student-centered methods of Dewey and other early Progressive reformers—except for inclusion of political practices such as the Marxist dialectic (which investigates "contradictions" in existing knowledge).

The Frankfurt School's cultural Marxism was a powerful influence on Freire. He was less concerned with students developing skills than he was with raising their revolutionary "consciousness," even though he cut his pedagogical teeth in skill-based adult literacy programs for farm workers in northeastern Brazil. In critical pedagogy, many of the ordinary tasks of education, such as helping students adapt to the existing society in order to find their place and prosper, are regarded as hegemonic functions used to maintain an oppressive social order.[15] As Peter McLaren explains:

> Critical theory is founded on the conviction that schooling for self and social empowerment is ethically prior to a mastery of technical skills, which are primarily tied to the logic of the marketplace.[16]

(Remember that in the critical lexicon the term "market" is a fundamental source of injustice.)

Despite his considerable rhetoric about raising the consciousness of individuals, Freire's intent was not to help students rise above their personal shortcomings, as is the goal in most education systems. Society is to blame for the

failure of individuals, unless they are part of the bourgeoisie. Giroux wrote that:

> Paulo never reduced an understanding of homelessness, poverty, and unemployment to the failing of individual character, laziness, indifference, or a lack of personal responsibility, but instead viewed such issues as complex systemic problems generated by economic and political structures that produced massive amounts of inequality, suffering, and despair—and social problems far beyond the reach of limited individual capacities to cause or redress.[17]

One alarming aspect of Freire's work is the way he so aggressively divided the world into "oppressors" and "oppressed" when discussing elementary education. He drew a bold, distinct line between sinners and the sinned against, between the damned and the saved, as vehemently as any fire-and-brimstone preacher ever has. After all, a revolution must have an enemy to overthrow, even if the enemy is ordinary, well-meaning, middle-class people working to improve the world in small ways.

> "
> Future educators could now be introduced and subverted to cultural Marxism in the guise of educational theory by reading a single short book, instead of needing to wade through heavy philosophical tomes.
> "

Neither Freire nor his successors held back from pointing fingers at those oppressors. McLaren wrote:

> The purpose of dialectical educational theory, then, is to provide students with a model that permits them to

examine the underlying political, social, and economic foundations of the larger white supremacist capitalist society.[18]

A revolution must have champions, too. In Freire's world, leaders must be "of the people," not above them. A leader must live with the oppressed in "solidarity"; to do otherwise is to support the oppressive existing order.[19] There are no half-measures; even genuine attempts to alleviate human suffering or advance prosperity cannot save establishment reformers from Freire's condemnation if they fail to submit to the demands of the most disadvantaged.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed has had a tremendous influence since the 1960s: it made critical theory an educational force. Future educators could now be introduced and subverted to cultural Marxism in the guise of educational theory by reading a single short book, instead of needing to wade through heavy philosophical tomes translated from German. This was a crucial development for a discipline that attracts many people who are inclined to be nurturing rather than scholarly, as is the case with many who enter the education profession.

That such a book as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—which makes extremely radical claims backed up by substandard argumentation with little in the way of factual evidence—could become one of the most-read works in education schools says volumes about the education schools that assign it.

CRITICAL THINKING VERSUS CRITICAL THEORY
Critical pedagogy—and critical theory in general—has benefited from a great confusion surrounding the term "critical thinking." It means different things to different people, often to the detriment of the general public. According to Wesleyan University president Michael Roth, the mainstream concept of "critical thinking," although used by John

Dewey as early as 1933, was formalized in 1962 by Robert H. Ennis. Ennis gave it a broad definition: "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do."[20] Under such ordinary definitions, it is expected that students will develop their reasoning skills by close readings of philosophical texts, the study of history to see how ideas affect events, drawing conclusions from empirical data, and so on.

But critical theorists regard the phrase as their own. Peter McLaren complains that "neoconservatives and liberals have neutralized the term critical by repeated and imprecise usage, removing its political and cultural dimensions, and laundering its analytical potency to mean 'thinking skills.'"[21]

It is likely that the confusion has mostly worked to the radicals' advantage, since the public is all for improving students' analytical prowess—but would pale at supporting the radical politics at the heart of the critical pedagogy agenda. And yet, when educators today speak of "critical thinking," they more often than not mean the latter.

Wesleyan's Roth identified a problem caused by this conflation of critical thinking and the cultural Marxist focus on perpetual critique. In practice, critical thinking has become synonymous with "to criticize" throughout academia. This means we have become "less interested in showing how we make a norm legitimate than in sharpening our tools for delegitimization."[22] Although Roth does not say it, in the process he describes how critical thinking becomes critical pedagogy: its goal is not true education—to deepen understanding for what constitutes the good life and the good society. Rather, it is intended to delegitimize the status quo through perpetual criticism. One need not even be aware that he or she is applying the Marxist critique of the Frankfurt School. For if students are

only taught to critique society rather than to analyze the costs and benefits of altering or maintaining our norms and traditions, then they are participating in an intellectual dialogue of precisely the kind transformative revolutionaries wish to occur.

HEGEMONY OF THE OPPRESSORS

A major concern of critical pedagogy theorists is that education can be used to perpetuate the existing culture rather than to question it, expose it, and transform it. It seems self-evident that societies would try to perpetuate their cultures through education; but to critical theorists this seems to be both alarming and a miscarriage of justice. While not all critical theorists share exactly the same beliefs or influences, they all attack traditional education's goal of passing on and strengthening the existing culture, which is antagonistically decried as "hegemony."

> "
> Critical pedagogy theorists are clear on how they perceive the current dominant culture: modern America is a bleak, dark place with little hope; it is inherently unfair economically, as well as racist, sexist, homophobic, and so on.
> "

This focus on hegemony is central to cultural Marxism, going back to Lukacs and Gramsci. It almost goes without saying that education is an essential part of hegemony. McLaren writes, "In a classroom setting, dominant education discourses determine what books we may use, what classroom approaches we should employ (mastery learning, Socratic method, etc.), and what values and beliefs we should transmit to our students."[23] This hegemony is often called "the hidden curriculum." This "hidden curriculum refers to the unintended

consequences of the schooling process," McLaren wrote. "Often, the hidden curriculum displaces the professed educational ideals and goals of the classroom teacher or school."[24]

McLaren provides a common example: "We know, for example, that teachers unconsciously give more intellectual attention, praise, and academic help to boys than to girls."[25] Without saying how that is known, he draws a specious conclusion: "the hidden message is 'Boys should be academically aggressive while girls should remain composed and passive' . . . . Not surprisingly, the boys are being taught independence and the girls dependency."[26]

The statistics tell a very different story, however. Girls have been surging past boys in academic achievement in recent decades; for instance, they now make up roughly 57 percent of the nation's college students. But such evidence is dismissed out of hand. Critical pedagogy theorists are clear on how they perceive the current dominant culture: modern America is a bleak, dark place with little hope; it is inherently unfair economically, as well as racist, sexist, homophobic, and so on.

And that goes for the mid-century educational consensus and more recent attempts to improve education, such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) campaign implemented during the George W. Bush administration. NCLB, as its name suggests, fostered attention upon the slowest achievers and the worst performing schools, a policy one would expect critical theorists to support. But, instead, many educators found its emphasis on skills to be reactionary. Henry Giroux attacked such educational practices, stating that "a new and more vicious mode of ideology and teaching, which I call neoliberal pedagogy, has emerged and now dominates education at all levels of schooling."[27]

This neoliberal pedagogy "thrives on a culture of cynicism, insecurity, and despair."[28] Under its sway, he says, "far too many schools have increasingly become institutional breeding grounds for commercialism, racism, social intolerance, sexism, and homophobia."[29] He adds:

> As a pedagogical practice, neoliberal pedagogy also pervades every aspect of the wider culture, stifling creative thought, reducing citizenship to the act of consuming, defining certain marginal populations as contaminated and disposable, and removing the discourse of democracy from any vestige of pedagogy both inside and outside of schooling . . . . The political sphere, like most educational sites, is increasingly driven by a culture of cruelty and a survival-of-the-fittest culture.[30]

Other models of education are derided as "anti-democratic" and "anti-intellectual" throughout academia. Critics suggest that education has become "corporate" or "commodified," which means that it is subordinated to serving the corporate world. The ability to fit into society and prosper—which is the intention of skill-building—is scoffed at as "adaptation," which Freire suggested is intended to "obviate" thinking.[31]

This view ignores the tremendous rise in the standard of living and social mobility that the free market has produced, not only in the United States, but world-wide. Yet cultural Marxists paint our modern American capitalist republic as irredeemable, even though, ironically, it has been heavily influenced by Progressivism and, for the last couple of decades, by cultural Marxism.

At the same time critical pedagogy's proponents attack the hegemony of the American status quo, they are conducting a campaign of counter-hegemony. McLaren explains that

"critical educators argue that any worthwhile theory of schooling must be partisan"[32] and that "critical educators, too, would like to secure hegemony for their own ideas."[33] He adds that education should be:

> a process of examining how we have been constructed out of the prevailing ideas, values, and worldviews of the dominant culture. The point is to remember that if we have been made, we can be "unmade" and "made over."[34]

COUNTER-HEGEMONY: RESISTANCE THEORY

One tactic for countering the prevailing hegemony is known as "resistance theory," also called "cultural oppositional theory." Praised by McLaren and others, it exacerbates some of the worst problems present in low-income schools. Alexander and Estella Chizhik, professors at the San Diego State University School of Teacher Education, describe it as involving "actions that passively or actively oppose the dominant culture. These actions serve to preserve students' or teachers' (as the case may be) sense of autonomy and identity."[35] McLaren suggests that such "resistance to school instruction" is needed to "fight against the erasure" of students' "street-corner identities" and to keep students from being turned into "worker commodities."[36]

This is at heart nothing more than a brazen call for inner city youth to reject education that prepares them for entry into the workforce, and an approval of street-corner thuggishness that is good neither for the youth nor for society. It justifies dysfunctional schools in low-income urban areas, encouraging undisciplined, disengaged students to routinely disrupt classrooms.

It is hard to fathom that educators would encourage "street corner" youths, the ones who are hardest to reach and also the ones most in need of basic skills to advance out of poverty, to actively reject formal education. Such a

perspective can only be rational if the intent is not to improve the lives of disadvantaged students, but to create an ignorant, intimidating, dependent, and radicalized element that can be called upon for political intimidation. It recalls the melding of urban gang culture and radical politics that produced the violent 1960s-era Black Panthers—and the 1920s blending of disgruntled ex-soldiers with National Socialism that produced German Brownshirts and Italian Blackshirts.

> **"Mainstream educational theory . . . conceives of schools as mainly providing students with the skills and attitudes for becoming patriotic, industrious, and responsible citizens . . . this is precisely the problem,"** writes McLaren.

IN THE CLASSROOM

As said before, critical pedagogy is not a practical program that spells out ways to achieve specific educational goals; it is a direction rather than a destination. It may be better understood by seeing what it is not and comparing it to more established educational practices.

Objectives that most people would identify as valuable education for children—the mastery of basic academic skills, the accumulation of fundamental bodies of knowledge, and adaptation to the existing culture—are either downplayed as merely "technical" or rejected outright as establishment capitalist hegemony. "Mainstream educational theory . . . conceives of schools as mainly providing students with the skills and attitudes for becoming patriotic, industrious, and responsible citizens. . . . this is precisely the problem," writes McLaren.[37]

Another pedagogical strategy favored by both the Progressives and critical pedagogy proponents is the need to ground learning in the students' own experiences. McLaren wrote that:

> Knowledge is relevant only when it begins with the experiences students bring with them from the surrounding culture; it is critical only when these experiences are shown to sometimes be problematic (i.e. racist, sexist); and it is transformative only when students begin to use the knowledge to help empower others . . . [38]

As stated earlier in the section on Progressive education, this concentration on students' narrow lives can stunt their development and limit their horizons. And McLaren raises another important facet of critical pedagogy: activism to transform society. Critical educators argue that praxis (informed actions) must be guided by phonesis (the disposition to act truly and rightly). One can see the effects by the mounting irrational protest culture among the young.[39]

As can be expected in a system of thought that places the underclass above the educated middle class, there is some confusion about the teacher's authority in the classroom. The critique against the banking model in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was nearly one long harangue against the teacher assuming authority. But Freire may have been overly idealistic in his belief that student and teacher can function as equals. His successors take a different tack:

> according to Giroux, educators need not "renounce their authority. On the contrary, it is by recognizing that teaching is always an act of intervention inextricably mediated through particular forms of authority that a teacher can offer students . . . a variety of analytic tools."[40]

According to Giroux, academics must deliberate, make decisions, take positions, and in doing so recognize that authority "is the very condition for intellectual work" and pedagogical interventions.[41] He cites Ohio University English professor Robert Miklitsch, who:

> suggests that teacher authority cannot merely be renounced as an act of domination, but should be addressed dialectically and deployed strategically so as to enable students to become witnesses to the material and cultural relations of power that often prevent them and others from speaking and acting in particular ways.[42]

Textbooks are another facet of education that critical pedagogy theorists have emphasized. They are quick to attack traditional textbooks as tools of the establishment. Henry Giroux writes of one study undertaken by critical pedagogy advocate Jean Anyon:

> Jean Anyon found, in her analysis of the content of elementary social studies textbooks, that the knowledge which counts as social studies knowledge will tend to be that knowledge which provides formal justification for, and legitimation of, prevailing institutional arrangements and forms of conduct and beliefs."[43]

Critical pedagogy proponents on occasion oppose Progressive education policies, which are viewed as hegemonic. This is especially true of testing, ability grouping, and competitive grading. McLaren suggests they are forms of social control that support, stabilize, and legitimate the role of the teacher as a moral gatekeeper of the state.[44] Tracking, especially, draws his ire. It "purports to meet the needs of groups of students with varying academic ability," but he suggests that claim is merely a device used to "cloak its socially reproductive function: that of sorting students according to their social class function."[45]

Critical pedagogy proponents are also opposed to teaching using the great texts, as was the standard practice in the days of the *McGuffey's Reader*. McLaren attacks the "current call for a national curriculum based on acquiring information about the 'great books' so as to have greater access to the dominant culture . . . . Literacy becomes a weapon" against those groups "whose social class, race, or gender renders their own experiences and stories too unimportant to be worthy of investigation . . . . Teaching the great books is also a way of inculcating certain values and sets of behaviors . . . . thereby solidifying the existing social hierarchy."[46]

In general, the teaching of factual content is secondary (at best) in critical pedagogy. But it is not entirely rejected—not if it inculcates critical or revolutionary values. Gramsci, for one, favored a highly disciplined approach to education that provided students with both skills and cultural knowledge, similarly to the "conservative" E.D. Hirsch. But Gramsci's goals were not knowledge, but something else entirely. Giroux wrote:

> For Gramsci, skills, discipline, and rigor were not in and of themselves valuable; they were meaningful when seen as part of a broader project and performative politics, one that embraced authority in the service of social change. . . . [47]

As Giroux explained, Gramsci's project was to use education to advance radical socialism. If Gramsci favored a disciplined environment, it was to produce a disciplined revolutionary cadre, not well-behaved children steeped in traditional culture.[48]

Which neatly sums up the agenda of critical pedagogy.

NOTES

1. Peter McLaren, *Life in Schools* (Boston MA: Pearson Education, Inc., 1998), p. 185.

2. Henry A. Giroux, *On Critical Pedagogy* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011, p. 71.

3. McLaren, p. 210.

4. Giroux, p. 75.

5. Giroux, p. 37-38.

6. McLaren, p. 211.

7. McLaren, p. 211.

8. McLaren, p. 211.

9. McLaren, p. 214.

10. Giroux, p. 152.

11. Giroux, p. 155.

12. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 1970), pp. 72-3.

13. Freire, p. 77.

14. Giroux, p. 156.

15. Freire, p. 76.

16. McLaren, p. 188.

17. Giroux, p. 161.

18. McLaren, p. 195.

19. Freire, p. 49.

20. Michael S. Roth, "Beyond Critical Thinking," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 3, 2010.

21. McLaren, p. 187.

22. Roth.

23. McLaren, p. 209.

24. McLaren, p.212.

25. McLaren, p. 212.

26. McLaren, p. 212.

27. Giroux, p. 8.

28. Giroux, p. 133.

29. Giroux, p. 83.

30. Giroux, p. 8.

31. Freire, p. 76.

32. McLaren, p. 194.

33. McLaren, p. 204.

34. McLaren, p. 217.

35. Estella Chizhik and Alexander Chizhik, "Research of Human Resistance in Schools," Gale Group, http://iguana-project.pt/wptest/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Gale-Group-Research-of-human-resistance-in-schools.pdf.

36. McLaren, p. 216.

37. McLaren, p. 194.

38. McLaren, p. 218.

39. McLaren, p. 210.

40. Giroux, p. 80.

41. Giroux, p. 80.

42. Giroux, p. 80.

43. Giroux, p. 36.

44. McLaren, p. 206.

45. McLaren, p. 208.

46. McLaren, p. 206.

47. Giroux, p. 63.

48. Giroux, pp. 56-7.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

While the major foundation of today's politicized pedagogy stems from critical theory, there are many other influences. The main ones are multiculturalism, environmentalism, and French postmodernism.

Multiculturalism may be the most important component of today's radicalization of teacher education. It is a term with many possible definitions; one general definition (but not one used by multicultural educators themselves) is that society consists of groups—ethnic, religious, economic, and sexual—between which the government serves as mediator.

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> Instead, multiculturalism is promoted as the fundamental organizing principle for all society. The real goal is . . . transforming the very foundations of how people think and interact with the world.
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The idea of multiculturalism also suggests that all cultures are equal in theory (although in practice U.S. and European cultures are treated as fundamentally inferior). And much of the time, it proposes that people—and the knowledge they possess—should be treated differently according to their backgrounds or identities. For instance, some groups should be given advantages to make up for past injustices. Or, native myths should be accepted as truths for members of the community that believe them, even though these myths are easily disproven by scientific methods.

It is hard to imagine a more disruptive idea in regard to our national foundations. Our traditional view of society, going back to even before the colonies were founded, all the way back to English common law in the 1500s, is based on the individual. It seems very unlikely that the two perspectives can be reconciled— and attempts to do so can only make society unworkable.

And yet, multiculturalism has made deep inroads into our public schools. Public elementary charter schools with "Afro-centric" curricula have popped up in urban centers across the country.[1] At a time when overt Christian beliefs and celebrations are being eliminated from public schools, students are learning the basics of Islam. At one upper-middle class district in New Jersey where the majority of students are either Christian or Jewish, students are taught to recite the Five Pillars of Islam and fill in the blanks in the following sentence: "There is no god but BLANK and BLANK is his messenger."[2] (Correct answers: Allah and Muhammed). In many public schools, students are taught almost entirely in the language of their parents, and wind up speaking only faltering English.[3]

Such outrageous examples abound. But multicultural education is often implemented in moderate or benign fashion rather than at its most extreme. And that is not always bad; when it promotes greater inclusion of minorities within a traditional framework, multicultural education has some potential to have a positive influence on education. But that is no longer how it is intended—or taught—by its leading advocates in the major education schools. Instead, multiculturalism is promoted as the fundamental organizing principle for all society. The real goal is to effect sweeping changes, not just in the way students learn, but by transforming the very foundations of how people think and interact with the world.

Multicultural education should therefore be viewed as primarily political, rather than educational. It is frequently militant, with an angry edge directed toward the people and culture of the European-American majority. And it is infused with the spirit and language of critical theory and other radical ideologies. The version that has emerged as dominant in schools of education not only divides society into various groups, but sorts or ranks them according to whether they are oppressed or oppressors. The focus is on social spheres where there is potential for oppression: race, class, and gender (and newer vehicles for discrimination such as ability and age).

The most prominent writers about multiculturalism make it clear that they intend it to be a radical concept. Peter McLaren, a co-director of the Paulo Freire Democratic Project, reveals his antipathy toward moderation: "Multiculturalism without a transformative political agenda can just be another form of accommodation to the larger social order."[4]

Former California State University professor Christine Sleeter also paints multicultural education in stark political tones, describing it as a form of "resistance to oppression" and "resistance to dominant modes of schooling, and particularly to white supremacy."[5]

Perhaps unintentionally, Sleeter acknowledged that there may be a more insidious side to the multicultural agenda that she and her peers would not like the public to know. "Many activists who are working to make changes in education work with whatever points of entry they can gain in whatever fashion is acceptable to others with whom they work. In order to understand what any advocate really thinks or believes, one should interact personally with him or her."[6]

Such secretive commentary suggests that the multicultural agenda is about advocacy; thus the academic adoption of it has a subversive intent.

