Professing Education

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In this Edition

Editorial: Electoral Hopes

By way of welcoming you to our third volume of Professing Education, I would like to open with a question. Who among us, irrespective of political stripe, doubts the gravity of this year's election outcome? It will be an election of great historical consequence only because the lies that have dominated this President's term have been of great historical consequence. Of course, the most grievous consequence is the appalling loss of innocent human life on all sides. How can we even trust the numbers that come down the media pipe when the moguls running the machine by-and-large feel compelled to obfuscate the lies told it? If only George W. Bush had lied about his old drinking habits, if only he had committed some sexual infidelity and lied about that, only then could we expect (if Clinton has set an accurate historical precedent) the kind of moral condemnation that a false war overseas, it appears, fails to generate. The public (generally speaking) hates the lies of the private sphere, I suspect because they often resonate too close to home. Public figures who lead sordid private lives make good targets for guilty feelings in the public sphere. We desperately want (need?) them to be above our own sundry private vagaries. If the electorate cannot appease its native imperfections by turning to a purer leader, then it turns to reality TV for such transference. Yet, and to a disturbing degree, the public seems far less perturbed when it comes to lies about international policy – lies about war and peace, life and death.

The word "lies," of course, is a notoriously strong word to use, especially in reference to an American President, but in the wake of the House Commission's findings that clearly there is no evidence supporting Saddam's complicity with Al Qaeda, what else in good conscience do we call it, especially when so many other lies are already a matter of public record? And so, what can professors of education say about electoral hopes as a way of making important but concealed truths resonate with the public? We are all aware that elections are integral to healthy democracy, but need we be reminded of what John Dewey told us early last century, that a thriving democracy extends well beyond the ballot box? It seems to me that Dewey (along with his poetic equals, Emerson and Whitman) taught us a great deal about the richness of democracy, and I am guessing that George W. Bush has not read a lick of it. I would be happy to stand corrected. Dewey taught us that in the absence of memory we

impoverish our imaginations, and that this in turn arrests our ability to intelligently hope. We cannot afford to pass on to our students the Manichaean mind-set of this President – we cannot afford to dream in black and white, good and evil. To project our hopes in such a manner is to devolve into a mass rather than a public – pliable, manipulable, unthinking. Without diminishing the terror of 9/11, we must remain conscious of the rich integrity of memory, imagination, and intelligent hope. History can become the greatest weapon of terror when we falsely convince ourselves that it is preordained and mapped out for us and us only.

Professors of education stand to learn a great deal, and teach their students a great deal about the wonderful richness of their democratic tradition by turning exactly to those who thought about it most deeply and with most compassion. The classical American Pragmatists would be a good place to start for anyone unfamiliar with their works – the works of C.S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and G.H. Mead representing the most salient examples. It seems the collective memory of the American public would stand to learn a great deal, not just about those discrete events in the past that need to be remembered, but also about the way that memory itself, as I have mentioned, fuels the imagination and staves off hopelessness. Manifest destiny or not, America's story, its grand democratic narrative, is a great one, but like all the greatest stories it must be disciplined by practices of truthfulness. And if one's truthfulness fails to wed to compassion and justice, then it becomes dangerous for lack of imagination. For, without the ability to intelligently and compassionately hope for better futures, without that ameliorative faith that professors of education can help to forge – and yes, it involves public critique and protest when lied to about matters of grave significance, then the world will be divided, simply and efficiently, into light and dark – tragic chiaroscuro.

On behalf of the entire editorial team, I hope that you enjoy this issue of Professing Education.

K.M.

No Intro Course Left Behind?

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This essay was originally presented as an address to the Society of Professors of Education at its annual meeting with the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, April 16, 2004.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak with the members of the society. I want to begin by explaining the title of my remarks.