HISTORY OF MULTICULTURALISM

The roots of multicultural education are political. According to Carl Grant, a University of Wisconsin education professor and the primary editor of the six-volume *The History of Multicultural Education*, the immediate sources were the intergroup movement, ethnic studies, and the women's movement—as the names suggest, they are "movements," not pedagogies.

The movement is also largely homegrown. Although it adopts much of its theoretical basis from the cultural Marxists of the Frankfurt School—Herbert Marcuse in particular—its deepest roots are in the United States.

MULTICULTURALISM'S CONFLICT WITH AMERICAN FOUNDING IDEALS

Some proponents have made the claim that multiculturalism is a natural progression of the American tradition of pluralism. One is leading multicultural educator James Banks, who asserts that that "multicultural education is highly consistent with the ideals embodied in the U.S. Constitution, the Declaration, and the Bill of Rights."[7]

But Banks leaps too far when deriving modern multiculturalism from our founding documents. The Founding Fathers made it clear that this nation was to be "one nation" with a common culture. James Madison's Federalist Paper #10 promoted a pluralistic approach to settling disagreements between factions so that the rights of minorities would not be swept away by majority strength. But this approach was not directed toward ethnic groups; rather, it was intended as a means to resolve differences between political or regional factions. Madison

wrote elsewhere that an immigrant should "incorporate himself into our society."[8]

Madison's co-authors Alexander Hamilton and John Jay were even more insistent on maintaining a unified culture. Hamilton spoke at length on the topic while addressing Congress in 1790, stating that:

> The safety of a republic depends essentially on the energy of a common national sentiment; on a uniformity of principles and habits; on the exemption of the citizens from foreign bias and prejudice; and on that love of country which will almost invariably be found to be closely connected with birth, education and family.[9]

In Federalist Paper #2, Jay wrote:

> With equal pleasure I have as often taken notice, that Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country, to one united people; a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who, by their joint counsels, arms and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established their general Liberty and Independence.[10]

George Washington also expressed a strong preference for assimilation. Writing to John Adams in 1794, he said, "by an intermixture with our people, they, or their descendants, get assimilated to our customs, measures, laws: in a word soon become one people."[11]

> **" . . . a multiculturalism that promotes different treatment for people of different backgrounds would appear to be incompatible with a society founded on universal individual rights. "**

Clearly, ethnic pluralism was not foremost on our Founding Fathers' minds. In fact, they were more concerned with creating unity after the weak Articles of Confederation led to an impotent government and near collapse. Even their opponents, the Anti-Federalists who favored less centralized government, were concerned with individual rights rather than group rights.

For the first two centuries, our nation regarded itself as a "melting pot," open to newcomers but with the expectation that they would assimilate and become individual citizens with a shared set of beliefs rather than possess group rights that are at times adversarial. In contrast, a multiculturalism that promotes different treatment for people of different backgrounds would appear to be incompatible with a society founded on universal individual rights. Indeed, if successful, the shift to a foundation of group rights that change over time will rock American society to its core. Given the alliance of multiculturalism with cultural Marxism, it is hard to imagine that is unintentional.

ROOTS OF MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism's real start coincided with the ascendance of the Progressive movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. One major strain of early influence came from academia and specifically from the philosophical tradition of pragmatism, according to Louis Menand, a New York University professor and editor of *Pragmatism:*

A Reader. He suggests that William James's 1909 book, *A Pluralistic Universe*, may have been the seminal event in the development of "cultural pluralism," which was a forerunner of, and synonym for, multiculturalism.[12]

James's book did not deal with cultural pluralism directly. Rather, his thesis was that physical reality is better conceived as a "multi-verse" rather than as a universe. But it provided the impetus for two of his students at Harvard to expand the concept to ethnicity. One, Horace Kallen, wrote an essay in 1915 that is often cited as the founding document of cultural pluralism, "Democracy versus the Melting Pot." Another was the first African-American Rhodes Scholar, Alain Locke, who lectured on "Race Contacts and Interracial Relations" at Howard University.[13]

Even before James's book on pluralism, another strain of influence arose: attempts by African-American scholars to produce an authentic African-American history. Even then, their scholarship was mixed with advocacy. Foremost was W.E.B. DuBois, whose *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America* was published in 1896. Another pioneer in the field of ethnic studies was Carter Woodson, who founded the *Journal of Negro History* in 1915. Woodson had already adopted a belief that American education was hegemonic in its treatment of black students—and rejected educating them in the same manner as whites. In his seminal work, *The Mis-education of the Negro*, published in 1933, he stated that:

> If you teach the Negro that he has accomplished as much good as any other race he will aspire to equality and justice without regard to race. Such an effort would upset the program of the oppressor in Africa and America. Play up before the Negro, then, his crimes and shortcomings. Let him learn to

admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin and the Teuton. Lead the Negro to detest the man of African blood—to hate himself. The oppressor then may conquer, exploit, oppress and even annihilate the Negro by segregation without fear or trembling.[14]

This mixture of scholarship and propaganda was also true of the Jewish Kallen, who strongly supported the Zionist movement.[15]

Black nationalism provided a third early influence. A "Back to Africa" movement had existed among freed blacks as far back as the early 1800s, culminating with Liberia's repatriated population declaring itself an independent nation in 1847. As African-American identity grew in intensity in the early twentieth century, along with increased prosperity and educational levels, there was a resurgence of black nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Perhaps the best-known leader of these new movements was Marcus Garvey, whose United Negro Improvement League ended with a failed attempt to create a shipping line hauling goods and repatriating African Americans to Liberia.[16]

Another separatist organization formed in the pre-World War II era that would grow in influence was the Nation of Islam. Founded by Wallace Fard Muhammad in 1930, it has long been openly confrontational and antagonistic to the white majority. In an explosive interview with English television host Michael Parkinson in 1974, boxer Muhammad Ali, perhaps the Nation of Islam's most celebrated convert, said that the sect taught that: "the white man is the Devil. We do believe that. We know it!"[17]

But the drive toward pluralism and racial separatism stalled somewhat after World War II. The war and the ensuing decades were, for the most part, a period of integration of

the races. The civil rights movement sought inclusion in the general society for blacks as equals. Wholesale desegregation of the military began with President Truman's President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services in 1948. Minorities had migrated to high-paying jobs in war-related industries, bringing them into increased contact—and occasional conflict—with formerly all-white communities. *Brown v. the Board of Education* sounded the official end of segregation in education in 1954.

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> The central tenet of intergroup education was to foster tolerance between various demographic groups, with one of the basic methods being "positive interracial contact."
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The postwar strategy to improve education for African-Americans and reduce friction between minority and majority populations was called the "intergroup movement." According to James Banks, it was unlike the early ethnic studies and separatist movements, which were organized by African-Americans; intergroup activities were primarily the efforts of "white liberal educators and social scientists who functioned and worked within mainstream colleges, universities, and other institutions."[18] It continued, however, the pre-war emphasis on increased ethnic pride and political activism by minorities.

The central tenet of intergroup education was to foster tolerance between various demographic groups, with one of the basic methods being "positive interracial contact."[19] Intergroup was adopted as the leading perspective on race in the classroom by the educational establishment in the 1950s and early 1960s.

But intergroup's dominance was short-lived. While the mainstream civil rights movement pushed for desegregation in post-War America, more radical and nationalist undercurrents were emerging in black America. The Nation of Islam, although relatively small in actual numbers—with approximately 20,000 members at its peak in the early 1960s[20]—had an influence that far surpassed its membership. For instance, its national newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*, had "a circulation of 600,000 (largely through street corner sales by members) by 1966" and "was the most widely read black newspaper in the United States."[21]

Additionally, independence movements in former European colonies across the globe reinvigorated black nationalism in the United States. The spirit of radical anti-colonialism was captured intellectually by Frantz Fanon, a Marxist psychiatrist from Martinique. His 1961 book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, became an important part of the required canon for 1960s radicals.

MULTICULTURALISM DEVELOPS

Throughout the twentieth century, there was considerable interaction between the radical left and ethnic studies scholars. And it was again a Frankfurt School scholar who envisioned multiculturalism's real potential. In his 1964 essay "One Dimensional Man", Herbert Marcuse wrote how the working class had ceased to be a revolutionary force, seduced by high wages, material goods, and enfranchisement in the system as union members to favor capitalism. Instead, he wrote, the new vanguard would consist of:

> the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for

ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system.[22]

The first ethnic studies department was established in 1969 at San Francisco State College (now University). It came about when the Black Student Union and a coalition of Hispanic and Filipino students tried to close down the university unless their list of 15 demands was adopted.

Months of campus unrest started with frustration by black students because the number of black students was declining (due to higher standards set by the school as it became more prestigious). This unrest included an assault by black students on the editor of the campus newspaper and their subsequent arrests and suspensions, a call by Black Panther Party leader and San Francisco State instructor George Murray for blacks to have guns, and occupation of the campus YMCA and administrative building by black students.

That initial period was followed by a five-month student strike (which led to periodic closures of the campus). It, too, was violent, with bloody clashes between students and police. Eventually, the school's president, S. I. Hayakawa (later a U.S. senator), caved in and agreed to much of what the students wanted.

One of those demands was the creation of a black studies department. In a 2012 history of the student strike, Oba T'Shaka, an SFSU professor, explained that the purpose of the department was to "serve as a counter to white values and white attitudinal courses" then taught on campus.[23] Thus, the origin of the department (now the Africana Studies Department) was based on grievances and radical politics rather than a well-planned

program for expanding knowledge using objective scholarly standards.

It was only natural that other ethnic groups throughout the United States followed the African-American lead and demanded "studies" departments of their own. The most common include Hispanic studies, Asian studies, and Native American studies.

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> Marcuse also sought to end the capitalist work ethic along with sexual morality. Moral virtues "had been inculcated to solve the economic problem [of scarcity]" and were no longer necessary . . ."
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Among Marcuse's revolutionary outsiders and outcasts were feminists and those he deemed to be "sexual deviants." Marcuse was important for introducing new attitudes toward sexual behavior that continue to be influential in multiculturalism today. Building on German psychologist William Reich's theories of sexuality, he suggested that "reason" was not something that "subdues our instincts."[24] Such falsely based repression of desires created unnatural self-conflict; he proposed instead that reason was the product of our desires—our instincts should be released, not repressed.

Marcuse also sought to end the capitalist work ethic along with sexual morality. Moral virtues "had been inculcated to solve the economic problem [of scarcity]" and were no longer necessary in a world in which all economic needs could be met. Rather, "they intensified human aggression" and "posed a threat to society."[25]

In ushering in an age that elevated "polymorphous" sexual gratification above work and virtue, we would achieve an "aesthetic state," in which man and nature were reunited, according to Marcuse.[26]

This aesthetic state would necessarily be socialist. The New Left of the 1960s embraced Marcuse—and so did many others participating in the decade's cultural upheaval. As a result, Marxism and sexuality entered the world of American ethnic pluralism. Sexual constituencies soon joined racial minorities in their demands for their own academic departments. The feminist movement had been waxing and waning both in the United States and in Europe for over a century, but it kicked into high gear in the 1960s.

One major impetus was the Food and Drug Administration's approval of birth control pills in 1960. After that, two major pieces of national legislation gave women additional rights in the workplace: the 1963 Equal Pay Act, which prohibited "sex-based wage discrimination" for "jobs that require substantially similar skill, effort, and responsibility,"[27] and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, which addressed discrimination in a wide variety of areas, including education and employment.

Books on feminist theory became national bestsellers, especially Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique* in 1963 and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* and Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics*, both published in 1970. The first women's studies course was created at Cornell University in 1969, with San Diego State College (now University) establishing the first degree program a year later.[28]

Perhaps the most sweeping legislative educational action in this period was 1972's Patsy Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act, also known as Title IX (of the Education Amendments of 1972). It gave multicultural educators broad powers to alter the educational landscape, stating that:

> No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from

participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.[29]

Another development of major importance for multicultural education was the start of the gay rights movement. It generally dates its beginning with the Stonewall Riot in 1969 in Greenwich Village in New York City, in which bar patrons violently responded to a police raid (although a similar incident at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco preceded it in 1966).[30]

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION COMES OF AGE

With the massive cultural changes wrought by the 1960s upheavals, helped by civil rights legislation with broad implications for future policy-making, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, multicultural education principles rapidly became commonplace in the 1970s.

Much of the early emphasis was on language and educational materials. Bilingual education, an important early component of multicultural education, was advanced with a major piece of legislation, The Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968), and a court case, *Lau v. Nichols* in 1974.

The push for bilingual education soon went beyond teaching immigrant children in their native tongues and helping them transition to English. With the 1969 publication of William Labov's report, "The Study of Non-Standard English," multicultural educators started making the case that the street language of African-Americans, called Ebonics, should be treated in schools not as English slang but as a legitimate language in its own right. In 1996 the Oakland School District passed a resolution recognizing Ebonics as an African language and raising teachers' pay for their abilities to speak both English and Ebonics.[31]

The Linguistic Society of America supported Oakland's decision, declaring that "the Oakland School Board's decision to recognize the vernacular of African American students in teaching them Standard English is linguistically and pedagogically sound."[32]

Textbooks—once decried by multicultural educator Gwendolyn Baker in 1977 as "the guardians of tradition"[33]—were pored over to detect language that was deemed demeaning (or absent). Initially, critics sought a more accurate depiction of the heritage of minorities; there had been considerable "whitewash" of racial conflicts in texts during the 1950s as the government promoted unity and integration. The examination of texts for racial reasons began even before multicultural education became formalized. In his 1969 study, "A Content Analysis of Black Americans in Textbooks," James Banks attempted to quantify textbook mentions of such "themes" as "deliberate discrimination," "expedient desegregation," "prejudice," and more. He concluded that between 1964 and 1968 there was a marked increase in the number of textbooks for students in grades four through eight that referred to "achievements [of blacks], violence and conflict, peaceful resistance to discrimination, and deliberate acts of discrimination."[34]

> "The next couple of decades could almost be described as a period of "textbook wars" as multicultural education moved from the fringes to the mainstream."

The 1970s, according to University of Washington education professor and leading multicultural educator Geneva Gay,[35] were "prime times" for multicultural education. Given the volatile stew of emerging identity politics, multicultural goals and theory were expanded in all areas of education: content, process, curriculum, pedagogy, ideology, and policy.[36]

The next couple of decades could almost be described as a period of "textbook wars" as multicultural education moved from the fringes to the mainstream. Research on discrimination, majority hegemony, and "whitewashing" of texts was ubiquitous, and activists and educators put pressure on the system for change.[37] Just a few examples:

- In 1973, Terry Saario, Carol Jacklin, and Carol Tittle published a report that explored sex bias in the *Harvard Educational Review*. Their report claimed that girls are socialized into narrow gender roles through language.[38]

- In 1978, University of Georgia education professor Joel Taxel wrote an article, "Justice and Cultural Conflict," a literature review in which he "outlined how racism and sexism intertwined with the curriculum."[39]

- In 1984, Gwyneth Britton, Margaret Lumpkin, and Esther Britton wrote a seminal article suggesting that multicultural education be expanded to include additional groups, including the handicapped and children from single-parent families.[40]

- And in 1975, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act forwarded a drive to "mainstream" children with disabilities into regular classrooms.[41]

The leading educational accrediting body, The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), included multicultural education requirements for certification of teacher education programs for the first time in 1979. Former University of North Carolina

education professor Alan R. Tom cited the new standard in his 1997 book *Redesigning Teacher Education*:

> 'Multicultural education should receive attention in courses, seminars, directed readings, laboratory and clinical experiences, practicum, and other types of field experiences.' Typical activities could include the examination of 'linguistic variations and diverse learning styles' and the 'dynamics of diverse cultures,' both for the purpose of developing suitable teaching strategies. In a broader sense, experiences should be provided to students to help them confront such issues as 'participatory democracy, racism and sexism, and the parity of power.'[42]

Indeed, multiculturalism had become such a powerful trend that former President Jimmy Carter characterized it during the 1976 presidential campaign:

> "We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams."[43]

By 1981, some of the less intrusive aspects of multicultural education had made deep inroads into the education establishment, yet bigger changes were still to come. For instance, blacks appeared in textbooks more often than in 1962, but textbook pictures still predominantly featured whites.[44] However, a major shift was to occur in the ensuing years, according to Carl Grant. "Whereas the predominant argument of the 1970s was to expand the curriculum through the inclusion of authors of color," he wrote, "the 1980s began the shift from multicultural education curriculum as additive to a re-envisioning of the entire curriculum in the 1990s."[45]

By the 1990s, this "re-envisioning" was accepted as mainstream by the education establishment. Multicultural educators again called for increased radicalism. Former Columbia Teachers College professor Maxine Greene wrote that she wanted to see the Left's "oppositional worldview incorporated in . . . the curriculum."[46]

The 1990s also saw such "progressive" innovations as the "Children of the Rainbow Curriculum," which treated cultural diversity "as a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended."[47] Conservative writer John J. Miller examined the curriculum in 1993 after it had been adopted by New York City schools. He wrote in a *Wall Street Journal* article that:

> The curriculum focuses almost entirely on student differences rather than commonalities. It pays lip service to inclusion, but ultimately reinforces barriers that prevent students from intermingling and learning about one another. One reads virtually nothing about a shared American identity and instead discovers hand-wringing passages devoted to topics of such grave importance as whether children with lesbian "co-parents" will feel left out during a classroom Father's Day celebration.[48]

The most controversial aspects drew the ire of parents, especially the introduction of first-graders to homosexuality. New York school chancellor Juan Fernandez was ousted due to his support of the curriculum, with the curriculum's inclusion ending shortly thereafter. But, as Miller suggested, there was much more to object to than that mischief. Along with a focus on trendy yet vacuous (and possibly demeaning) lessons such as singing a song about tortillas to introduce students to Central

American culture and "challenging sexist myths" by making boys wear pink name tags while girls wore blue, there were egregious errors of omission of actual academic skills.[49]

Additionally, Miller said, the Rainbow Curriculum glossed over actual incompatibilities that occur when differing cultures come into contact, such as those that exist between Western feminism and Islam.

Twenty-five years later, much of what New York's parents—hardly the nation's most conservative district—found objectionable is now an established part of the curriculum in rural and suburban districts throughout Middle America.

MULTICULTURALISM'S RELATION TO CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Although multicultural education as it exists today has many roots, it has considerable inheritance from and synergy with critical pedagogy. According to Geneva Gay, "at the level of philosophical principles, ideological emphasis and outcome expectations, multicultural education is a form of critical pedagogy."[50]

Both multicultural education and critical pedagogy "have transformative and revolutionary potential for reforming education because they challenge underlying value assumptions," she added.[51]

Again following in the path of critical theory, the aim of many prominent multicultural education theorists is to produce an egalitarian society. "Working for social justice—redistribution of the world's resources—is at the heart of what multicultural education should be about," wrote Christine Sleeter.[52]

According to two leading critical pedagogy theorists, Gloria Ladson-Billings (assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin at Madison) and William F. Tate (dean of the graduate school in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington in St. Louis), critical theory and multiculturalism share a relativist perspective of knowledge: "'truths only exist for this person in this predicament at this time."[53] In this view, reality is socially constructed, rather than the result of an independently objective world. Multicultural educators and critical theorists imply that such fundamental American educational tenets as neutrality, objectivity, color-blindness, and meritocracy are merely devices to "camouflage" the "self-interest of dominant groups."[54]

Accordingly, there is an emphasis on subjectivity when it comes to the curriculum. Personal stories and other subjective techniques take precedence in the multicultural curriculum over facts or theories that have been subjected to the crucible of criticism over long time periods.[55]

> "Working for social justice—redistribution of the world's resources—is at the heart of what multicultural education should be about," wrote Christine Sleeter.

There are genuine differences between the two concepts, wrote Gay. Critical pedagogues tend to be generalists, as their proposals for action apply to the whole of U.S. education without reference to specific programs of study. Multiculturalists are more particularistic; their advocacy tends to concentrate on changing curriculum content and classroom instruction to incorporate cultural pluralism.[56] But the differences "are more context than content, semantics than substance, and oratorical than essential," she asserted.[57]

Many proponents openly profess their desire for multiculturalism to be hegemonic. While educators decry the thought of traditional influence on young students, the transformation intended by multicultural education advocates is clearly a form of hegemony itself, that is, the indoctrination of children. "Children of elementary age are impressionable and malleable," wrote Gay in 1979.[58] One can sense her glee at the prospects.

ALL RACE, ALL THE TIME

As shown above, multiculturalism in the United States originated with the emergence of minority racial identities. Other marginalized demographic groups, such as women or the disabled, have been included over time, but race and ethnicity are still paramount. Multiculturalism is often described in positive terms as a means to provide formerly marginalized minorities with an identity and positive self-esteem. But it is also a form of critique—or even an attack—on, not just the educational status quo, but on the majority population and its European-based culture. Although it arose separately from critical theory, multiculturalism serves as critical theory's instrument by which the dominant culture is diminished so that it can be replaced by the collective bureaucratic state.

Despite multiculturalism's appeals to egalitarian principles and a supposed universal brotherhood of man, it is in fact very hierarchical. Different groups are defined to be oppressors or oppressed, and even ranked on shifting scales according to the political emphasis of the organization or school of thought. For instance, Jews may be regarded as oppressed in a discussion of the Holocaust or in relation to Christianity, but as oppressors in a discussion of the current Middle East. Or, white heterosexual females are considered oppressed, but not as much as women of other ethnicities or as much as lesbians, and must defer to these more oppressed subgroups within their own feminist ranks.

Always at the bottom of this shifting hierarchy are white heterosexual Christian males—who are often treated with precisely the sort of negative stereotyping multicultural proponents claim they are combating.

Such hierarchical determinations are not benign or temporary. The cultural Marxist thinking that began making inroads into educational institutions in the 1930s and now dominates much of academia assumed that the world's population is in an existential struggle. Government was assumed to pick winners and losers, politically, economically, and demographically. As sociologist (and 1960s radical icon) C. Wright Mills asked in 1959:

> What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and this period? . . . In what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted?[59]

Additionally, much of the multicultural thought about race is incoherent. For instance, many proponents consider race to be a "social construct created to show dominance of one race over another,"[60] despite obvious biological differences between the major races.

Views on the identity of European-Americans present a bewildering contradiction; at first, the left tried to diminish or eliminate white racial identity, yet today they campaign to increase white racial identification—not as a source of pride or belonging, as other identity groups are urged to have, but as one of guilt and atonement.[61] Former Yale Law School professor and critical race theorist Harlon Dalton holds that "it is important for whites to conceive of themselves as a race and to recognize the advantages that attach to simply having white skin."[62]

Another questionable contention by multiculturalists that follows from the "race as social construct theory" is the idea that "racism is about institutional power, and people of color have never possessed this form of power."[63] In other words, racial minorities in the United States cannot be racist since they lack power, as the nation's institutions were created by whites to advance their hegemonic system. Such dogmatic claims are used to fend off serious political critique.

> Furthermore, it "acknowledges how notions of objectivity, neutrality, and meritocracy, as well as curriculum practices, such as tracking, teaching expectations, and intelligence testing, have historically been used to subordinate students of color."

The union of cultural Marxism and multiculturalism is often known as critical race theory; it concentrates heavily on its applications to education. According to UCLA education professor Daniel Solarzano and University of Michigan education professor Tara Yosso, the goal of critical race theory when applied to education is to "identify, analyze, and transform subtle and overt forms of racism in order to transform society."[64] Critical race theory "recognizes the central role racism has played in the structuring of schools and schooling practices, and that racism intersects with other forms of subordination including sexism and classism." Furthermore, it "acknowledges how notions of objectivity, neutrality, and meritocracy, as well as curriculum practices, such as tracking, teaching expectations, and intelligence testing, have historically been used to subordinate students of color."[65]

One of the racial issues cited by multicultural advocates is stereotyping. As the nation has moved away from the overt racism of the past, multicultural education proponents have pointed their efforts toward uncovering unintentional, unconscious, or subtle stereotyping. They demand that discussion of racial experiences be an integral part of a teachers' training, including how minorities are sensitized to "microagressions" such as looks, body language, and coded language. They also favor classroom exercises designed to help recognize and reduce stereotyping.[66]

One difference, however, between multiculturalism and critical race theory suggested by Ladson-Billings and Tate is that critical race theory favors a full rejection of capitalism as its primary endgame, whereas multiculturalism is clearly centered on race and gender as its ends. Ladson-Billings and Tate state that we educators should "align our scholarship with the philosophy of Marcus Garvey: race first!"[67]

WHITENESS STUDIES

Multicultural education was originally conceived by many to be a positive force and a means of inclusion for minorities. But with the emergence of "whiteness studies" it has taken a troubling negative turn. Whereas other ethnic studies disciplines were largely created by members of those ethnicities to promote their identities, whiteness studies have been created in order to blame and undermine the majority culture.

The self-inflicted attack against the white majority is not a new concept; it dates back to the formative years of the New Left. The psychology of Frankfurt School associates such as William Reich, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse redefined Western man according to Freudian and Marxist principles. In their view, traditional Western morals, those aligned with Christianity and capitalism, repressed

humanity's natural instincts, causing sexual guilt and perversion. Non-Western societies—including those Westerners with ethnic roots outside of the West—were regarded as more natural and authentic and therefore superior. In the New Left version of the emerging Utopian world, whites are to follow the lead of non-whites—even to be subordinate to them.[68]

Like much in the critical theory world, incongruities are rampant. For, on one hand, the goal seems to be to free Western man from his repressing guilt. Yet, inducing white guilt is one of radical multiculturalism's most potent and more frequently used weapons. Consider the remarks of some leading theorists:

> "White groups need to examine their own ethnic histories so that they are less likely to judge their own cultural norms as neutral and universal," wrote McLaren.[69]

> Christine Sleeter said that "Whiteness has come to mean . . . . destroying indigenous knowledges and languages around the world and teaching young people to worship the bottom line—profit—above all else."[70]

> Cornel West remarked that "'Whiteness' is a politically constructed category parasitic on 'blackness.'"[71]

> Dean McCannell wrote that, "To say that white culture is impersonal is not the same thing as saying that it does not function like a subject or subjectivity. But while it is the kind that is cold, the kind that laughs at feelings while demanding that all surplus libido, energy, and capital be handed over to it."[72]

There are three main themes, or characteristics, in whiteness studies. One is that whiteness is a social construct, rather than a fact of biology, "serving as pervasive ideology justifying dominance of one group over others," according to Frances Maher, a women's studies and education professor emeritus at Wheaton College, and Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault, dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service at California State University at Fullerton.[73]

> **The commonly accepted concept of meritocracy—so crucial to a free society—is considered to be falsely perpetuated rather than real, since racism is so embedded in every act of the majority that no real fairness exists.**

Because it is considered to be a construct, whiteness can be conferred on others if it works to the advantage of the dominant white majority—or it can be denied. It is a form of hegemony which, through "education policy plays an active role in supporting and affirming . . . . racist inequities and structures of oppression,"[74] according to David Gillborn, a professor of "critical race studies" in the School of Education at the University of Birmingham in England. His paper "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy" is taught in two courses at the University of Wisconsin and suggests that "race inequity and racism are central features of the education system . . . It is in this sense that education policy is an act of white supremacy."[75]

A second theme of whiteness is that it confers privilege upon those who are deemed white. This privilege confers access to "tangible goods . . . . such as well-paying jobs, health protection, environmentally safe neighborhoods, legal

and police and fire protection . . . good education, and basic civil liberties," according to University of Utah education professor Audrey Thompson.[76]

Of course, privilege means that such goods and opportunities are unfairly denied to deserving others. The commonly accepted concept of meritocracy—so crucial to a free society—is considered to be falsely perpetuated rather than real, since racism is so embedded in every act of the majority that no real fairness exists. Angelina Castagno is an education professor at Northern Arizona University (whose papers are assigned in two Wisconsin education classes). Her rationale against a standard of merit is convoluted: "When meritocracy is assumed, our focus is directed away from systemic inequities and toward individual success and failure. Thus, meritocracy allows us to see ourselves as innocent bystanders rather than participants in a system that creates, maintains, and reproduces social justice."[77]

Castagno has it backwards. We are not bystanders when we see ourselves in a system in which we rise and fall according to our own abilities and efforts in a system of meritocracy. Rather, we are bystanders when we envision ourselves as victims of a rigged system.

The third theme is that some sort of denial, ignorance, or lack of awareness is assumed on the part of whites about their sense of privilege. The concept has a long history; an oft-cited comment by James Weldon Johnson, an early twentieth-century black writer, suggested that, "The colored people of this country know and understand the white people better than the white people will ever know and understand themselves."[78] More recently, Arizona State English professor Lee Bebout, who teaches a course he initially entitled "The Problem of Whiteness," said, "White supremacy makes it so that white people can't see the world they

have created."[79] Wells and Roda describe a "white double consciousness" that leads to "contradictory allegiances to both privilege and equality."[80]

The lack of awareness includes "denying institutional oppression," according to Castagno.[81] Although de facto segregation has been eliminated in favor of integration, modern educators say continued hegemony is accomplished, not through the aggressive racism of the Jim Crow era, but through subtle messaging. Because "whites are socialized (via family, peers, media) into this [racially hegemonic] society," wrote University of Illinois at Urbana psychology professor Mikhail Lyubansky in *Psychology Today*, " they cannot help but internalize messages about white superiority, even if they consciously reject racist beliefs."[82]

Part of the hegemonic mechanism is to "normalize" European-American culture and behaviors as the standard for the entire society. Deviations from these norms push other ethnicities into "other" status. And because this normalization is so complete, whites tend to be unaware of it, and even tend to "put very little emphasis on their racial identity," according to Lyubansky.[83]

The search for the colorblind society, in which universal values, similarities, and mutual goals are secondary to differences and grievances, is rejected in whiteness studies. One frequent criticism of white educators is that they avoid discussions of race, which "are perceived as uncomfortable or threatening to the established social order," wrote Castagno.[84] Such avoidance of controversy is ostensibly performed to "legitimize" the status quo, rather than, as multicultural educators would prefer, making race the central focus of education in order to effect "the dismantling" of whiteness."[85] "We must try to transform the attitudes of White teachers, but we must also recognize

how deeply engrained colormute [colorblind] attitudes and practices are." The complexity of "the way Whiteness works" is "what makes it so difficult to undo."[86]

The implications of what Castagno and others in the whiteness studies field mean by "dismantling" and "undoing" whiteness are disturbing. For, if one is to accept that there is a hegemonic system of dominance based upon the subtle and unaware characteristics and behaviors that can be deemed "whiteness," to "dismantle" that system means rooting out instances of so-called whiteness, deeming these attitudes and behaviors unacceptable, and instituting a system of punishments for participating in these behaviors (as well as a system of rewards for rejecting white behaviors).

Indeed, undoing whiteness would require nothing less than a complete remaking of the socialization process of whites by cutting the deep connection between children and their families and society from birth. Such education, or rather, "re-education," would in fact be cultural genocide on a depth and scale far surpassing Communist China's Cultural Revolution or the French Revolution. It is based on the condemnation of the very race that founded this nation, pitting races and ethnicities against each other in asymmetric adversarial positions. It can only proceed through totalitarian control of a large segment of the population, rather than permitting society to develop freely and organically. It is, without question, a declared intention to transform a people through tyranny.

While some may try to dismiss whiteness studies in education schools as a development occurring only on the fringe, they are indeed making their way into public secondary schools. As of October, 2015, several hundred school districts nationwide, including some of the largest such as Philadelphia Public Schools and the Dallas Independent School District, had contracted with the Pacific Educational Group, a private consulting firm based in San Francisco, to conduct training and provide curricular and disciplinary advice.

Pacific Educational Group workshops include such titles as "Creating Culturally Relevant Classrooms by Removing the Sand and Interrupting Whiteness," "Accelerate the Achievement of Students of Color by Decentering Whiteness in School Discipline," and "I'm White? I'm White: Increasing White Racial Consciousness to Expand White Racial Consciousness." According to a PJ Media report, "many of the school districts that hire the Pacific Educational Group do so only after being pressured by the U.S. Department of Education or sued by the U.S. Department of Justice to address 'disparities' in the punishment rates of black students as compared to white students."[87]

IMPLEMENTING MULTICULTURALISM

There have been many attempts to describe how to implement multiculturalism. James Banks created a widely accepted framework of approaches, as described in the list below.[88]

1. Contributions
   This approach focuses on inserting the contributions and culture of minorities into a traditional curriculum. Banks said it is "characterized by the addition of ethnic heroes into the curriculum using criteria that are similar to those used to select mainstream heroes." It also includes celebrating minority-centered holidays such as Cinco de Mayo and Martin Luther King's birthday. Focus on minority culture content is usually limited to certain days.

2. Ethnic Additive
   This approach extends the contributions approach by further inclusion of "content,

concepts, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure, purposes, and characteristics." Although it may seem benign, Banks indicates that it is "the first phase in a more radical curriculum reform effort."

An example of how ethnic material can be inserted into a traditional structure offered by Banks is including the perspectives of Lakota Sioux in a social studies unit called "The Westward Movement." Western expansion of the United States is a Eurocentric concept, he contends; the same period studied from a Lakota perspective could be titled "The invasion from the East."

3. Transformative
This approach fundamentally alters structures and the underlying assumptions about society and history. Instead of adding to a traditional framework, the traditional framework is treated as one of several equally valid perspectives. The American Revolution is therefore not taught as our foundational experience, but as an historical event perceived differently by varying interests, such as "the Anglo Revolutionaries, the Anglo Loyalists, African Americans, Native Americans, and the British."

The traditional perspective of a fundamentally English and European culture receiving contributions from other groups should be downplayed, according to Banks. Instead, U.S. culture should be perceived as being formed by the "complex synthesis and interaction of the diverse cultural elements . . . that make up American society."

4. Decision-Making and Social Action
This approach extends the Transformative approach from the cultural and intellectual to the political. It "adds components that require students to make decisions and to take actions related to the concept, issue, or problem they have studied." Banks gave as an example students studying the question, "what actions should we take to reduce prejudice and discrimination in our school?" and then implementing their solutions.

Banks also suggests that these four approaches can be "blended together" for a more comprehensive fifth approach.

As one moves up the hierarchy of approaches, they build to two extremely radical changes to a traditional curriculum. One is that we—the citizens and residents of the United States— should no longer perceive the world from within our society looking out at the rest. Nor should we even regard that "inward-looking out" paradigm as one of many valid perspectives. Instead, we should "downplay" the major forces at the center of our society while promoting those on the periphery.

In this scenario, the "other" becomes dominant—a prescription for cultural suicide.

> "
> The American Revolution is therefore not taught as our foundational experience, but as an historical event perceived differently by varying interests.
> "

And, as expressed in the Decision-Making and Social Action approach, our education system is to be politicized, with social action replacing intellectual activities. While not every public school in the country has adopted all of these approaches, most include elements of them in some measure.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION CONCLUSION

When multicultural educators claim that multiculturalism is better than other types of pedagogy, they usually do so without presenting empirical evidence that proves their claim. One does not see charts indicating tremendous improvement in reading or math skills through multiculturalism; the absence of such proof suggests that many multicultural educators realize that the facts would work against them.

This absence of proof may also be confirmation of the suspicion that multicultural education is not about the academic performance of students, but about producing a collective, egalitarian society (as so many multicultural educators openly attest).

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The Politicization of University Schools of Education

Part II: An Empirical Look at Today's Politicized Education Schools

MAIN EMPIRICAL RESULTS

This report does not purport to be a scientific study. Attempting to somehow quantify the degree to which schools of education have become radicalized would be a massive undertaking requiring numerous researchers—and most likely could not be done with any true precision.

However, one does not have to dig deep or apply scientific rigor to the task of finding evidence of politicization of education schools. Rather, it is easy to show that, by any reasonable definition, radicalization is part of the mainstream in them. Faculty and authors who are on the fringes of political thought in the general public and who advocate that the purpose of education is to transform society according to their radical visions are the most frequently assigned writers in some of the most prominent schools of education.

It may very well be that the problem is much worse than our examination reveals. Reading selections with benign titles can indeed have political intentions. Or, quite possibly, teachers treat them in such a way as to be political. Consider, for example, that a teacher may assign a work by a conservative or apolitical author to knock it down. But since investigation at the classroom level is impossible, this report gives such works the benefit of the doubt and considers them to be apolitical.

Another sign of probable politicization is that the dominance by radical writers is not controversial within schools of education. They coexist with less radical educators with little tension—or else there would be evidence of a schism.

METHODOLOGY

To discover ideological patterns in the education school curriculum, we reviewed syllabi—the detailed descriptions of a course's content usually presented to students on the first day of a class—from three highly ranked public schools of education. These are the University of Wisconsin at Madison, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of Michigan. The reason for using public universities is that they are subject to public record legislation, meaning they are required to provide syllabi when requested.

We used highly ranked education schools because they are influential. Wisconsin is ranked second among all education schools in the 2019 *U.S. News and World Report* rankings. It may be the most influential public school of education in the country, with graduates writing many significant books and articles and holding key professorships in other top-ranked institutions. The University of Michigan is ranked 14th by *U.S. News*, and the University of North Carolina is ranked 30th; their graduates have a powerful presence in other education schools in their respective states.

We also sought syllabi from the University of Oregon's education school (ranked 13th). Despite the fact that the school is required to provide the syllabi requested, administrators claimed that the syllabi were the personal property of faculty and only provided us with two or three that professors offered voluntarily.

We looked at the syllabi in each of our three sample schools to see how often writers were assigned. We then used the results to find the overall leaders. At UNC, we were able to identify 1,658 authors and co-authors from a total of 87

syllabi; at Michigan, 983 authors from 40 syllabi, and at Wisconsin, 3,375 authors from 163 syllabi.

We did not use all syllabi from every education course. An attempt was made to focus on courses that would influence elementary education more than high schools. This was because we wanted to find out if politicization was occurring right from the start, as soon as a child entered his or her schoolhouse. Even so, we covered in our study a majority of courses offered at each school.

In addition to courses that specifically addressed elementary or high school education, we included syllabi from leadership and policy courses; while they are not specific to elementary education, courses in leadership and policy represent the dominant theory that will become practice. These courses are responsible for many of the most-read works and authors.

> Ladson-Billings wrote that "we educators should align our scholarship with the philosophy of Marcus Garvey: race first!"

Rather than basing the popularity of authors on the number of times their works were assigned, we thought it better to base it on the number of classes in which their works were assigned. In some classes, the same author was assigned as many as five or six times; counting every time a book was assigned would skew the results away from the broader popularity represented by the number of courses in which they were assigned.

Also, all co-authors were given credit for a book or article.

There are five empirical sections in this study. The first looks at the most popular assigned authors at each of the three schools in the sample, and then at the most-assigned authors for all schools combined. The next two sections look at history authors and science authors, respectively. The fourth section looks at a particular aspect of education that has been receiving enormous attention—the so-called "achievement gap." The final one looks at a number of empirical results from other studies to provide a fuller picture.

MOST-ASSIGNED AUTHORS, SCHOOL BY SCHOOL

This section looks at the most popular assigned authors at each of the three schools of education, regardless of subject. The results speak for themselves.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Table I. Most Assigned Authors at UNC	
Author	**Courses**
Ladson-Billings	8
Darling-Hammond	8
Sweller	6
Dunst	6
Nieto	6
Lareau	6
Sherrick Hughes	5
Yosso	5
Cochran-Smith	5
Villegas	5
Ravitch	5

The two most-assigned authors at UNC are among the most prominent advocates of multiculturalism: Gloria Ladson-Billings and Linda Darling-Hammond.

According to the National Academy of Education, of which she is the current president, Ladson-

Billings is "known for her groundbreaking work in the fields of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Critical Race Theory."[1] As stated in the multicultural education section, Ladson-Billings wrote that "we educators should align our scholarship with the philosophy of Marcus Garvey: race first!" One of her works assigned at UNC is a book chapter titled "From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools," in which she seems to argue for some sort of recompense or reparations for historical differences in education between the races.