I am going to use the term "intro course" inclusively in this address to refer to courses that focus on teaching as an occupation within the larger social context of education. Intro courses require professors of education to move beyond their academic specializations and help prospective teachers look broadly at a variety of issues. Coming first (or at least early) in the teacher education program, such courses may be titled "Introduction to Education" or "Introduction to Teaching" or "Foundations of Education." Or they may not be. At my university, the intro course is called "Education in a Diverse Society," and it is a single course that covers ground we once covered in two courses. This compression of our work, a political reality in teacher education programs throughout the nation, is one of the things that prompted my choice of subjects for this address.

Intro courses are taught by people like us. We're professors whose specializations are philosophy of education, history of education, curriculum theory, and maybe even social studies education. We're professors who often find ourselves in small teacher education programs that require us to be generalists. We're the people most likely to join the Society of Professors of Education.

As for the "Left Behind" in the title, it is an obvious reference to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. That is the political context I am addressing, and it influences the work all of us do as professors of education. Consider how NCLB has affected you and your work. Allow me to borrow the

question of a former president of the United States: "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" Is your teacher education program better off? Is your part of the program better off? I think I know the answers. NCLB has created an unfavorable climate for teacher education generally, and people like us have been faring worse within teacher education programs.

The two aspects of NCLB that have affected us most directly are:

1) *highly qualified teacher* provisions that have caused teacher education programs to increase coursework in the arts and sciences and cut coursework in education, putting a squeeze on people like us and the courses we teach;
2) mandates for state *standards, assessments, and accountability* – the continuation and intensification of a trend that has been underway for a quarter century. Many, perhaps most, of our colleagues in teacher education doubt that people like us have a genuine contribution to make in preparing teachers to work under such mandates.

My career in teacher education began in 1977, and I have spent the entire time struggling with back to basics and testing, testing, testing. I must say it is getting old. NCLB is the latest but, unfortunately, the worst manifestation I've encountered—the most powerful and most dangerous version yet of a long-term trend.

The perspective I want to offer you in this address is based on 27 years of teaching the intro course at one institution. It is a perspective that informs the textbook I have written: *America's Teachers: An Introduction to Education*, which I am now revising for the fifth edition. Steady involvement with people like us since the mid-1970s has shaped my perspective. I have enjoyed being active in the American Educational Studies Association; the American Educational Research Association, particularly Division F, History and Historiography, and the Special Interest Group on Teachers' Work and Teachers' Unions; the History of Education Society; and several regional societies.

I have four points to make, four pieces of friendly, collegial advice. If people like us want to keep our jobs, our courses, and our contributions to teacher education from being left behind, I suggest we do several things:

1. Talk about children
2. Talk about teachers
3. Talk about the social context of education, especially politics and diversity
4. Talk about practice as well as theory.

I will discuss each point in turn.

1. Talk about children

People like us should not be reluctant to talk about children. In the fall of 2003 in Mexico City, I was honored to deliver a presidential address to the American Educational Studies Association titled "Would Marietta Johnson Join AESA? What a Pioneer Progressive Educator Might Think of Our Association." My basic argument was that Johnson, founder of the School of Organic Education in Fairhope, Alabama, and one of the preeminent child-centered educators of the early twentieth century, would find a great deal to admire in AESA. But she would have reservations, I feel sure, about the tendency of AESA members to talk *around* children rather than talk *about* them. Johnson died in 1938, but were she alive today, I believe she would want people like us to put children at the very center of our analyses. She would want us to start with children and work outward to the social and political context rather than the other way around.

Why do people like us avoid talking about children? My answer in Mexico City was complicated, but let me say here that it involves our rejection of child-centered studies as soft, affective, and socially unaware. Digging deeper, we may find that gender is also involved. More than we realize, professors like us have bought into the notion that talking about children is sweet and feminine while talking about social and political issues is tough and masculine. And in our academic work, we want to be tough and masculine.