Darling-Hammond achieved national prominence as an advisor to President Obama. One of her assigned works is *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future Multicultural Education.* In 2015, Darling-Hammond was rewarded with her own think tank, which is funded by many of the leading charitable foundations in the nation.[2] *Education Week* announced its opening:

> The Palo Alto, Calif.-based Learning Policy Institute launched this week with 30 researchers and a board including some big education names, such as Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the director of Harvard University's W.E.B. DuBois Institute for African and African American Research, and Kris Gutiérrez, a language, literacy and culture professor at the University of California, Berkeley.[3]

As further evidence of her insider status, Darling-Hammond also serves as chair of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.[4]

The next two most frequently assigned authors at UNC are non-political, at least on the surface. One is John Sweller, an educational psychologist who formerly taught at the University of New South Wales in Australia.[5] His work focuses on pedagogical techniques and advances. His major work (with several co-authors) is *Efficiency in Learning: Evidence-based Guidelines to Manage Cognitive Load.*

The other is Carl J. Dunst, whose official biography is:

> Senior Research Scientist at the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute in Asheville and Morganton, North Carolina. His research and practice spans more than 40 years and includes early intervention, early childhood special education, family and social support, and family-centered practices. His primary areas of interest include evidence-based child, parent-child, and family intervention practices, meta-analyses and research syntheses of child, parent, parent-child, and family practices, and research on in-service professional development and adult learning methods and strategies.[6]

Next is Sonia Nieto, a leading multiculturalist. One of her assigned readings is her first book, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education.* As evidence of her perspective, she also wrote a glowing forward to a book by former Weatherman (and still small 'c' communist) William Ayers.[7]

Annette Lareau is a sociologist at the University of Pennsylvania. Her work focuses on race, class, inequality, cultural capital, and poverty. Her best-known work, which was assigned in several classes at UNC, is *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life.* Also assigned is her article "Invisible Inequality and Child-rearing in Black and White Families."

Sherrick Hughes teaches at UNC. One of his assigned articles (in his own course) is entitled *"Maggie and Me: A Black Professor and a White Urban High School Teacher Connect Autoethnography to Critical Race Pedagogy."* Hughes's curriculum vitae is peppered with tell-tale signs of his devotion to multiculturalism,

critical pedagogy, and critical race theory. These include two 2013 articles in the journal *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, one titled "Honoring Derrick Bell's Contributions to CRT [Critical Race Theory] in Educational Studies," and the other "Critical Race Pedagogy 2.0: Lessons from Derrick Bell." Another from the journal *Educational Controversy* in 2007 is "Toward a Critical Race Pedagogy of Hope: A Rejoinder to Brian Schultz." And a forthcoming book chapter is titled "Co-Reflexive Dialogues and Freirean Pedagogy: A Co-constructed Autoethnography to Improve a Graduate Education Course on Qualitative Field Techniques."[8]

University of Michigan education professor Tara Yosso's self-penned biography reveals her politics:

> My research and teaching apply the frameworks of critical race theory and critical media literacy to examine educational access and equity, emphasizing the community cultural wealth Students of Color bring to school . . . My article, "Whose Culture has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth," has become the top cited article in *Race Ethnicity and Education* since its publication in 2005, with over 3,000 citations. The American Educational Studies Association recognized my book, *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline* (Routledge) with a 2008 Critics' Choice Book Award. I was honored by the Critical Race Studies in Education Association with a 2017 Derrick Bell Legacy Award.[9]

Marilyn Cochran-Smith is also a proponent of critical race theory. In one assigned article, "Color Blindness and Basket-making Are Not the Answers: Confronting the Dilemmas of Race, Culture, and Language Diversity in Teacher Education," she argues against treating race as neutral. She writes of the need to "construct pedagogy that . . . makes issues of diversity an explicit part of the curriculum."[10]

A review in the *Harvard Educational Review* of her best-known book, also assigned in one UNC class, describes it as:

> invoking the work of Myles Horton and Paulo Freire with the title *Walking the Road: Race, Diversity, and Social Justice in Teacher Education*, Marilyn Cochran-Smith situates herself among activist-educators who understand "participatory education as an instrument for social change."[11]

Montclair State University education professor Ana Maria Villegas is also a multicultural educator, focused on ethnicity and social justice. Her assigned works include the article "Dispositions in Teacher Education: A Look at Social Justice" and the book *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers: A Coherent Approach.* She also contributed a chapter (unassigned) to the 1997 *International Handbook of Teachers and Teaching*, entitled "Increasing the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the U.S. Teaching Force."

Then there is Diane Ravitch, a true anomaly in this list. An education historian and popular writer, Ravitch has been all over the map politically. Her career began at the *New Leader*, a socialist magazine. In the 1980s, she adopted the beliefs about core knowledge promoted by E.D. Hirsch and favored by many conservatives (although both Hirsch and Ravitch remained political liberals). In recent years, she has again moved left.

One of her assigned works, *A Consumer's Guide to High School History Textbooks*, received its initial funding from a moderately conservative think tank, the Fordham Institute, and generally

expressed a traditional view. Another was from *The Democracy Reader: Classic and Modern Speeches, Essays, Poems, Declarations, and Documents on Freedom and Human Rights Worldwide*, an anthology she co-edited with conservative academic Abigail Thernstrom.

But Ravitch's days of siding with the political right appear to be over. One of her assigned works was written in 2012, after her more recent conversion. In "The Teacher Accountability Debate," she argued that firing bad teachers will not necessarily improve student performance on test scores. Due to unintended consequences such as the resultant demonization of the profession making it less attractive to all prospective teachers, the overall competence level of the teaching profession will fall. It would be hard to find an idea more amenable to the education establishment, especially to teachers' unions.[12]

She also suggested that test scores do not indicate the quality of education.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The University of Michigan's education school does not appear to have gone quite as far to the extreme left as the other two. Most of Michigan's most-assigned authors are relatively apolitical. (Again, it is possible that they may be more radical than can be gleaned from syllabi alone.)

The two most commonly assigned authors are professors at Michigan and frequent collaborators: David Cohen and Deborah Loewenberg Ball. Cohen and Loewenberg Ball are not radicals—in that their main concerns are not changing society—but are entrenched in the education school establishment. For instance, Loewenberg Ball is a former dean of Michigan's School of Education and currently serves as the president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

Table II. Most Assigned Authors at Michigan

Author	Courses
Cohen	14
Loewenberg Ball	7
Dewey	7
Lortie	6
Wilson	6
Grossman	5
Shulman	5
Darling-Hammond	5
Loeb	5
Anyon	5
Labaree	5
Carol Lee	5

Still, they are very much on the left. Cohen has written of the need to establish a more "coherent educational infrastructure," which is tied to "fragmented school governance in the United States."[13] This appears to be a call to place all K-12 education under the administration of the federal government.

Cohen and Loewenberg Ball consider themselves to be education reformers. While it is beyond the scope of his paper to explore their reform goals, insight can be gleaned by Loewenberg Ball's support for changes to mathematics instruction that were implemented in the Common Core Standards and highly criticized nationally.

Common Core's standards were derived from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, of which Loewenberg Ball writes:

> My conclusion is a simple one: If this reform movement is to have any promise, resources and supports of a variety of kinds will be absolutely crucial to working with, toward—and beyond—the ideas represented in the Standards.[14]

They also profess what may be termed "education school chauvinism," in that they advocate for education schools, and see them as a force for positive change.

Next is Dan C. Lortie, a sociologist who examined the teaching profession as a career; he, too, appears to be apolitical on the surface. Lee Shulman was an educational psychologist who is best known for promoting the concept of "pedagogical knowledge content."[15] Pamela Grossman's expertise appears to be the recruitment and retention of teachers, as well as classroom practices.

Suzanne Wilson appears to be cut from the same establishment mold as Loewenberg Ball, supporting "reforms" such as the National Science Foundation's "Next Generation Science Standards." Those standards may not appear to be radical, but they forward politicized concepts about climate change, gender, and diversity and equity.[16]

Economist Susanna Loeb, whose expertise is in educators' labor markets, often focuses on the gaps between low-income and middle-income schools. Sociologist David Labaree is more liberal than radical, promoting education as a public good.

Two of the last three on Michigan's list are clearly multiculturalists. One is Linda Darling-Hammond, who has been introduced already. The other is Carol Lee, a Northwestern education professor and former president of the AERA, who founded four African-themed schools, including three charter schools affiliated with the Betty Shabazz International Charter Schools. (Shabazz was the wife of Malcolm X).[17]

Which leaves John Dewey, the socialist, Progressive advocate of child-centered education.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Table III. Most Assigned Authors at Wisconsin	
Author	**Courses**
Ladson-Billings	18
Noguera	13
Stacey Lee	11
Apple	10
Bartlett	10
Freire	9
Anyon	9
Tyack	8
Oakes	8
Torres	7
Vavrus	7
Du Bois	6
Kendall	6
Coleman	6
Orfield	6

The most assigned author at Wisconsin is Ladson-Billings, just as at UNC. Next is Pedro Noguera, a sociologist by training who is now UCLA's "Distinguished Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies and Faculty Director for the Center for the Transformation of Schools."[18] Much of his writing focuses on race; one of his assigned writings is a book chapter titled "Youth Agency, Resistance, and Civic Activism: The Public Commitment to Social Justice," published in a volume of which he was a co-editor called *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change*. The book was part of a Routledge series named "Critical Youth Studies," and the "resistance theory" described in the section on critical pedagogy is recognizable in Noguera's chapter—indeed, throughout the entire book.[19]

The third most assigned author at Wisconsin is Stacey Lee, an education policy professor. She is clearly in the multicultural camp, writing books

such as *Up Against Whiteness: Race, School and Immigrant Youth*, in which she writes that Hmong students are "'up against' a dominant culture that privileges the activities and achievements of white students."[20]

Next is Michael Apple, whose scholarship is classic critical theory. An example:

> Two things have been central to this approach, so far. First, it sees schools as caught up in a nexus of other institutions—political, economic, and cultural—that are basically unequal. That is, schools exist through their relations to other more powerful institutions, institutions that are combined in such a way as to generate structural inequalities of power and access to resources. Second, these inequalities are reinforced and reproduced by schools (though not by them alone, of course). Through their curricular, pedagogical, and evaluative activities in day-to-day life in classrooms, schools play a significant role in preserving if not generating these inequalities . . . .[21]

> **The third most assigned author at Wisconsin is Stacey Lee, an education policy professor. She is clearly in the multicultural camp, writing books such as *Up Against Whiteness: Race, School and Immigrant Youth*.**

Although she is a professor of education policy studies, Lesley Bartlett's Ph.D. is in anthropology; her educational specialty is writing about education in the Third World from a critical theory perspective. One of her book titles (although not one assigned at Wisconsin) is *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas (International and Development Education)*.

The next two most assigned authors are firmly in the radical category. One needs no introduction or further commentary: Paolo Freire.

The other is former Rutgers and CUNY education professor Jean Anyon, an unabashed radical activist and critical theorist who participated in the Occupy Wall Street protests. A couple of her best-known works, both assigned at Wisconsin, are: *Radical Possibilities: Public Policy, Urban Education* and *A New Social Movement: Social Class, School Knowledge, and the Hidden Curriculum*. Other book titles, though not assigned at Wisconsin, include *Marx and Education, Theory* and *Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Explanation,* and *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform.*

> **The other is former Rutgers and CUNY education professor Jean Anyon, an unabashed radical activist and critical theorist who participated in the Occupy Wall Street protests.**

Next are the late education historian David Tyack and Jeannie Oakes. Tyack was a key figure in the education establishment whose works became the accepted history of education. He was liberal rather than radical.

Oakes, on the other hand, tends toward left-wing activism, like her occasional collaborator Jean Anyon. Her official biography at UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education and Access reads:

Jeannie Oakes was a Presidential Professor in Educational Equity in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA. She also was the founder and former director of UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education and Access (IDEA), former director of the University of California's All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity (ACCORD), as well as the founding director of Center X. Oakes' research focused on schooling inequalities and followed the progress of educators and activists seeking socially just schools.[22]

The title of her most assigned work is *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*. Another of her books, not assigned at Wisconsin, is titled *Teaching to Change the World*. Other works by Oakes assigned at Wisconsin include *Social Movement Organizing and Equity-focused Educational Change: Shifting the Zone of Mediation* and "Broad-based Public Engagement: Alliances and Social Movements."

There is little question where the next person on the list stands politically. Carlos Alberto Torres cofounded UCLA's Paulo Freire Institute in 1991.

Frances Vavrus teaches at the University of Minnesota. Her assigned works include "Constructing Consensus: International Development and the Feminist Modern" and "The Cultural Politics of Constructivist Pedagogies: Teacher Education Reform in the United Republic of Tanzania." She was also Lesley Bartlett's coauthor for *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas (International and Development Education).*

One of the four remaining popular authors at Michigan is a household name: W.E.B. DuBois. Many know him primarily as a sociologist and

civil rights activist; however, he also promoted black nationalism and socialism. And, "in 1961 he joined the Communist Party and, moving to Ghana, renounced his American citizenship more than a year later."[23]

Nancy Kendall's Wisconsin-Madison biography reads:

She is affiliated with the African Studies Program, Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Development Studies Program, and Global Health Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Kendall conducts comparative ethnographic research on U.S. and global development education policies and their intersections with children's and families' daily lives. Research projects have examined Education for All, political democratization and educational governance, structural adjustment and education, US higher education, sexuality and HIV/AIDS education, and gender and schooling.[24]

A couple of her assigned articles also suggest a tendency to favor left-wing politics: "Education for All Meets Political Democratization: Free Primary Education and the Neoliberalization of the Malawian School and State" and "Gender and Education for All: Progress and Problems in Achieving Equality."

Sociologist James S. Coleman is a different matter entirely. There was little politics in his work—he conducted scholarly sociological research. His famous 1966 *Coleman Report* was a basis for busing for school desegregation, but a follow-up report was criticized from the left, with some members of the American Sociological Society calling for his resignation. (He later became the society's president.)[25]

Finally, there is Gary Orfield, a "professor of education, law, political science and urban planning, and co-director of the Civil Rights

Project" at UCLA. His assigned works focus on school desegregation and the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision. He has supported left-leaning causes, such as giving expert testimony in favor of affirmative action in the 2003 Supreme Court case *Gratz v. Bollinger* and co-authoring a book against school choice entitled *Educational Delusions? Why Choice Can Deepen Inequality and How to Make Schools Fair.*

ALL SCHOOLS

The following chart shows the 10 most assigned authors overall. All of them were assigned at least once at all three schools, and all were discussed in the previous sections.

More important: all may be considered radical, in that they adhere to either extreme multiculturalism or critical pedagogy. Except, perhaps Dewey, who was radical in his own way for his own era.

Table IV. Most Frequently Assigned Authors (All Schools)

Author	UNC	MICH	WISC	TOTAL
Ladson-Billings	8	2	22	32
Darling-Hammond	8	5	6	19
Freire	4	4	9	17
Anyon	1	5	11	17
Dewey	3	7	6	16
Apple	1	3	12	16
Noguera	1	1	14	16
Lareau	6	3	6	15
Oakes	2	1	9	12
Yosso	5	1	4	10

Of course, most of these authors are operating at the theoretical or analytical levels, rather than teaching everyday pedagogy. But theory and analysis greatly influence pedagogy; there is assuredly a "trickle-down" effect from critical theory to classroom practice—although

it may not be visible to those unfamiliar with the terminology. For instance, the biography of Ladson-Billings—the most assigned author at both UNC's and Wisconsin's education schools—at the National Academy of Education says that she "investigates Critical Race Theory applications to education."[26] In other words, she figures out how to insert CRT into the curriculum.

And, it must be remembered, most of the writers on these lists are not merely authors, but highly regarded professors, often in leadership positions. Taking a closer look at how highly placed in the education establishment these very radical thinkers are is a clue to the real situation in education academia.

Gloria Ladson-Billings is the associate vice chancellor of academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin, and she formerly served as the chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She is currently the president of the National Academy of Education and, for 2005-2006, was president of the American Educational Research Association.

As mentioned above, Linda Darling-Hammond was a top education advisor to President Obama, heads her own large think tank (with offices at Stanford University and Washington, D.C.), and is chair of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Furthermore, she is the past president of the American Educational Research Association and served as director of the RAND Corporation's education program, and "from 1994–2001, she was executive director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future." According to her Learning Policy Institute biography, "in 2006, Darling-Hammond was named one of the nation's ten most influential people affecting educational policy."[27]
It goes without saying that Paolo Freire's influence is enormous. He has numerous centers spreading his ideas after him throughout the world, including UCLA's Paulo Freire Institute,

the Paulo and Nita Freire International Project for Critical Pedagogy at the University of Calgary, and the Freire Institute at the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom.

Jean Anyon served as chair of Rutgers University's Department of Education for nearly two decades, from 1982 to 1999. She also received a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the American Educational Research Association.[28]

John Dewey, suffice it to say, was perhaps one of the five or so biggest influences in American education.

The University of Wisconsin's Michael Apple has served on the editorial boards of roughly thirty academic education journals worldwide. Beijing Normal University in China has established a Michael W. Apple Research Center. His books and articles have received awards from the National Educational Research Association, the National Educational Studies Association, the International Sociology Association, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.[29]

Along with directing his own center at UCLA, Pedro Noguera "serves on the boards of numerous national and local organizations and appears as a regular commentator on educational issues on CNN, MSNBC, National Public Radio and other national news outlets," according to his personal biography. He was formerly a trustee of the State University of New York and has been elected to the National Academy of Education. Additionally, he has been the director of two other academic centers, the Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools at New York University and the Institute for the Study of Social Change at the University of California at Berkeley.[30]

> **They are not a fringe element, seeking converts around the edges of academia. They are the education establishment.**

Annette Lareau is a sociologist at the University of Pennsylvania. Her inclusion on this list reflects the powerful impact the social sciences have had on education.

Tara Yosso is still early in her career, but her writing on education is widely cited, with her *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/ Chicano Educational Pipeline* given the 2008 Critics' Choice Book Award by the American Educational Studies Association.

As mentioned above, Jeannie Oakes founded three academic centers at UCLA. She left that school in 2008 to join the Ford Foundation as its director of education and scholarship. She is a past president of the American Educational Research Association.

In summary, these educators serve as advisors to top public officials, as officers of leading education associations, and as trustees of state higher education systems. They serve on the editorial boards of leading organizations, and as department heads. They receive top awards for writing and teaching, have founded or head influential education centers and institutes, and their opinions are widely sought in the media.

They are not a fringe element, seeking converts around the edges of academia. They are the education establishment.

CORROBORATING STUDIES

Our conclusions about radical influence in education schools are corroborated by the only two studies we were able to find on the topic. One is an annual survey conducted by Frederick Hess, the education expert for the American Enterprise Institute. Hess uses a set of quantifiable criteria, such as Amazon ranking, Google Scholar citations, and mentions in the media to determine the 200 most influential education scholars. Most of the people mentioned in this section are on the 2018 list (although Michael Apple was a notable absence). Linda Darling-Hammond was ranked first, Gloria Ladson-Billings was ranked fourth, Diane Ravitch was ranked fifth, and Pedro Noguera was ranked twelfth.[31]

Even though they did not make our list of the most assigned authors, some of the biggest names in left-wing thought were also assigned with regularity: Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jane Addams, Edward Said, Noam Chomsky, Sigmund Freud, Michel Foucault, and Louis Althusser, plus Frankfurt Schoolers Max Horkheimer, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodor Adorno.

Education school reading is also heavily peppered with some of the modern era's most radical writers on education: Howard Zinn, bell hooks, William Ayers, Maxine Greene, Judith Butler, Henry Giroux, Jonathan Kozol, Peter McLaren, Cornel West, Ronald Dworkin, Ivan Illich, Lev Vygotsky, Richard Rorty, Alain Locke, Ta Nehisi Coates, and Martha Nussbaum. Plus many, many less known but still highly influential figures, such as Christine Sleeter, Geneva Gay, Kevin Kumashiro, Paul Gorski, Thomas Popkewicz, Shirley Steinberg, Howard Gardner, Sara Goldrick-Rab, Edward Bonilla-Silva, James Banks, Lisa Delpit, and William F. Tate.

True, a tiny smattering of recognizable "education conservatives," such as Frederick Hess, Abigail

Thernstrom, Sandra Stotsky, Jay Greene, and E.D. Hirsch, is present. And the same goes for historical figures such as Benjamin Franklin, Frederick Douglass, Cotton Mather, Booker T. Washington, Louisa and Bronson Alcott, John Locke, and Horace Mann. But the preponderance of extreme left-wing radicals is so overwhelming that their influence is essentially buried. Radicals—and their liberal helpers—rule the education schools.

Another study that looked at syllabi from 16 schools of education was conducted by David Steiner, director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, and Susan Rozen, director of Reading/Literacy at the Bedford, Massachusetts public school system, in 2004. Steiner summarized their findings in an *Education Next* article:

> In the domain of foundations of education, the books most often required by the programs we reviewed were authored by Anita Woolfolk, Jonathan Kozol, Henry Giroux, Paulo Freire, Joel Spring, Howard Gardner, and John Dewey . . . . The rest are well-known works that embrace a constructivist and/or progressive standpoint. Conspicuously absent from almost all such syllabi were works that took a very different approach to teaching, such as those by E. D. Hirsch or Diane Ravitch. (We found Hirsch on two syllabi, Ravitch on just one.)[32]

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TODAY'S HISTORY CLASSROOM: EMPTINESS AND INDOCTRINATION

Perhaps no subject is more important for maintaining a common culture—or for dismantling it—than history. As George Orwell wrote in 1984, "who controls the past . . . controls the future; who controls the present controls the past."[1] Teaching new generations of Americans their history from an early age has long created a common national memory and a common understanding that tied together a people who have no common ethnicity.

Yet the history curriculum in education schools is no longer directed toward creating a unified nation tied together by respect for and curiosity about its past. Overt politicization to a leftist sensibility has become routine; while it may not make its way into every elementary school classroom, it assuredly is a powerful influence on the next generation of educators.

Furthermore, history pedagogy is undergoing a pedagogical transformation that is just as harmful as politicization, from a tradition of building a foundation of knowledge based on important dates, people, and events, to one that deemphasizes facts and focuses instead on reasoning processes. The combined effect of politicization and changes will likely be disastrous, with radical beliefs based on conjectural theories replacing an informed appreciation of who we are as a people based on facts.

This section is, again, based on reading selections found on education school syllabi from three major universities—the University of North Carolina, University of Michigan, and University of Wisconsin. The titles of the reading selections that contained the keyword "history" (or variations such as "historical") were tabulated.

> " Perhaps no subject is more important for maintaining a common culture—or for dismantling it—than history. "

Many of the selections were not pertinent to this study, since they discussed such topics as the history of education instead of the subject matter of history and the pedagogy of teaching history. This resulted in a relatively small sample with 97 readings at all three schools combined, one that reflects the slim number of courses about teaching history to be found in education schools. As Sam Wineburg, a Stanford education professor and director of the Stanford History Education Group, whose works were assigned more than any other author in the sample, suggested: "We would be hard-pressed to find more than a handful of courses in the entire nation that are devoted to the teaching of history."[2]

Table V. Most Assigned Authors: Keyword "History"

Author	Courses	Texts	Schools
Wineburg	5	6	UNC, MI
Zinn	3	3	UNC, MI
Mintz	3	1	UNC, MI
Van Sledright	2	2	UNC, MI
National Research Council: Donovan/ Brassfield	2	1	MI, WI

An examination of assigned readings in the keyword group supports both hypotheses: that politicization is commonplace and that pedagogy is undergoing a transformation.

HISTORY PEDAGOGY

Sam Wineburg's writing is not especially political, although his liberal inclinations are readily apparent. His best-known work, which is assigned as both a book and an article explaining the key points of that book, is *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts.* His school of historical pedagogy comes under many headings: historical literacy, historical thinking, historical consciousness, and historical reasoning, to name a few. As its names suggests, it emphasizes reasoning over the accumulation of conventional facts. It may seem to be a good way to develop young minds, yet, as E. D. Hirsch's discussion of the importance of content in teaching described in previous sections indicate, reasoning unmoored from content fails young students even in the development of their reasoning.

And it appears to have some potential for causing confusion. The publisher of *Historical Thinking*, Temple University Press, promoted the book by stating that it "demolishes the conventional idea that there is one true history and one best way to teach it."[3]

> According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, only 18 percent of U.S. eighth-graders were proficient in history in 2014.

While Wineburg's "historical thinking" approach may be appropriate for advanced students, attempting to teach such nuanced reasoning to children at the primary level is bound to cause confusion. It may be that history is best taught to young students using a "walk before you run" approach. This would entail building a foundation of factual knowledge, based on the most commonly accepted versions and interpretations, rather than trying to get them to think in more sophisticated fashion.

For, without specific content, there is cause for skepticism about whether the historical thinking method will promote stronger reasoning. It may instead create a mental void that opens students up to political indoctrination. Certainly, there is ample evidence that, as history education makes the transition from content to reasoning, American students demonstrate less knowledge and understanding of history. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, only 18 percent of U.S. eighth-graders were proficient in history in 2014.[4] It may be that dates, places, and names matter, since they form the primary groundwork of the foundation upon which more difficult concepts can be built.

And even at more advanced levels, the success of Wineburg's approach would depend on specific facts, but it's not clear whether he even regards facts as possible. While he does not appear to go to relativistic extremes, he intends to replace accepted modes of teaching history by de-emphasizing facts—certainly a cause for concern.

The devaluing of facts such as great events and their dates may make impossible one of the most important forms of historical reasoning. Giving students a comprehension of history's narrative should be the central function of history education at an early age. It is essential that they develop a timeline marked by important events and history's major transitions rather than "do" history on a personal level, as Wineburg prefers.

For Wineburg states a preference for a version of history that focuses on the small details of life rather than on a more traditional view that tries to give students an appreciation for history's grand chronicle of events and ideas. He favors as an example an eighteenth-century midwife's diary that "other historians" found to be "trivial and unimportant."[5] He applauds the change in history writing: "the sweep of the historical narrative is no longer restricted to great acts of statecraft but now encompasses everyday acts of childbirth, the daily routines of ordinary people trying to make ends meet. While this narrative reflects the influence of social history and feminism, it also highlights the new, more active role of the historian in narrating the past."[6]

Many may agree with Wineburg's emphasis on social history rather than on the history of major events, important people, and world-changing ideas. But such a transition is particularly unsettling for the education of young boys, who are captivated by the great adventures and personalities that contribute to a larger narrative and who are quickly bored by the ordinary. And it is the education of boys that appears to be suffering most, as evidenced by their high secondary school drop-out rates and low participation in higher education.

Further evidence of the transformation of history pedagogy can be found in a paper by Jannet van Drie and Carla van Boxtel, two widely cited Dutch educators, titled "Historical Reasoning: Towards a Framework for Analyzing Students' Reasoning about the Past." The article was assigned in the course Instructional Theories in Education at UNC-Chapel Hill; the authors suggested that the traditional "focus on history education has been on the content." But no longer: "Recent views of learning history have emphasized learning to reason."[7]

Another aspect of the modern pedagogy is shown in Chapter 4 of Brigham Young University history professor Jeffrey Nokes's *Building Students' Literacies: Learning to Read and Reason with Historical Texts and Evidence.* It is assigned in EDUC 490: Methods for History/Social Sciences Teaching Minors at the University of Michigan.

In the chapter, Nokes decries the "passive learning" students derive from textbooks and lectures and believes that they must instead be exposed to "the work of historians." He writes that "in classrooms where lectures and textbooks dominate instructional time, students develop a distorted perception of what it means to learn history."[8]

The "historical literacy" method championed by Nokes is illustrated by teaching about the "home front" during World War II. He recommends that students "interview women and men who remember life during World War II, synthesize their stories into an article on the effects of the war on their neighborhood and submit the article to a local newspaper."[9]

Having students talk to members of previous generations may be a good learning exercise in principle, but it is also narrow, anecdotal, and inefficient for students who should be learning about the unfolding of the historical narrative and the ideas that accompany it. The sort of anecdotal investigation prescribed by Nokes means spending lots of a limited resource—time—on relatively unimportant first-person accounts instead of learning about the events of the war itself. It is hard to argue that what happened in one's American neighborhood during the war was as important as the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the invasion of Normandy, the concentration camps, or the Yalta Conference. Yet that is often the message of academic history in recent decades, that the everyday lives of ordinary people deserve more attention than the grand events and ideas that changed the world.

It may very well be that such focus on the ordinary is why interest in history is so low among young people.

POLITICIZATION OF HISTORY EDUCATION

While the transition of history pedagogy from a basis in accepted facts to one focused on reasoning causes some problems, it is not necessarily nefarious. The politicization emanating from the education schools is another story; when historical content is assigned, it leans overwhelmingly to the left. Including radical political theory in the history curriculum is an intentional act.

The degree of politicization in history teaching varies from course to course. For example, two courses at UNC in Social Studies Pedagogy (in a master's program for experienced teachers) include works by educational conservatives such as Diane Ravitch and Sandra Stotsky.

Yet those two courses are anomalies. Other reading selections in the sample are consistently to the left, albeit to a mixed degree.

Politically, Sam Wineburg stated that he wished to stay out of the debate over "which history," by which he meant the debate over whether we should teach a traditional view of U.S. history with a narrative of freedom and progress or a leftist narrative of a nation that must atone for a racist, misogynist past. Yet, despite his declared reluctance to take sides, Wineburg supported the left in the clash over national history standards during the 1990s, scoffing at critics of the exclusion of Robert E. Lee and the Wright Brothers from history texts so that women and minorities could be increasingly discussed.[10]

And in the brief article describing his book, his choice of topics includes the slaughter of a Native American village, feminism, racism, and the Holocaust, rather than positive aspects of Western history. He also could not refrain from taking a gratuitous slap at President Reagan, citing a student who unfavorably "cast Lincoln as a modern-day Ronald Reagan, massaging words to fit the needs of his crowd, contradicting himself to gain votes, and turning to his spin doctors and handlers for counsel."[11]

> In *A People's History*, Zinn treated American history as one long litany of atrocities committed by European settlers and their descendants.

Even though Wineburg does not keep his politics out of his writing, he is still a modern liberal who at least aspires to truth rather than a radical whose aim is solely political. He wrote an oft-cited critique of the second-most assigned author in the history keyword group—Howard Zinn.[12] Zinn was the author of the widely used *A People's History of the United States*, as well as an unabashed radical and Communist Party U.S.A. member.[13]

In *A People's History*, Zinn treated American history as one long litany of atrocities committed by European settlers and their descendants. Furthermore, the book equates the United States's "Jim Crow" segregation laws with the World War II Holocaust, regards the United States as an illegitimate entity, and promotes communism. Zinn also displays little regard for accuracy; for example, he refused to acknowledge the guilt of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, after not only their co-conspirator, but their son admitted the pair had indeed been spies (along with considerable other evidence).

Zinn's work was assigned in two courses at UNC and one at Wisconsin. Additionally, a third UNC course assigned *A People's History* for the Classroom, a pedagogical adaptation of Zinn's

book by Bill Bigelow that includes lesson plans. And Zinn's book is widely used in the K-12 classroom (although claims that his book is the most widely used history text are most likely exaggerated). According to "The Zinn Education Project,"[14] a website dedicated to promoting his work in schools, 60,000 teachers have registered to download teaching resources from its website. It is not unreasonable to assume that many more teachers use Zinn's book without registering at this particular website.

Zinn regarded history as a tool to achieve social ends; in other words, truth and honesty have little importance in his reasoning. He chose what to include in his work according to how well it served his political goals. In *A People's History*, he wrote,

> Objectivity is impossible and it is also undesirable. That is, if it were possible it would be undesirable, because if you have any kind of a social aim, if you think history should serve society in some way; should serve the progress of the human race; should serve justice in some way, then it requires that you make your selection on the basis of what you think will advance causes of humanity.[15]

Not all authors in the keyword group are as hard-left as Zinn. Joy Hakim's book *A History of Us*, used in a course called Teaching of Social Studies in Elementary School at the University of Michigan, is not radical; instead it is written from a more ordinary strain of liberalism. She praises the Founding Fathers and is complimentary toward the American nation as a force for progress.

But Hakim's book still emphasizes the left's favorite themes of slavery, women's rights, unionism, and so forth. As is often the case with liberal texts, the lean to the left becomes more noticeable the closer to the present

time. The sequence of topics in one 20-page stretch spanning two chapters is: Malcolm X; Cesar Chavez and La Causa; Women's Rights; Native American Rights; Bobby Kennedy; Nixon ("the most unfit temperament of any who have held the office"); the Pentagon Papers and the Ellsberg break-in; and Watergate.[16]

The violence on the left that happened in the same period—race riots, the terroristic actions of the Black Panthers and the Weatherman—is largely ignored.

Perhaps Hakim's slant is best illustrated by the different treatments she gives to presidents Lyndon Johnson and Ronald Reagan. Johnson's Great Society is generally regarded as a disaster for greatly expanding dependency on government programs and weakening the family structure. But not according to Hakim:

> Later critics will accuse the Great Society of profligacy, but close study shows something else. Johnson manages to cut taxes, balance the budget, and address human rights and social issues.[17]

Reagan's treatment is less complimentary, even though he is widely regarded as a successful president:

> Reagan is anti-tax, anti-union, and fiercely anti-communist. He wants to reduce the size of government ... How do things actually turn out? Well, by the end of the 1980s, the United States is the world's greatest superpower and very wealthy. But in most inner cities, schools, bridges, roads, and buildings are falling apart; urban crime is soaring; some education statistics are in free fall; and access to health care is not equal to that in most developed countries.[18]

A more objective treatment would note that all of those negative trends were occurring long before

Reagan took office. Indeed, strong arguments could be made that most were exacerbated by Johnson's Great Society policies.

Also in the modern liberal camp is the third most assigned book in the keyword group: *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* by Steven Mintz, a historian and professor at the University of Texas at Austin. For the most part, it is a reasonable exploration of how various trends in childhood are to be perceived, from children captured by Native Americans in colonial times preferring to remain with their tribes to today's angst-ridden childhoods filled with conflicting messages.

But there are messages throughout *Huck's Raft* that let readers know where the author stands politically. One paragraph in the conclusion sums up Mintz's perspective:

> We must recognize that the solutions to young people's problems cannot simply come from individual parents, nor should they; effective solutions will necessarily be communal. . . . Government can ensure that all young people grow up with their basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and health care are met.[19]

Somehow, government taking over primary care functions is equated to Huck needing Jim to survive on their raft in Twain's novel. One would think the exact opposite from actually reading the book, for Jim's concern for his young companion is clearly more paternal and human than official and bureaucratic.

Many other readings assigned go much further into the radical realm. One is *Black Earth* by Timothy Snyder, assigned in "Problems in Education Policy" at Wisconsin. It comes with a dire warning: "Our forgetfulness conceives that we are different from the Nazis by shrouding the ways that we are the same."[20]

So what are the ways in which we resemble the German Nazis of the twentieth century? And whom does he have in mind when observing such dreadful similarities? One shared trait between modern factions and Hitler, according to Snyder, is a presumed conflation of science with politics, an "anti-Enlightenment" mindset. Another is an emphasis on competition. A third is a purported misunderstanding of the role played by the state.

To Snyder, Hitler's world view mixed politics and science in tragic fashion. Hitler failed to grasp how the problem of economic scarcity that plagued post-World War I Europe could be solved by expanded output through science and technology. Instead, he preferred a political solution—conquest—to a technical one, pitting men against one another for the one resource that remains fixed and essential: land.

And that is how Snyder perceives today's "climate science deniers," as claiming that "science is nothing more than politics."[21] His contention is based on a disingenuous conflation of terms. What Snyder means by "deniers," but does not say, is people who reject the belief that anthropogenic global warming is an immediate existential threat that can be corrected with policy. In other words, when he says "the science of climate change is clear," he deliberately substitutes a concept that is impossible to controvert—"climate science"—for one that that is clearly still an open question—anthropogenic global warming.

It may be that, rather than conservatives conflating science with politics, as Snyder claims, the reverse is true, that his environmentalist position on the climate is mere political smoke and mirrors and the threat of global warming is being used to get people to give up their liberty—the very ploy of which he accused Hitler.

And one could easily make the case that the Nazi regime—which exalted nature—was much

more aligned with today's environmentalists than with conservatives.

Competition, with its hallowed place in free market theory, is a special bogeyman for Snyder. There is little argument against his contention that Hitler viewed the world as ferociously competitive, that the branches of mankind were in ultimate competition for resources and control.

But Snyder's assertion that competition threatens the world in the form of capitalism is difficult to take seriously. He decries the belief that "free markets are natural,"[22] an outgrowth of mankind's inclination for free exchange. Rather, his reasoning takes a tortuous route in which he argues in favor of greater state control, even while attempting to criticize the rise of Nazi totalitarianism. He does so by contrasting the two leading Germanic postwar interpreters: the cultural Marxist Frankfurt School and the free market Austrian School.

> "
> Competition, with its hallowed place in free market theory, is a special bogeyman for Snyder.
> "

The Austrian School argued that the rise of Germany's welfare state was instrumental in Hitler's rise to power. Snyder instead claims it was the collapse of the governments of Austria and Weimar Germany that was responsible for Fascism's ascendancy:

> Followers of the Austrian economist Friedrich von Hayek claim that the overweening welfare state led to National Socialism, and thus prescribe deregulation and privatization as the cure for political evil. This narrative, though convenient, is historically indefensible."[23]

Snyder ignores the highly plausible idea that the rapid increase in the centralized government in the Teutonic world since the mid-nineteenth century eroded free institutions and paved the way for even greater reliance on government. It is commonly accepted that the Weimar Republic was a weak substitute for the strong central government that existed before World War I, and that its citizens sought shelter from Weimar's economic and political instability in the statist promises of the Nazis.

Yet Snyder is an unabashed apologist for state control, with little regard for accuracy. For example, he equates belief in limited government with belief in no government. "A common American error is to believe that freedom is the absence of state authority," he writes.[24] Yet neither the Austrian School nor modern American conservatives are anarchists who wish for no government. They merely wish to limit government from becoming too powerful.

There is one more group that Snyder places among those who, according to his definition, conflate science with politics in the manner of Hitler: "evangelical Christians," who "tend to deny the reality of climate change while supporting the hydrocarbon policies that accelerate it."[25] Without adopting the disingenuous sleight of hand mentioned above, in which "climate change" is substituted for "global warming," it is hard to imagine anyone, including devout Christians, denying "climate change."

Snyder's answer then, to the question of who resembles Hitler today, is a wide swath of the American right: capitalists, global warming skeptics, and evangelical Christians.

Another book assigned at both Michigan and Wisconsin was produced by the National Research Council. Titled *How Students Learn: History, Mathematics, and Science in the*

Classroom, its main editors were M. Suzanne Donovan, who is the executive director of the Strategic Education Research Partnership, and John Bransford of the College of Education at the University of Washington. Sam Wineburg also had some involvement in this National Research Council project as a member of an advisory committee.

The book's references include many of the leading lights of the "thinking history" movement, and the book clearly promotes that perspective. Even so, one major contributor, Peter Lee, who teaches history education at the University of London, supported some use of a fact-based curriculum. He wrote that one of the main principles of the book "is that students need a firm foundation of factual knowledge ordered around the key concepts of the discipline."[26]

Still, there are indications that both the method and factual knowledge prescribed in the NRC book will support politicization. While Lee promoted the inclusion of factual knowledge, his choice of such knowledge is suspect; he offers for demonstration of his teaching style a discussion about paintings of the landing of the Mayflower and the Pilgrims' first contacts with Native Americans, in which he raises such ideas as subconscious racism and the potential motive by the white artist to show whites as "great."[27]

Also, writing in the conclusion of *How Students Learn*, University of Michigan education professor Andrew Bain mentions assigning a lengthy selection of Kirkpatrick Sale's biography of Christopher Columbus, *Conquest of Paradise*. Sale's account was described in the *New York Times Review of Books* as:

> a learned, lopsided account of the discoverer's career, and of what he calls the ''Columbian legacy'' of environmental destructiveness.