I will relate some organizational history to explain. During the late 1920s and 1930s, Marietta Johnson and other female child-centered progressives lost control of the Progressive Education Association (PEA), which Johnson helped found in 1919, when males with a society-centered vision took over the organization. Had we lived in Johnson's era and pursued careers similar to those we have today, some of us would have been members of the PEA, and we would have witnessed the change. The men who rose to power in the association – professors of education and school administrators – brushed aside child-centered pedagogy because they considered it soft, permissive, and socially unaware.

The major catalyst in the change was George Counts' famous 1932 address to the PEA, "Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?" Mincing no words as he described the crisis of capitalism and the widening gap between rich and poor, Counts wondered how much longer progressives could continue to emphasize personal freedom, individual expression, and creative activity. "Progressive Education cannot place its trust in a child-centered school," he concluded. Counts challenged educators to "face squarely every social issue [and] come to grips with life and all its stark reality" (p. 259). This call to arms, which hit Counts' audience like a "bombshell," hastened the transformation of the PEA into a more society-centered association.

Today, using the interpretive lens of gender analysis, we can see within the takeover of the PEA a masculine rejection of a feminine pedagogy. Johnson and other child-centered women practitioners, rather than professors, found themselves marginalized within their own organization as well as the larger progressive education movement. They were dismissed – quite unfairly, in most cases – as frivolous playschoolers with no social vision.

Counts, a professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, helped develop the first courses and the first graduate program in the social foundations of education. The new academic field, which took shape during the changing of the guard in the PEA, was characterized from the start by tough talk on the social cutting edge. People like us modeled this hard, masculine approach while we were in graduate school. What the field of social foundations lacked, and what we learned to regard as unimportant, was a connection to actual experience with children, the stock and trade of the PEA prior to its transformation.

Having spent time reflecting on how this academic heritage has influenced my own teaching and research, I am convinced people like us should start talking about children again. We should treat them not as abstractions, not as creatures some of us remember working with years ago, but as the people at the very center of our concern.

I was not sure how this message would go over with AESA members. After my address, several people assured me I had made them think, for the first time in years, about what they have to say about children in their teacher education classes. "You know, Joe, I'll have to admit I don't talk about them very often," one of my closest friends in the history of education confided. "I guess I'm too busy talking about Horace Mann, or John Dewey, or Lawrence Cremin to say much about children."

2. Talk about teachers

Most people like us have even less to say about teachers than we do about students. Over the course of my career as a teacher educator, I have probably overcorrected in this area by centering much of my research on teachers. I could well heed Johnson's advice and move children closer to the center of my work, especially in the intro course.

My point here, though, is that the intro course should help prospective teachers think critically about the occupation they are preparing to enter, about such things as their motives for teaching, teacher salaries, trends in teacher education, teacher organizations, and school law as it applies to teachers. After all these years of teaching the intro course, I am still looking for better ways to help prospective teachers stand in the shoes of currently employed teachers and appreciate their views on occupational issues – for

instance, why veteran teachers rationalize their low salaries by saying they are still dedicated to children and they never expected to get rich anyway.

By the same token, people like us should not be so reluctant to help teachers understand the nuts-and-bolts of the occupation: job markets, salary schedules, union contracts, evaluation procedures. Although such things can seem mundane at first glance, my experience has been that it is not hard to get teachers interested in how the pieces of the puzzle fit together – why salary schedules are set up as they are, for instance, or why politicians take such a keen interest in keeping the job market open and flowing. We should not view these issues as beneath our scholarly dignity. In the intro course, we can turn these matters into issues for critical analysis within the social context of education. Which leads into my next point.

3. Talk about the social context of education, especially politics and diversity

NCLB requires that student test scores be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, social class, exceptionality, and other cultural factors. What a golden opportunity for people like us to join a conversation about diversity, a conversation situated in a highly charged political context. Within teacher education, we are the ones who have been talking for years about politics and cultural factors. We are the ones who have taken those factors into consideration when our colleagues did not want to. And yet now, within some teacher education programs, people like us are being pushed aside because we are viewed as irrelevant – people with nothing much of importance to say.