Convinced that altering the natural environment is wicked, and attributing the vast changes that have come to American landscapes since 1492 to Columbus's example, he has set out to destroy the heroic image that earlier writers have transmitted to us. Mr. Sale makes Columbus out to be cruel, greedy and incompetent (even as a sailor), and a man who was perversely intent on abusing the natural paradise on which he intruded.[28]

Bain also wrote that he assigns other, more favorable writings on Columbus, trying to give a balanced view. But to the *New York Times* reviewer, University of Chicago Columbus expert William McNeil, Sale's account was beyond the pale. He said that "the lambasting that Mr. Sale administers" to the explorer is "unhistorical, in the sense that" he selected "from the often cloudy record of Columbus's actual motives and deeds what suits the researcher's 20th-century purposes."[29]

Bain also writes that he favors "problematizing historical accounts," which "makes visible what is obscured, hidden, or simply absent in many history classrooms."[30]

It may be that such "problematizing" the study of history obscures students' sense of clarity about topics, which makes them open to indoctrination. It also appears to mirror an observation by Wesleyan president and intellectual historian Michael Roth's description of how critical thinking is taught in today's academy: as merely adopting a hyper-critical attitude toward everything.[31]

Another blatantly political piece, assigned in the Seminar in Cross-National Studies of Educational Problems at Wisconsin, is "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History" by Nancy Fraser, a philosophy professor

at the New School for Social Research. It is historical only in the sense of describing the development of radical feminism in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

And it consists of little more than leftist jargon. Some examples:

> Turning "from redistribution to recognition," the movement shifted its attention to cultural politics just as a rising neoliberalism was declaring war on social equality.[32]

> . . . we could see a reinvigorated feminism join other emancipatory forces aiming to subject runaway markets to democratic control. In that case, the movement could retrieve its insurrectionary spirit, while deepening its signature insights: its structural critique of capitalism's androcentrism, its systematic analysis of male domination, and its gender sensitive revisions of democracy and justice.[33]

> Problematizing welfare paternalism and the bourgeois family, they exposed the deep androcentrism of capitalism.[34]

> . . . the young feminists of this generation seem poised to conjure up a new synthesis of radical democracy and social justice.[35]

It is difficult to see what such hyperpolitical rhetoric has to with education, either pedagogy or content knowledge. Yet such texts are so routinely assigned, they are part of the mainstream in education schools. Works by authors such as Hirsch and Ravitch—who are political liberals while educational conservatives—look extreme when placed on such a skewed spectrum.

Even in apolitical works that focus on the changing pedagogy, the literature is generously sprinkled with Progressive or leftist buzzwords,

suggesting that, at the very least, the text is intended to subtly nudge students to think in the language of the left. For example, the phrase by Janet van Drie and Carla van Boxtel that "students, who are not yet socialized into the genre of school history" suggests something beyond education.[36] And one can glean their intent to transform cultural awareness in the examples they chose, such as one sample exercise asking, "were the changes in the youth culture in the nineteen sixties in the Netherlands revolutionary or not?"[37]

HISTORY CONCLUSION

While not every reading selection in the keyword group is radical in the manner of Zinn, Snyder, and Fraser, there is still an obvious pattern. With a few exceptions, the range of ideological perspectives appears to extend from mainstream left to extreme left. While not all aspiring history and elementary teachers will enter the workforce as revolutionaries or subversives, many of them—who may have been failed by their own K-12 educations—will assume that there are no other valid perspectives on history.

And as the new "historical thinking" style of pedagogy becomes prevalent, so are indications that American youth are becoming increasingly ignorant of the past. It is likely that such advanced reasoning at a too-early age inhibits basic understanding of history, and that comprehension is best initiated with a foundation of easily grasped facts.

> "
> And as the new "historical thinking" style of pedagogy becomes prevalent, so are indications that American youth are becoming increasingly ignorant of the past.
> "

While both trends by themselves are likely to cause some degree of mischief, their concurrent domination of education school history pedagogy is truly alarming. All manner of beliefs can be poured into the empty vessels caused by a failing pedagogy; when education schools assign readings such as *The People's History*, *Black Earth*, and "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History," the only intent can be indoctrination of a new generation of teachers, administrators, and theorists.

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THE RADICALIZATION OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

No branch of learning is left unaffected by the radicalization of schools of education. Even supposedly neutral science, with its near-foolproof objective methodology, is being transformed by critical theory's all-consuming perspective. Much of the assigned or suggested literature in education schools now holds that the intention is not merely to introduce students to basic scientific concepts and reasoning, but to push teaching candidates toward adopting politicized pedagogies just as they do in more social disciplines.

The transformation of science education is not complete; there is still some adherence to Western scientific practices that have borne up over the centuries, proven to be remarkably useful, and for which there are identifiable methods for distinguishing knowledge from conjecture. But today, much of the literature assigned in education school courses rejects teaching science as an objective body of truth; to consider it so is perceived as an attempt to normalize Western culture and perspectives, or to perpetuate inequalities.

Instead, there are a variety of alternatives based on some form of cultural relativity. They can be called multicultural science, culture-based science, the plural "sciences," community-based science, and so on, but all are based on similar principles.

One advocate of this approach, Okhee Lee, is a professor of childhood education at New York University whose works are taught in three different classes at the University of North Carolina. In her book *Science Education and Student Diversity: Synthesis and Research Agenda*, coauthored with Aurolynn Luykx,

she states that unlike the view of science as "a universally valid endeavor with a set of tenets that transcends cultural boundaries," multicultural science is "a socially and culturally constructed discipline that questions the dominance of Western modern [universal] science, and advocates for inclusion of non-Western, indigenous, or other racial/ethnic traditions of knowing the natural world."[1]

> "
> No branch of learning is left unaffected by the radicalization of schools of education. Even supposedly neutral science, with its near-foolproof objective methodology, is being transformed by critical theory's all-consuming perspective.
> "

According to Lee, the plural word "sciences" is "used to refer to multiple ways of understanding the natural world." And multicultural science is justified "based on the principle of moral justice" and "antiracism."[2]

This is not merely the adoption of a new pedagogical technique. It is a "Copernican Revolution" that rejects the Enlightenment and, to an astonishing degree, blurs the lines between phenomena and noumena; that is, between the knowable physical world and the unknowable world of belief, conjecture, and wonder.

And this new paradigm is being gradually—but aggressively—foisted on young prospective

teachers who are ill-equipped to assess it by education school academics who lack the wisdom to comprehend the harm they are doing. Once in the classroom, both academics and K-12 educators may be teaching a world view that is fundamentally opposed to the one that has served the scientific world so well in the last 400 years.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The following chart categorizes reading selections at each of the three schools that included the keyword "science" (or some variation such as "scientific").

Table VI. Assigned Science Readings and Their Political Overtones				
School	UNC	MI	WI	ALL
Non-Scientific Readings	11	5	17	33
Scientific Readings	17	35	16	68
Politicized Readings	11	5	11	27
Educational Organization Readings	0	11	3	14

There were 101 such reading selections in all. Of them, 33 (the first category in the chart) merely used the word "science" but were not, in fact, about science or science pedagogy. One example of a non-scientific work is from Michigan's ED 516: "Montessori, The Science Behind the Genius."

Of the remaining 68 reading selections, 27 had titles that demonstrated some clear political intent. Some examples include:

> From UNC's EDMX 810: "Teaching Science for Social Justice" by Angela Calabrese Barton;

> From Michigan's EDUC 792: "Cultural Processes in Science Education," by Megan Bang and Douglas Medin;

> From Wisconsin's EPS 560: "Gender Similarities in Mathematics and Science," by Jane Hyde and Marcia Linn.

The other 41 titles that included a variation of the keyword "science" were straightforward and betrayed little or no hint of politicization, such as a selection from UNC's EDUC 504, "How Students Learn: History, Mathematics and Science in the Classroom."

While these reading selections' titles may be apolitical, their contents may not be. One example is a book by Mario Biagioli, recommended in Michigan's EDUC 830, with the innocuous-sounding title of *The Science Studies Reader*. The table of contents reveals a lengthy list of contributors, nearly all of whom can be identified as belonging to the political left, including French sociologist and philosopher of power relations Pierre Bourdieu. Many contributors were influenced by other French leftists, particularly Michel Foucault.

A final category is the number of reading selections that are produced by non-profit NGOs, governmental, and professional organizations. Such organizations—the National Research Council (NRC), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), and others—represent the heart of the establishment in science education, and their standards play important roles in deciding what gets taught in science classrooms and how it is taught. These publications will be examined in some detail in the following section.

SCIENCE EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR GOALS

A quick scan of the documents of the most important establishment scientific organizations reveals that they are not promoting strict adherence to the empirical tradition, but are complicit with the multicultural and critical education agenda. The National Science Foundation (1998) "emphasizes 'culturally and gender relevant curriculum materials' that recognize diverse cultural perspectives."[3] Some other policies explicitly stated by the National Science Teachers Association include:

• NSTA strongly endorses instituting a policy of gender equity in all pre-K-12 science classrooms. . . . [Teacher education programs should] ensure that discussions about research-related issues related to the pedagogy of gender equity are an integral part of professional development and teacher education programs.[6]

• Instructional strategies selected for use with all children must recognize and respect differences students bring based on their cultures.[7]

• NSTA advocates that K-16 science and engineering instruction be provided within the context of personal and societal issues.[8]

• [Science instruction should] provide an authentic learning context by examining the societal dimensions of scientific issues, such as political, economic, and ethical considerations.[9]

• Environmental education should provide interdisciplinary, multicultural, and multi-perspective viewpoints to promote awareness and understanding of global environmental issues, potential solutions, and ways to prevent emerging environmental crises.[10]

The National Association for Research in Science Teaching (NARST) states that:

1. Science is not free of cultural context.
2. Science textbooks are not free of racism.
3. History and development of science should
4. not be solely attributed to European cultures.[11]

> "
> The National Science Foundation (1998) "emphasizes 'culturally and gender relevant curriculum materials' that recognize diverse cultural perspectives."
> "

NARST literature includes an astonishingly patronizing and ethnically stereotyped explanation for teaching science with a cultural context:

> Three men went to see Niagara Falls. One was an Indian from India, one was a Chinese, and one an American. On seeing the falls, the Indian, as a matter of course, thought of god, manifested in this grandeur of nature. The Chinese simply wished to have a little hut beside the falls, where he might invite a friend or two, serve tea, and enjoy conversation. The American, however, on viewing the falls, asked himself what could be done to make the most of such an enormous amount of energy.[12]

Even the National Research Council concurs with the multicultural perspective, suggesting that "seeing science as a body of knowledge derived from (acultural) practices is a very impoverished view that leads science educators to focus on methods and facts rather than motivation, fascination, and personal relevance."[13]

THE MULTICULTURAL PERVERSION OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD

One of the ways that critical theorists and others have used to undermine traditional society has been to conduct an all-out assault on objectivity and truth. Skepticism, which is healthy in sensible doses, is inappropriately and exaggeratedly applied to the possibility of all or any knowledge.

Much of the attack comes from multiculturalism. The National Association for Multicultural Education website provides an abbreviated summary of its preferred epistemology, declaring the following to be invalid:

> Science is a neutral subject;
>
> Science has nothing to do with culture or politics;
>
> [Science] is an objective discipline based on a fixed body of knowledge that has been proven over time.[14]

The aims are, of course, political. Just as all the other facets of education, science is to be reduced to exposing bias and oppression. And traditional science education is reduced to just another form of hegemony, filled with surreptitious means for maintaining an unjust system of privilege. "Throughout history and even today, science asks only certain questions, and as a result, is used in ways that primarily benefit certain racial and socioeconomic groups," writes Kevin Kumashiro, who has been dean of the University of San Francisco's education school and president of the National Association for Multicultural Education.[15]

> " . . . "our approach works to remove the implicit valuing of Western modern scientific ways of knowing over all others." "

Science is condemned for its role in colonization and in creating patriarchal societies.[16] Because of this connection with past injustices, Kumashiro states, teacher candidates must therefore learn that the way we think is oppressive, and then participate in "unlearning"[17] and instead learn "to teach in anti-oppressive ways," with oppression almost anything that smacks of tradition, workability, or practical utility.[18]

Advocates for cultural forms of science attempt to tear down "Western science" (itself reduced to a cultural idea), objectivity, and "universalism." Megan Bang and Douglas Medin make clear that part of their goal is to diminish or dismantle Western science's importance in education: "our approach works to remove the implicit valuing of Western modern scientific ways of knowing over all others."[19]

Okhee Lee condemns the traditional standard of "universalism" to promote a multicultural form of science. In universalism, the basic rules apply everywhere; modern science transcends boundaries, whereas multiculturalists reject the assumption that science is culture-free—it is instead socially and culturally constructed. She deplores the way "universalism will be used as a de facto gate keeping device for determining what can be included in a school science curriculum and what cannot."[20] For, if she and other multiculturalists can eliminate universalism, anything is permissible if it is deemed as a central cultural belief.

A great fear of multiculturalists is that science, with its proven universal principles that were primarily uncovered within the Western tradition, will be imposed on students who are not Western, inhibiting their identities and diminishing their group ties. Goal-oriented education that gets children to comprehend science concepts and to think scientifically is dismissed as "thinly disguised (or even overt)

efforts to get children to adopt White middle-class practices and orientations," according to Kumashiro.[21]

Lee seconds Kumashiro's concern about the potential for hegemony:

> The multicultural science literature expresses the concern that universalism grounded in Western modern science may lead to assimilation, as it expects students to identify with science as universal knowledge and to leave their cultural beliefs behind in order to succeed in the dominant society.[22]

To fend off any possible assimilation, an important new skill for teachers is the ability to recognize "normalizing" practices, since they are unlikely to be discovered by the uninitiated, according to philosopher Sandra Harding.[23] In other words, every jot and title of the science curriculum must be critically eyed for signs of showing favor to the majority culture. (Harding's article "After the Neutrality Ideal: Science, Politics, and Strong Objectivity" is assigned in Michigan's EDUC 830.)

> "
>
> Education for the majority ought to be "something that disrupts one's common sense view of the world," states Kumashiro.
>
> "

Glen Aikenhead, whose article "Integrating Western and Aboriginal Sciences: Cross-cultural Science Teaching" was assigned in UNC's EDMX 810, suggests that "Western Science's historical roles in the colonization of Aboriginals" can make some minority students feel as if they are "associating with the enemy." Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to address such students' "feelings toward Western science,"

making them "feel more at ease with learning and with appropriating that subculture's content without accepting its values and ideologies."[24]

While the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) literature states that "science is misrepresented as a neutral, apolitical subject," it simultaneously promotes ideas that are suspect according to traditional perspectives, such as "the fact that race is not biological but a political and social construction."[25]

The claim is ubiquitous: "Most social scientists today agree that human "races" are cultural categories," writes Lee.[26] Indeed, that claim is gradually achieving the sort of Ivory Tower "consensus" automatically granted to other highly contestable topics, such as anthropogenic global warming.

Conventional attitudes toward gender are another common target in education school science literature. Kumashiro attacks science for "reinforcing the notion that there are only males and females" when "significant numbers of human beings and other living beings in the natural world are intersexed."[27]

TEACHING SCIENCE FROM CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

In the education school courses examined, there was a dearth of readings that mention the specific science concepts to be taught (and ways of teaching them). More likely such matters would be discovered in a textbook review, which is beyond the scope of this report. Education school science courses instead seem to focus on the theoretical level at all three schools.

But some insight into what is intended for the classroom can be gleaned from specific assigned readings. And it appears that the emerging science education will likely prove detrimental to students' advancement in science, as rigorous methodology and facts are downgraded. Okhee

Lee writes that "adherence to content standards may not always promote 'best practices' in science education. For example, an emphasis on discrete facts or basic skills discourages teachers from promoting deeper understanding of key concepts or inquiry practices."[28]

The ordinary logic and patterns of thought we all use to successfully make our way in the world are under attack in the radical left conception of science education. Education for the majority ought to be "something that disrupts one's common sense view of the world," states Kumashiro.[29] He favors an education that initiates some sort of "crisis" in which students learn that the very ways in which we think and do things is not only partial but oppressive," a "very discomforting process."

"Commonsense definitions of good teachers and effective math/science education actually hinder efforts toward equity in education," writes Kumashiro.[30] "By urging us to look beyond the repetition of commonsense and tradition that often helps perpetuate multiple forms of oppression in schools and society, they [postmodern educators] are able to offer insights that can help improve the educational experiences of all students."[31] "Unfortunately," Kumashiro opines, "what happens in the classroom is often not crisis and not change, but repetition and comfort."[32]

"Repetition" is an apparent epithet reserved for not just rote memorization, but adherence to scientific methodology and fact-based learning. Processes that educators have long sought to instill in students—building upon a foundation of concepts with which they gain easy facility so they can focus their attention on learning new, more difficult concepts—are no longer in vogue. Nor are meeting achievement standards. According to Kumashiro, these tried-and-true teaching concepts close off "the possibility of learning what has yet to be known."[33]

Remember that he is discussing schools of education preparing undergraduates to teach primary and secondary students, not graduate-level scientific researchers.

As these ideas filter down from Ph.D. theorists to ordinary teachers, the classroom becomes less about science. Instead, science teacher educators must be able to "integrate diversity, multicultural education, equity and social justice in their courses."[34]

A CLOSER LOOK AT CULTURAL SCIENCE

As mentioned previously, the multicultural perspective is beginning to dominate in schools of education. Nowhere does it rest on more shaky grounds than in science education, with its empirical and universal foundations. According to many of the articles assigned, there is equivalence between the varying ways that different ethnic groups have perceived the natural world; ethnic groups are considered to have their own "epistemologies," which are based on appearances or even upon religious myths.

Okhee Lee is an ardent advocate of multicultural science. Her book, *Diversity and Equity in Science Education: Research, Policy, and Practice* (co-authored with Cory Buxton), was assigned at UNC. She writes that teachers must have "awareness of how traditional educational practices have functioned to marginalize certain groups of students and limit their learning opportunities."[36]

Furthermore, she suggests that "effective science instruction must consider students' home cultures and languages in relation to the pedagogical aims of science instruction."[37] "For example," she adds, "teachers may point out for students that questioning and argumentation with teachers and peers is encouraged in the science classroom, although it may not be acceptable with adults at home."[38]

She suggests that "teachers also need to use cultural artifacts, examples, analogies, and community resources that are familiar to students in order to make science relevant and intelligible to them."[39] Otherwise, "when their own intellectual and cultural processes are marginalized from the learning process, students may withdraw from that process and have fewer opportunities."[40]

> "
> Aikenhead also suggests that culture comes before empiricism, stating that Western science should be brought "into the student's world view rather than insisting that students construct a world view of a Western scientist."
> "

The emphasis on culture in science education is frequently taken to extremes. There is a growing acceptance of the idea that there are alternate "indigenous" sciences derived from folk knowledge, mythology, and lived experiences that are regarded as equivalent to Western science. According to Lee, these tales "highlight a rich and well-documented indigenous knowledge base, known to biologists, ecologists, and anthropologists as 'traditional ecological knowledge' that has sustained indigenous populations over many centuries by providing pragmatic local practices organized around the relationship between environmental processes and human needs."[41]

She is hardly alone. "We think that cultural practices and their connections with Native ways of knowing must be the foundation of a community-based science curriculum," write Megan Bang and Douglas Medin.[42] They caution that "[n]ative science is not simply folk wisdom accumulated over time that may or may not be validated by modern science," but it promotes a "science" that incorporates myth, ritual, and long-held practices that are the antithesis of science.[43]

Aikenhead also suggests that culture comes before empiricism, stating that Western science should be brought "into the student's world view rather than insisting that students construct a world view of a Western scientist."[44]

Not only are race and gender presented to prospective teaching professionals as constructs; in some of the extreme multicultural literature that promote "indigenous science," rocks and water can be "alive" (if myths say they are).[45]

ATTACKING THE MAJORITY

The flip side of pandering to minorities by suggesting that their mythology and cultural beliefs are equal to science is the dismissal of the European-American majority as capable of teaching minorities due to cultural inadequacies. In much of the multicultural science literature, contempt drips off of the pages when discussing white teachers.

According to Lee, "a teaching profession increasingly dominated by white females"[46] inherently possesses negative attitudes toward minority students at a time when their population is exploding. Lee claims that these white teachers tend to "believe non-mainstream students are less capable than mainstream students," and "blame" students' outside lives rather than their own beliefs and actions, are "unaware of cultural and linguistic influences of student learning, do not consider teaching for diversity as their responsibility, purposefully overlook racial/ethnic and cultural differences, and accept inequities as a given condition or actively resist multicultural views of learning."[47] Lee cites a 1999 study by Sherry Southerland and Julie Gess-Newsome that examined the beliefs of 22 prospective elementary teachers. Their crimes? They demonstrated a positivist

(empirical) view of knowledge, believed that the goal of inclusive science is to make a fixed body of scientific knowledge accessible to all students, and to help "diverse learners" think like mainstream students.[48]

She cites a number of studies in which white science teachers' supposed insufficiencies are exposed. In her own 1990 study, titled "Differential Treatment of Students by Middle School Science Teachers: Unintended Cultural Bias," she describes a "White male teacher" who treated classes differently according to their racial makeup:

> often failing to provide non-mainstream students in his regular classes with meaningful activities and indirectly preventing them from participation in science field trips (due to school policies prohibiting participation of students with poor citizenship grades).[49]

Even from her own description, however, her criticism of the teacher is unwarranted. A school rule prevented some minority students from participating in field trips, not one the teacher imposed. Nor is he responsible for their citizenship grades—the students were misbehaving outside of his classroom, too. Lee's analysis performs a grave injustice by blaming the teacher for the students failure to conduct themselves properly. The injustice is not just to the teacher, but to the students as well, since they are encouraged to respond to their punishment by blaming others for their own behavior. And to reject their teacher's sincere attempts to teach them.

This is a crucial point about multicultural education in general: it places all of the responsibility for a student's "education" on the teacher, when much of it must be on the student instead. This approach conflicts with a more reasoned view that, while a teacher can guide,

explain, correct, and more, real education—the act of learning—is produced (or not) by the learner.

Lee also described a "science methods" course sequence taught by Alberto Rodriguez at Wisconsin in 1999 (he now teaches science education at Purdue University), working with mainstream prospective science teachers. The course integrated "a political theory of social justice with a pedagogical theory of social constructivism."[50] Most of the students in the class adopted his methods of teaching for both "student diversity and scientific understanding," but some "demonstrated strong resistance to ideological change due to feelings of disbelief, defensiveness, and shame that Anglo-European prospective teachers often experience when they are asked to confront racism and their own racial privilege."[51]

SCIENCE CONCLUSION

The view that objectivity-based Western science is an instrument of hegemonic control is part of the broader critical theory and multicultural project. This perspective is in ascendance in science education; its proponents are introducing values, anecdotes, myths, and emotions into a discipline that formerly tried to eliminate subjectivity as a general method. According to Lee, "from a critical theory perspective, desired science outcomes include social activism, as non-mainstream students become aware of social injustice and inequities—the unequal distribution of social resources and the school's role in the reproduction of the social hierarchy—and take actions to address this problem in their communities."[53]

The teaching of science to future K-12 educators has not yet become entirely politicized, as suggested by the fact that the majority of reading selections do not appear to be overtly political. But politicization can hide behind a benign, nonpolitical title; that majority may be

illusory. In any case, Western science's hold may be tenuous, for only a few decades ago there was little or no political influence in science education. Given the rapid and ongoing intrusion of subjectivity and critical theory into science education, without some dramatic change science education will soon be as politicized as the social sciences. And if culture-based science is not yet the standard, it has at least achieved a disturbing acceptance.

This manner of pseudoscience—for that is what cultural-based science is—will have its most devastating influence on students who are trapped in politicized public schools. It is not the existence of different learning tracks that will perpetuate socioeconomic "classes," as was claimed above. It is the failure to adequately teach even the most elementary of Western scientific principles as a firm, universal rock upon which to build more advanced knowledge that will do so.

> If science, with its verifiable method of proof, cannot withstand politicization, it is difficult to see what, if anything, can be salvaged from schools of education.

The same goes for the attempt to make race a key measure of teachers; by removing earnest, knowledgeable educators—of any race—who hold their minority students to high standards in the classroom, or by forcing them to teach cultural-based science, minority students will suffer. While majority students in private schools or other educational alternatives such as home schooling will study real science appropriate to their age level, minority students in public schools will be fed an inferior pseudoscience, with myths and political rhetoric regarded as

equal to empirical evidence, that will hinder their future intellectual development.

If science, with its verifiable method of proof, cannot withstand politicization, it is difficult to see what, if anything, can be salvaged from schools of education.

NOTES

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14. "I Teach Science. Can I be a Multicultural Educator," National Association for Multicultural Education, https://www.nameorg.org/learn/i_teach_science_can_i_be_a_mu.php.

15. Kevin K. Kumashiro, "Posts" Perspectives on Anti-Oppressive Education in Social Studies, English, Mathematics, and Science Classrooms," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 30, no. 3 (April 2001): p. 4.

16. Kumashiro, p. 9.

17. Kumashiro, p. 8.

18. Kumashiro, p. 10.

19. Bang and Medin, p. 1015.

20. Lee and Luykx, p. 23.

21. Kumashiro, p. 4.

22. Lee, p. 25.

23. Sandra Harding, "After the Neutrality Idea: Science, Politics, and "Strong Objectivity," *Social Research*, vol. 59, no. 3 (Fall 1992): pp. 567-587.

24. Glen Aikenhead, "Integrating Western and Aboriginal Sciences: Cross-Cultural Science Teaching," *Research in Science Education*, vol. 31, no. 3 (2001): pp. 342-3.

25. National Association for Multicultural Education.

26. Lee and Luykx, p. 11.

27. Kumashiro, p. 4.

28. Lee and Luykx, p. 27.

29. Kumashiro, p. 8.

30. Kumashiro, p. 9.

31. Kumashiro, p. 11.

32. Kumashiro, p.8.

33. Kumashiro, p. 9.

34. Mary M. Atwater, Malcolm Butler, Tonjua Freeman, Eileen Carlton Parsons, "An Examination of Black Science Teacher Educators' Experiences with Multicultural Education, Equity, and Social Justice," *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, vol. 24, no. 8 (2013): p. 1294.

35. Lee and Luykx, pp. 48-9.

36. Lee and Luykx, p. 103.

37. Lee and Luykx, p. 72.

38. Lee and Luykx, p. 77.

39. Lee and Luykx, p. 73.

40. Lee and Luykx, p. 78.

41. Lee and Luykx, pp. 23-4.

42. Bang and Medin, p. 1015.

43. Bang and Medin, p. 1015.

44. Aikenhead, p. 343.

45. Bang and Medin, p. 1017.

46. Lee and Luykx, p. 103.

47. Lee and Luykx, p. 104.

48. Lee and Luykx p. 105.

49. Lee and Luykx, p. 73

50. Lee and Luykx, p. 105.

51. Lee and Luykx, pp. 105-6.

52. Lee and Luykx, p. 22.

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The achievement gap dominates education policy today the way tracking and vocational education dominated in the 1930s. The gap represents the differences in scholastic achievement between varying demographic groups. Of primary focus is the gap between African-American students and those of European descent, with white students far outperforming black students on numerous measures.

However, as the chart below shows, the gaps between white and black students, and white and Hispanic students, have decreased over time (the gaps between Asians and all others are growing). The charts below compares National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test scores for fourth-graders belonging to the major racial and ethnic groups in the years 1992 and 2015:

	Table VII. The Diminishing Achievement Gaps for Math and Reading				
YEAR	**WHITE**	**BLACK**	**HISPANIC**	**ASIAN**	**BLACK/WHITE**
2015	248	224	230	257	24
2003	243	216	222	251	27
1992	227	193	202	231	34

MATH

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress

	Table VII. The Diminishing Achievement Gaps for Math and Reading				
YEAR	**WHITE**	**BLACK**	**HISPANIC**	**ASIAN**	**BLACK/WHITE**
2015	232	206	208	239	26
2003	229	199	201	224	30
1992	224	192	197	216	32

READING

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress

When one looks through the top education journals, the obsession with the so-called "racial achievement gap" seems overwhelming. Consider the *American Educational Research Journal*, the top education journal according to the SCImago Journal Rank. (This measures the importance of scholarly journals using a formula that relies on the number of journal citations and the importance of the journals from which those citations come.) In the most recent five issues of the journal, fully 11 of 42 articles touched on the gap at least tangentially.

In our sample of assigned and recommended readings on syllabi from three major education schools at the flagship universities of Michigan, North Carolina, and Wisconsin, 58 books and articles included the word "gap" (as applied to the differences in achievement by ethnic groups). The most frequently assigned authors (at all schools together) are:

Table VIII. Most Frequently Assigned Achievement Gap Readings	
Gloria Ladson-Billings	11
Sean Reardon	6
Pedro Noguera	5
Tyrone Howard	3

Nor is this concentration on the gap merely a matter of words and white papers: major policy campaigns—including the George W. Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind" legislation—have been created to eliminate it. Yet it sometimes appears that all this attention is creating less understanding rather than more. Policy prescriptions driven by the education schools continue to miss the mark because realistic analysis is politically untenable.

EXPLAINING THE GAP

Daniel Solorzano and Tara Yosso, education professors at UCLA and the University of Michigan, respectively—and critical race theorists—described the four main paradigms that are cited as reasons for why this gap has persisted for decades.[1] They are:

1. "Genetic determinist," which suggests there are inherent differences in intellectual abilities in different racial groups and subgroups.

2. "Cultural determinist," which suggests that the intellectual growth of children in some groups is inhibited by such factors as child-rearing, family structure, community expectations, and so forth.

3. "School determinist," in which the educational institutions are blamed for failing to educate minority children properly. Often the cause is assumed to be unequal resources and conditions; other times it is because the dominant pedagogical methods are assumed to favor the needs and learning patterns of majority students.

4. "Societal determinist," which suggests that, "the socioeconomic structure is ultimately responsible," that "schools reinforce and reproduce societal inequalities."

The first two focus on students, specifically their aptitudes and preparedness for learning, and both are out of favor with almost all left-leaning educators. Genetic differences are especially attacked, dismissed, demonized, or ignored, even though there is a large body of evidence to suggest they exist. Solorzano and Yosso add fear-mongering to the mix, making the outrageous claim that, since "no solution is possible because nothing can be done to change the genetic makeup, segregation or incarceration [are] deemed [to be the] most viable policy solutions."[2] No serious policy maker

or observer has suggested any such thing, at least for many decades.

> While acculturating low-performing minority students to behaviors that lead to higher achievement may seem a sensible means for closing the gap, it too is decried as racist.

One leading critic of the genetic determinist view is UCLA education professor Pedro Noguera, the second most assigned writer on the achievement gap topic in this report's sample. He suggests that social scientists who have expressed support for acknowledging genetic differences, such as political scientist Charles Murray and psychologist Richard Herrnstein, have no right to do so because they are not scientific geneticists.[3] That argument is specious: social scientists are experts in interpreting statistics, which would reveal group tendencies more readily than would knowledge of the genetic code.

By rejecting natural ability differences, methods that may help, such as placing students in "tracks" according to ability—first introduced by the Progressive left—have long fallen out of favor with progressive educators. Today, tracking is decried as racism, even though there is ample evidence that letting students progress at their own pace, among peers of similar ability, works for the majority of students.

With genetic differences dismissed outright, earnest educators explored another highly probable cause for at least part of the gap, the cultural deficit model, which addresses culturally based behaviors of minority students that adversely affect their school performances.

The cultural deficit model's acceptance has ebbed and flowed. It evolved from the intergroup movement in the early postwar period, then lost sway during the rise of the various "pride movements" of the 1960s and 1970s. It saw a resurgence in the ensuing decades, according to Solorzano and Yosso. Writing in 2001, they said it had become "'the norm' in social science research" (although admitting that there was "insufficient evidence" to support their claim).[4] According to the cultural deficit theory, among the many family and community factors that may affect minority students adversely are "present versus future time orientation, immediate instead of deferred gratification, an emphasis on cooperation rather than competition, and placing less value on education and upward mobility."[5]

While acculturating low-performing minority students to behaviors that lead to higher achievement may seem a sensible means for closing the gap, it, too, is decried as racist. According to Solorzano and Yosso, it perpetuates "racial stereotypes" due to "criticizing, downplaying, or ignoring the values and behaviors of marginalized minority cultures."[6]

Noguera does not deny that such anti-education behaviors exist; he cites many papers that point out how many cultural factors likely have a negative influence on school performance. These include parental influences and expectations, the anti-social rap music culture, a culture of poverty, an "oppositional culture" that deliberately rejects learning, and a culture of "victimology."[7] But despite acknowledging that these behaviors may be behind much of the achievement gap, Noguera rejects further exploration of how and why they have adverse affects and what solutions might exist. This would be laying "blame," he writes; it is better to find out what works to reduce the gap.[8]

Yet proper methodology rarely includes going straight from the problem to the solution without

a rigorous appraisal of the underlying causes. And Noguera is quick to ascribe blame to the schools themselves, suggesting that they, not the students' backgrounds, are responsible. A paper he co-wrote with Anne Gregory and Russell Skiba, "The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap: Two Sides of the Same Coin?", assigned in four different classes at Wisconsin, gives bias as the reason behind the equivalent "discipline gap" (black students tend to be more frequently and severely disciplined than white students). If minority students show more "defiance" for which they are severely punished, it is due to a cultural mismatch rather than oppositional culture, and teachers are expected to make themselves "culturally competent" in finding ways to teach that blend with students' home lives.[9]

In other words, the problem is not with the failure of individual students to learn; it is with the teachers and the schools. In this third cause, the "school determinist" perspective, school "structures and process" must be reformed so that they no longer favor the majority.[10] Doing so may require restructuring the entire curriculum. It also calls for devoting more resources to schools with large populations of minority students.

The last cause—societal determinist—suggests that low minority achievement persists "because schools reinforce and reproduce social inequalities. The socioeconomic structure is ultimately responsible," claim Solorzano and Yosso, and therefore it must be changed "to one that is more equitable."[11] It is not hard to see that this reasoning creates an opening for the entire leftist agenda far beyond the schoolhouse door.

One frequently cited source, "The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations" by Sean Reardon, a professor of

Poverty and Inequality in Education at Stanford, is a review of studies indicating that the racial gap has been declining gradually throughout the decades; the real persisting gap is due to family income. He cites a number of reasons, including the attempts by many in the educated middle and upper classes to deliberately stimulate their children's cognitive development, while low-income children are increasingly raised in single-parent families or other situations in which social pathologies and neglect stunt their development. Also, he suggests that the nation is separating according to Murray's and Herrnstein's cognitive elite theory, that educated people tend to marry other educated people, making a less intellectually egalitarian society.

> "The socioeconomic structure is ultimately responsible," claim Solorzano and Yosso, and therefore it must be changed "to one that is more equitable."

Reardon flirts with support for a conservative cultural deficit perspective in which low achievement is recognized as a function of behaviors inimical to scholastic success, and acknowledges that a genetic "cognitive elite" exists. However, he suggests that the growing gap in achievement between rich and poor is not the result of increasing numbers of low-income parents participating in those behaviors or differences in natural ability that are difficult to overcome. Rather, he blames Reagan-era policies that reduced government support for low-income families.

Poverty, then, not culture, becomes the new bogeyman. Raise living standards through redistribution and the gap will diminish. With this conclusion, Reardon's serious look at the causes

of differences in educational outcomes becomes just one more call for a more egalitarian society.

REPARATIONS, EXCUSES, AND TRADE-OFFS

The most frequent reading list selection discussing the gap is Gloria Ladson-Billings's presidential address at the 2006 American Educational Research Association conference, titled "From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools." It was assigned in nine courses at Wisconsin and two at UNC. Based on the work of economist Robert Haveman, her thesis suggests that wealthy people, such as factory owners, have historically used the profits from other people's labor to become better educated. Over time, the family and cultural benefits of that extra education have piled up, much in the same way that family wealth from higher incomes can accumulate over generations. She concludes that there is an educational debt owed to the descendants of those whose labor was used to provide that education. In other words, she wants educational "reparations."[12]

But the concept is based on faulty assumptions. Factory workers chose to work for their employers, as doing so was the best way that they knew of to provide for themselves and their families. After all, if some path to a better existence had been open to them, they would have pursued it. And she ignores America's long-term pattern of high levels of social mobility. Illiterate peasants from Eastern and Southern Europe and Asia have arrived here penniless and advanced educationally within one or two generations, and stories abound of African-American students born in dire poverty who rose to the highest academic levels.

So how can the "cumulative effect of poor education, poor housing, poor health care, and government services" be addressed, according to Ladson-Billings? Through the "expertise of education researchers," such as herself, who would reorder the curriculum as if omnipotent and implement a wide array of reparative schemes such as affirmative action.[13]

All of the attention focused on the gap is actually hurting education, says one expert who leans to the right, albeit slightly. That is Frederick Hess, the director of education policy studies of the American Enterprise Institute; it is not irrelevant to note that he works outside of academia. Hess claims that the emphasis on closing the racial achievement gap, as mandated by No Child Left Behind, has resulted in complacency about the education of good students.[14]

Hess raises issues rarely seen in other writing about the gap, such as the idea of limited resources involving trade-offs. For instance, acquiescence to demands to improve the outcomes of moderate-achieving minority students by placing them in advanced placement classes has diluted the rigor of such programs. In other cases, programs for the gifted are axed to shift resources to those who are struggling to learn basic skills—something Hess says has been occurring since the Education Act of 1965.[15]

Especially injurious to high- and middle-achieving students is an end to tracking according to ability, Hess suggested. While it indeed raises the performance of low-aptitude students, it has powerful negative affects on the performance of others.[16] Much more troubling is the way the campaign to end the racial gap has forced politicization of the schools. Hess described No Child Left Behind as "linking a conservative notion of accountability with liberal social justice." Schools are "treated as instruments for producing desired social outcomes," rather than as educational institutions.[17]

Another critic, this one on the left, who says too much attention is paid to the gap—but for very different reasons—is Rochelle Gutierrez, a curriculum and instruction professor at the

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Gutierrez's articles are taught in two courses at UNC and one at Wisconsin, and her University of Illinois biography says her "scholarship focuses on equity issues in mathematics education, paying particular attention to how race, class, and language affect teaching and learning."[18] While acknowledging that cultural and economic factors are closely related to low minority performance in mathematics, she suggests that "the racial hierarchy of ability in mathematics is socially constructed."

In her article "Gap-Gazing" Fetish in Mathematics Education? Problematizing Research on the Achievement Gap," published in the *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education,* Gutierrez claims that focusing on the gap ignores "the multiple identities and agency of students" and "engrains whiteness and middle-to-upper income as a norm." Furthermore, "current gap studies in mathematics education allow researchers to talk about, and unconsciously normalize, the 'low achievement' of Black, Latina/Latino, First Nations, English language learners, and working class students without acknowledging racism in society or the racialization of students in schools."[19]

Also troubling to Rodriguez is how the gap is measured and addressed: "Most professionals would agree that mathematical proficiency constitutes much more than can be easily measured on standardized tests. Yet gap studies tend to be based on measures of basic skill mastery."[20] She rejects the notion that "the problem (and therefore the solution) is 'technical'": meaning that those exploring the gap "are overly focused on tangible characteristics" such as "teacher knowledge or pedagogy."[21]

What is missing from the equation, according to Rodriguez, are "dimensions of equity" such as

"identity," which she describes as "maintaining cultural/linguistic/familial ties," and "power," which she defines as the "agency to affect change in school or society."[22] "Addressing issues of identity and power is important for decentering the underlying assimilationist perspective in many mathematics education policy documents."[23]

In other words, the key to improving mathematics instruction is infusing it with political dogma.

One frequent proposal for ending the gap is for more cultural relevance in the classroom and for teachers to be more knowledgeable about students' backgrounds. A common solution is for teachers to be minorities themselves. That is the theme of a book chapter by Montclair State University education professors Ana Maria Villegas and Danne Davis, assigned in two different classes at UNC.