In some respects, we are facing the same old problems we have faced for years. Our political criticism often comes across as negative and carping. Our analysis of diversity comes across as excessively academic, carefully distanced from the students that teachers face every day in their classrooms.

Let me state clearly that we should not apologize for our political critique. NCLB *is* a dangerous political ploy, one that threatens to undermine public education. We cannot sugar-coat that point. Most of our colleagues in teacher education and most teachers, I am convinced, stand with us on this issue, although they may not appreciate our sometimes shrill tone. In this 2004 election year, we can be encouraged that governors and legislators in states as different as Utah and Massachusetts are beginning to see through the ploy. The bipartisan support that led to the passage of NCLB is beginning to crumble. We can wish the growing opposition to NCLB were based less on the hardships of unfunded mandates, which seems to be John Kerry's main complaint, and more on the real harm that standards, testing, and accountability are doing in the classroom. But the opposition is growing nonetheless, and that is good news.

In the meantime, teachers are being forced to fall into line with NCLB, and they are looking for guidance on how to deal with diversity. What are we doing to help them?

If you listen to teachers, the answer is clear – not much. During Fall Semester 2003, I worked with one of the best graduate students I have ever taught, an intermediate school principal who seemed very receptive to what I was trying to do in my advanced graduate seminar in educational foundations. Without ever directly critiquing my academic approach to diversity issues, which is similar to what I do in my intro course, Lee Mansell told me in her research project titled "Overcoming Poverty to Promote Learning" (2003) what she would have preferred.

> This year we have changed our expectations of students and parents from poverty and are rethinking our teaching methods. This change resulted from the study and implementation of the work done by Ruby Payne, former teacher, principal, consultant, and administrator.
> In August 2002 a faculty member found an article by Payne which she shared with the faculty. We were searching for a way to help our at-risk students learn to read. The advice in the article could be applied

> to our situation. We recognized the students in the article as those who were struggling in school. For the first time, we understood what generational poverty meant to students and the implications for educators. . . . In January 2003 the whole faculty attended a workshop where [we] discussed Payne's findings and the implications for working with students living in poverty. In February 2003, the Title I teacher and I attended Ruby Payne's two-day seminar based on her book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. After the seminar, we purchased every work written by Payne and/or her associates. In the following months, the faculty read, discussed, and decided to adopt Payne's methods for working with students from generational poverty. (p. 7)

Reading these words stopped me short. How many people like us have had such a direct effect on teaching and learning? Ruby Payne's work is attracting a great deal of attention in public school districts because it seems credible to teachers. It speaks to them directly even if it does not offer the cookbook approach to teaching that some of them want. Payne has become a well-paid consultant, flying around the country, conducting seminars, and probably making a good bit of money. My local school district, the Mobile County, Alabama, Public Schools, is buying her program. As I investigated Payne's approach, which she presents in *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (2003) and other books, I discovered it is based in part on work most of us are familiar with: the research of Lee Shulman and James Comer, the writing of Jonathan Kozol and Oscar Lewis.

But as my outstanding graduate student, the principal, finally told me, Ruby Payne's work comes across to teachers as more *practical* than ours does. We have heard that critique for years, I realize, but I still want to make it my fourth point in this address.

4. Talk about practice as well as theory

During graduate school and into my early career as a foundations professor, I learned I was responsible for theory while methods professors were responsible for practice. In fact, I developed a disdain for the practical side of teacher education, taking occasional potshots at the record keeping, lesson-plan making, noun drilling, and other skills that lie in the methods domain.

No wonder Ruby Payne seems more credible to teachers than I do. When I look at what she says about language and dialect, for instance, I am particularly intrigued because I began my career as a high school English teacher. As a social foundations professor, I still talk about language and dialect, but I have learned to distance myself from the classroom *because that is what people like us do*. In Payne's book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (2003), by contrast, she concludes the chapter titled "The Role of Language and Story" with the question "What does this information mean in the school or work setting?" Then she answers by applying what she has explained in detail in the chapter.