Villegas outlined her views in another article, "Closing the Racial/Ethnic Gap Between Students of Color and Their Teachers: An Elusive Goal." She claims that "people of color are uniquely positioned to promote learning for students of color because they tend to bring an understanding of the students' cultural backgrounds and experiences."[24] Such teachers also "bring to teaching personal experience with and insight into racism and ethnocentrism in society."[25] Her argument also suggests that minority teachers serve as "role models" to minority students.[26]

> **"**
> While acknowledging that cultural and economic factors are closely related to low minority performance in mathematics, she suggests that "the racial hierarchy of ability in mathematics is socially constructed."
> **"**

Such reasoning suggests reconstructing education along tribalistic lines, even though students have long learned from teachers with different ethnicities.

GAP CONCLUSION

Frederick Hess wrote that the ethical foundation for educators' intense focus on the achievement gap is based on a fallacious moral argument that misinterprets philosopher John Rawls's "difference principle" from his *A Theory of Justice*. Hess said that, while Rawls suggested that "any social or economic inequalities" be "arranged for the benefit of society's least advantaged group," Rawls also cautioned that "it is not in general to the advantage of the less fortunate to propose policies which reduce the talents of others."[26] Hess concluded that the "problem with the achievement-gap mania is not that it is necessarily wrong; the problem is that its self-confident purveyors have been uniformly uninterested in the cost, complications, or consequences of their crusade."

But even that criticism may be overly hopeful. It may be that the full range of consequences of policies are knowingly dismissed in pursuit of the multicultural agenda.

NOTES

1. Daniel Solorzano and Tara Yosso, "From Racial Stereotyping and Deficit Discourse toward a Critical Race Theory in Teacher Education," *History of Multicultural Education*, Volume II, eds. Carl Grant and Thandeka Chapman (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 122.

2. Solorzano, p. 122.

3. Pedro Noguera, "Creating Schools Where Race Does Not Predict Achievement: The Role and Significance of Race in the Racial Achievement Gap," *Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 77, No. 2 (Spring, 2008): pp. 91-2.

4. Solorzano, p. 123.

5. Solorzano, p. 122.

6. Solorzano, p. 123.

7. Noguera, p. 92.

8. Noguera, p. 101.

9. Anne Gregory, Russell J. Skiba, and Pedro A. Noguera, "The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap: Two Sides of the Same Coin?", *Educational Researcher*, vol. 39, no. 1 (Jan. 2010): pp. 59-68.

10. Solorzano, p. 122.

11. Solorzano, p. 122.

12. Gloria Ladson-Billings, "From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 35, no. 7 (Oct. 2006): p. 10.

13. Billings.

14. Frederick Hess, "Our Achievement-Gap Mania," *National Affairs*, vol. 9 (Fall 2011): pp. 130-145, http://68.77.48.18/RandD/Other/Our%20Achievement%20Gap%20Mania%20-%20Hess.pdf.

15. Hess.

16. Hess.

17. Hess.

18. Rochelle Gutierrez, University of Illionois, Faculty Profile, https://education.illinois.edu/faculty/rg1.

19. Rochelle Gutierrez, "Gap-Gazing' Fetish in Mathematics Education? Problematizing Research on the Achievement Gap," *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, vol. 39, no. 4: 359.

20. Gutierrez, p. 360.

21. Gutierrez, p. 359.

22. Gutierrez, p. 359.

23. Gutierrez, pp. 359-60.

24. Ana Maria Villegas, Kathryn Strom, and Tamara Lucas, "Closing the Racial/Ethnic Gap Between Students of Color and Their Teachers: An Elusive Goal," *Equity and Excellence in Education* vol. 45, no. 2 (2012): 286.

25. Villegas, p. 287.

26. Villegas, p. 286.

27. Hess.

CORROBORATING EVIDENCE

Other evidence corroborates the conclusions derived from the examination of education school syllabi. One approach is to look at faculty members' voter registrations to see if a large imbalance in political preference exists. Another is examining the research interests of education school faculty for signs of radicalization. In both cases, we used UNC's education school for this investigation. We also present other evidence, both anecdotal and statistical, to show how the politicization of education schools is playing out.

PROFESSORS' VOTING REGISTRATIONS AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

Current voter registrations of the UNC education school faculty were quantified to check for signs that the education school is politically monolithic. Of the 52 education school faculty members listed as tenured or tenure-track on the UNC education school website, 30 are registered as Democrats, 10 as unaffiliated, two as Republicans, and 10 were not registered.

A further breakdown suggests that even this limited Republican presence is likely to be temporary. Both Republicans are full professors in their early sixties who were hired in the 1990s; very likely, one or both will retire within a decade. Voter registrations of the 12 assistant professors, who are the most recently hired tenure-track faculty members, are a reasonable predictor of future political beliefs. Eight of the 12 are registered as Democrats, with two unaffiliated and two not registered.

Of course, such uniformity does not unequivocally prove radicalization, as registered Democrats may be moderate in their beliefs. It does, however, suggest that ideas on the left—even radical ones—will be more generally accepted than ideas on the right.

But an examination of UNC faculty research does indicate that radicalization is extensive. A majority of education school faculty—27 of 52—expressed a research interest in subjects that indicate at least some degree of politicization (see Chart VII below). Eight of the 12 assistant education professors (67 percent) expressed such research interests. This high percentage among assistant professors contrasts somewhat with the rest of the faculty, of whom only 19 of 40 (48 percent) expressed interest in a politicized research area.

> Of the 52 education school faculty members listed as tenured or tenure-track on the UNC education school website, 30 are registered as Democrats, 10 as unaffiliated, two as Republicans, and 10 were not registered.

This means that the most recently hired faculty—generally the youngest ones who are likely to stick around and ascend to positions of power—are not only more frequently registered as Democrats, but they are more likely to be unduly politicized.

Table IX. UNC Education School Faculty with Politicized Interests

Professor	Party	Rank	Research Interest
Janice Anderson	D	ASSOC	Gender and Science Education
Kathleen Brown	U	PROF	Social Justice and Equity Diversity and Cross-Cultural Understanding
Lora Cohen-Vogel	D	PROF	Politics of Education
Jennifer Dilberto	N/A	ASSOC	Educators with Disabilities
Thurston Domina	D	ASSOC	Social Inequality
Deborah Eaker-Rich	D	PROF	Caring in Socially and Culturally Diverse Environments
Lori Edmonds	D	ASST	Using Funds of Knowledge to Promote Social Equity in the Classroom
Helyne Frederick	N/A	ASSOC	Culturally Sensitive Pedagogy
Brian Gibbs	D	ASST	Critical Pedagogy Social Justice and Democratic Education Teacher Disposition, Understanding, Positionality, and Ideology School Transformation
Jocelyn Glazier	D	ASSOC	Diversity and Multiculturalism Professional Development/Teacher Education Social and Cultural Studies Equity
Dana Griffin	D	ASSOC	School Family Community Partnerships Race and Culture
Sherick Hughes	U	PROF	Critical Race Studies and Black Education Social Context of Urban/Rural Education Interdisciplinary Foundations of Education
Alison Lagarry	D	ASST	Social Justice in Education Sociology of Education
Catherine Marshall	D	PROF	Politics of Education Social Justice Gender and Education
Robert Martinez, Jr.	D	ASST	Social Justice
Roger Mills-Koonce	D	ASSOC	Health and Well-being of LGBTQ Parents and Children
Rebecca New	D	ASSOC	Cultural values and early education
George Noblit	D	PROF	Race and Education
Kristin Papoi	D	ASST	Multiliteracies
Eileen Parsons	D	PROF	Socio-cultural Dimensions of Science Learning African American education Cultural Relevance and Cultural Responsiveness in Science Education Racial Equity
Xue Lan Rong	D	PROF	Educational Demography Social and Cultural Foundations of Social Studies
Kelly Ryoo	N/A	ASST	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners
Christopher Scott	U	ASST	Native American K-12 and Higher Education Social Justice and Equity Ethnic Identity Development
Lynda Stone	D	PROF	Social Theory in Education Feminist Theory Cultural Studies
James Trier	D	ASSOC	Cultural Studies in Education Popular Culture Representations of Education Critical Literacy Critical Media Literacy
Meghan Walter	D	ASST	Social Justice Issues in Schools

Source: UNC School of Education

EFFECTS ON EDUCATION SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Throughout academia, new education programs and courses are being produced that push a politicized agenda. Here are excerpts from a November 12, 2018, press release from North Carolina State University's College of Education:[1]

> NC State Education Adds Ph.D. Program Area of Study in Educational Equity
>
> The NC State College of Education has added the educational equity area of study as an option within its Doctor of Philosophy in Teacher Education and Learning Sciences Ph.D. program. The new emphasis will focus on preparing scholars to lead in providing improved educational access, opportunities and success for all children.
>
> Faculty teaching the educational equity courses will come from a variety of focus areas within the field of education, including educational psychology, literacy education, multicultural studies, social studies, English Language Arts education and special education. Their research focuses on teacher education, multicultural education and literacy, education and immigration, and diversity and equity in schools and communities.
>
> The educational equity focus addresses:
>
> - Scholar activism
> - Ethnic-racial identity development
> - Equity in education and teacher education
> - Ethics in human resource development
> - Ethical/moral dimensions of school leadership
> - Student motivation and achievement
> - Culturally sensitive research approaches and methodologies
>
> . . .

Note: This is an update from an earlier version of this story. The college changed the title of the area of study from social justice to educational equity to better describe and reflect its intent and desired outcomes.

EFFECTS ON TEACHERS

Despite the situation in university schools of education, the question must be asked whether politicization in education schools has a major impact on the teaching profession. Perhaps the simplest way is to look at the political leanings of teachers and compare them to the rest of society. Fortunately, the education media source and research center, *Education Week*, conducted a substantial national poll that was released in December 2017. It found that 41 percent of K-12 educators (teachers and administrators) described themselves as Democrats, 30 percent as independents, and 27 percent as Republicans.[2]

While those percentages do not approach the overwhelming dominance of Democrats in university schools of education, it suggests that the teaching profession tilts to the left. The results of the Education Week poll contrast with a Gallup poll taken of the general population in the same month. Gallup found that only 27 percent considered themselves to be Democrats, 46 percent to be independents, and 25 percent to be Republicans.[3] The narrow gap between Democrats and Republicans in the Gallup poll matches a 2016 Pew Foundation poll, which found that voters who are either Democrats or Democrat-leaning independents were 48 percent of the general population, whereas Republicans or Republican-leaning independents were 44 percent.[4]

While discovering the definitive set of reasons why teachers tend to be more liberal than the general population is beyond the scope of this report, it is not irresponsible to propose that their college education was a contributing factor, given the nearly universal liberal or radical-left ideologies of their education school professors. And, it would not be out of line to consider the possibility that, just as the UNC education school

faculty is moving to the left generationally, so is the education school faculty as a whole.

EFFECTS ON K-12 CURRICULUM

It is difficult to quantify national trends in the politicization of K-12 curricula. But the omnipresence of anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that the problem is severe. Some examples follow.

One well-documented example of a school district taken over by radical thought is in Edina, Minnesota, a prosperous, largely white suburb of Minneapolis. According to Katherine Kersten, a former Minneapolis *Star-Tribune* columnist and current fellow with the Minnesota-based think tank Center of the American Experiment, Edina's school district adopted a new strategic plan "that reordered the district's mission from academic excellence for all students to 'racial equity.'"[5]

The new plan mandated that "'all teaching and learning experiences' would be viewed through the 'lens of racial equity.'" According to Kersten, the system became obsessed with "white privilege" and extreme gender theories. An elementary school principal promoted "Black Lives Matter propaganda" and "recommended an A-B-C book for small children entitled A Is for Activist," in which students learned that "'F is for Feminist,' 'C is for . . . Creative Counter to Corporate Vultures,' and 'T is for Trans.'"[6] A course description of an 11th grade U.S. literature and composition course told students that they would learn to "'apply marxist [sic], feminist, postcolonial, [and] psychoanalytical … lenses to literature.'"[7] That may not be the worst course at Edina High School.

A required English course for 10th graders was "the primary vehicle in the indoctrination effort," Kersten wrote. The course:

> centers, not on reading literature and enhancing writing skills, but on the politicized themes of "Colonization," "Immigration," and "Social Constructions

of Race, Class, and Gender." . . . One student characterized the course this way on the "Rate My Teachers" website: "This class should be renamed . . . 'White males are bad, and how oppressive they are.'"[8]

Even training for Edina school bus drivers suffered the excesses of the social justice zealots in charge: "Drivers were exhorted to confess their racial guilt and to embrace the district's 'equity' ideology."[9]

> **"**
> Edina's school district adopted a new strategic plan "that reordered the district's mission from academic excellence for all students to 'racial equity.'"
> **"**

Another egregious example is a set of reforms implemented in many Washington State schools in 2017 that centered on teaching gender identity as early as kindergarten. While Washington officials said that the reforms were optional, they are now required by Seattle, the state's largest district.

At the first-grade level, Seattle teachers bring up the issue of gender roles, such as whether "dads could cook in the kitchen, or if moms should mow the lawn." Small children are read books such as *Introducing Teddy*, "about a stuffed bear named Teddy who identifies as a girl and wants to be called Tilly."[10]

A third example is an Atlanta charter school that no longer starts the day with the Pledge of Allegiance. Instead, the school's principal said that it is making "an effort to begin our day as a fully inclusive and connected community." She said that "[t]eachers and the K-5 leadership team will be working with students to create a school pledge. . . . that will focus on students' civic responsibility to their school, family, community, country and our global society."[11]

Yet one more is the Montgomery County, Maryland, school district, which is in the process of permitting students to take as many as three days off to participate in political protests.[12]

Such stories of how schools have forwarded the radical agenda are seemingly infinite.

EFFECTS ON STUDENTS

There are also many indications that the indoctrination of the newer generations is working. That is, young peoples' beliefs are shifting to the left. A 2011 Pew Research Center poll compared the most recent generation to fully achieve adulthood—the so-called Millennials—with prior generations. It found that Millennials are dramatically more left-leaning than other age groups, including an alarming generational shift in attitudes toward socialism—the ultimate goal of critical theorists and American Progressives.

Table X. Generational Attitudes toward Socialism

AGE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
18-29	49	43
30-49	34	58
50-64	25	68
65+	13	72

Source: Pew Research Center

Other results in the Pew poll suggested similar dynamics. For instance, only 70 percent of Millennials identified as patriotic, a significant drop from the 86 percent of the preceding generation, the so-called Generation X, who did so. Also, 47 percent of Millennials looked upon the "growing variety of family and living arrangements" favorably, as opposed to only 34 percent of Generation X.[13]

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> Small children are read books such as *Introducing Teddy*, "about a stuffed bear named Teddy who identifies as a girl and wants to be called Tilly."
> "

NOTES

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CONCLUSION

There is no hidden agenda in schools of education to radically transform our society.

Instead, that agenda is open, clear, and ubiquitous, and has been so since the early twentieth century. Back then, some of the nation's leading education academics openly declared that education should be used to transform the nation politically and culturally. They derided the transmission of American and Western cultural inheritances while encouraging changes in both how and what children were taught.

Today, there is an even worse element gaining influence in our schools of education. Cultural Marxists and radical multiculturalists have already become part of the education establishment, and they are using their positions to incessantly advance their causes.

Something reprehensible has been going on in K-12 schools. Sometimes it is visible and makes headlines: the Edina, Minnesota, school district making "white privilege" a focus of its high school curriculum; Washington State introducing "the many ways to express gender" in kindergarten; a school in Atlanta, Georgia, dropping the Pledge of Allegiance for an oath taken to a "global society"; and much, much more.

Most of the time, however, it happens behind closed doors. The "boiling frog" principle has long been at work in K-12 education. Rather than introducing district-wide "whiteness studies" curricula, many schools undergo lesser but incremental tweaks to existing programs. They quietly introduce unspoken policies to even out racial differences in punishments by ignoring chronic trouble-makers, or subtly make curricular choices that instill particular

beliefs about anthropogenic global warming, transgender rights, or open borders policies into impressionable young minds.

This politicization is not happening randomly, but by design. Something is driving it. That something is our schools of education.

> There is no hidden agenda in schools of education to radically transform our society. Instead, that agenda is open, clear, and ubiquitous, and has been since the early twentieth century.

Of course, most new K-12 classroom teachers do not spring forth from education schools as full-blown social justice warriors eager to transform the world. But some do. After four years (at a minimum) in academia, most new teachers are sympathetic to at least part of the critical pedagogy or multiculturalism world views. Even teachers who are apolitical will defend their education school training or their current school's policies. When asked about politicization, they will possibly be stunned at the question or adamant that nothing of the sort goes on at their schools. At best, these teachers may say that something is happening in the next town, or the next state, but not in their school.

But that doesn't mean they are right; more likely they are just unaware. After all, most education school students are young and unsophisticated about the world of politics. That means they have little defense against persistent political persuasion.

And, as demonstrated by the empirical evidence presented in Part II, radical ideas are hard to escape in education schools. The higher one goes up the educational hierarchy, the more likely he or she is to have had a lengthy exposure to extremist ideas—and the less likely to reject them. To rise to a position of influence in education, one must make it through a minefield of graduate education courses that are intended to indoctrinate the gullible and weed out the recalcitrant.

Each year, the radical agenda advances a little more. The "long march through the institutions" called for by the early cultural Marxists almost 100 years ago has moved forward in each subsequent generation. Their way was prepared by the American Progressives who assumed power in schools of education right from the start.

The biggest problem is that there may be little hope of reforming the schools of education. The "critical mass" needed to achieve a permanent consensus of the radical left has likely been reached at two of the three leading education schools explored in this report. The only logical assumption to make—if the nation continues to hand over the mental training of new generations to education school-trained teachers—is that the current trend will continue.

We cannot expect reform to occur naturally. It will only happen with wholesale changes to longstanding practices in the way education schools are governed. Since recruitment and admission of graduate students and the hiring and promotion of faculty depend on a consensus of faculty—who are either themselves radicalized or sympathetic—it may be impossible for traditional or non-politicized educators to gain a foothold in all but a few small, private education schools.

This may mean, sadly, that the major schools of education must be written off. The education of the young is too important to continue handing it over to a mixture of hardened radicals, cynical liberals who cooperate with them, and well-meaning-but-naïve educators who are easily influenced into becoming "useful idiots." This is not to say all educators belong to those categories, but with the continued control of the teaching profession by the major schools of education, a high degree of uniformity is inevitable.

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> **"**

But all may not be lost. Today, there is a renewed public focus on culture that was absent during much of the period when radicals overtook the education schools. There is considerable experimentation and innovation in K-12 education, including charter schools and alternative certification programs for teachers such as Teach for America. While these innovations may not address the issue of politicization, the problem is becoming unavoidable. And since politicization is at the root of so many other problems, solutions that do not address it will inevitably fail.

Other developments, such as home schooling, school choice, and a rebirth of private schools, provide some hope, since they can cut the cord between actual education of children and schools of education—or at least mitigate the damage by not hiring teachers who show signs of indoctrination.

There is also the possibility that new schools of education will be founded, with an eye toward bringing back traditional education (or at least, an updated version of it). Unfortunately, that is not yet occurring.

While the best route to reform of education may be through alternate institution building, it may not be enough. Perhaps the best hope for reform—at least for public schools of education—is political. Conservatives are gaining influence in many state governments; as legislators and governors, they appoint members of governing boards, who in turn appoint the top administrators. They control the purse strings for universities, and have ultimate control over the K-12 curriculum. They can alter certification procedures and standards, encourage partnerships with innovators, and more. They can even change education school governance and personnel practices—a drastic step, perhaps, but one that may be necessary if real reform is to occur.

So far, however, legislators and trustees have shown great reluctance to get directly involved in faculty and curriculum decisions. It appears that few have yet to grasp how deeply radical elements and ideas have been embedded in our education establishment. They continue to work with the establishment and appoint its devotees to high positions—even though these "experts' have been groomed by the same schools that badly need reform.

But each passing year brings greater urgency to turn back the century-long politicization process. Despite their current squeamishness about disrupting current practices, legislators and trustees will have to aggressively tackle the problem—or hand over the nation to proponents of some of the worst ideas the world has ever known.

About The James G Martin Center for Academic Renewal

The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal is a nonprofit institute located in Raleigh, North Carolina. It is dedicated to excellence in higher education, both nationally and in North Carolina.

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