> Formal register needs to be taught directly.
>
> Casual register needs to be recognized as the primary discourse for many students.
>
> Discourse patterns need to be taught directly.
>
> Both [formal and casual] story structures need to be used as a part of classroom instruction.
>
> Discipline that occurs when a student uses the inappropriate register should be a time for instruction in the appropriate register.

> Students need to be told how much the formal register affects their ability to get a well-paying job. (p. 50)

In my own defense, I can say I cover most of those things in class as well as in my intro textbook – but not so directly. In some cases I just imply them, telling myself that my students can make the connections to practice for themselves. For 27 years, I have been stopping just short of Payne's approach. But I have finally realized that to teachers and prospective teachers, the distance seems much greater.

Although I could say more, I have probably said enough, and I want to invite others to join the discussion. I have tried to put a new spin on four issues people like us have faced throughout our careers. I am convinced, as I near the end of mine, that the intro course which seems to have evolved during this address into a metaphor for all that we do – could well be left behind. But I have suggested four things we can do to keep up, move ahead, and in doing so make even more valuable contributions to teaching and learning.

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Electoral Hopes: A Canadian Perspective

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During election time, a concerned citizen needs an unwavering faith in democracy. The individual voter needs to be sustained by such a hope while knowing full well that unelected corporate elites with a global reach have grown in power since Mills (1956) first opened our eyes five decades ago. As both Canada and the United States are conducting federal elections this year, it might be instructive to take a comparative snapshot of these two systems of government with a view towards assessing which one is healthier from a democratic point of view.

First, let us review some obvious facts that are rarely discussed. Unlike the United States where the government's power is kept in check through the separation of the executive and legislative branches, Canada follows the British parliamentary model in which the majority party of the legislature forms the executive branch of government. In the nineteenth century, Canadian members of Parliament saw themselves as accountable first and foremost to the citizens of the local constituencies that elected them. This meant that the governing party would often lose votes in the House of Commons because party discipline was not the powerful variable that it is today. With the rise of mass media in the twentieth century, the increasing cost of campaign advertising pushed political parties to develop into powerful fund-raising organizations. As local candidates became increasingly dependent on their party machines to help them get elected, they had to balance accountability to their constituents with loyalty to their party. There is a political price to pay if an elected Member of Parliament votes against the

party line.

Consequently, political debate and civil discourse moved from the public arena of the House of Commons to the private chambers of the caucus room. What we see in Parliament now is staged political theatre where party members dutifully applaud their chosen speakers, and opposing members jeer, heckle, and interrupt. No one is trying to persuade anyone in the House through careful argumentation: debates are performances designed to grab the attention of a voter who happens to be watching the Parliamentary television channel or, more likely, viewing a snap-shot of the daily Question Period that a network has decided might be "newsworthy." What we remember are the "colourful" antics of those who shock or entertain us, such as Pierre Trudeau's "fuddle duddle" (Did he really say f – off?) or John Crosbie's chauvinistic put-down of fellow Member of Parliament Sheila Copps. Canadian educators who wish to take up Kingwell's (2000) challenge to encourage a political civility that "entails consideration of the interests of others, coupled with a willing restraint on the expression of [their] own interests" (p. 116) would point to the recent debate between the leaders of Canada's four major parties as an example of how *not* to do it. By contrast, any Canadian who watches *The Newshour with Jim Lehrer* will soon discover that the level of political discourse in the United States seems much more substantive and civil. Are American politicians more independent and more responsive to the needs of their constituents? Is party discipline comparatively weaker in the United States because of the separation of powers?

Similarly, Parliamentary committees lack the clout of their Congressional counterparts. During the recent sponsorship scandal in which millions of tax payers' dollars disappeared, the House of Commons' investigating committee had to put up with evasive answers from former government ministers that bordered on contempt. At about the same time, a Congressional committee in the United States had senior administration officials "shaking in their boots" over the Iraqi prisoner abuse scandal.

Since Trudeau's time, the relative power of the Prime Minister has increased considerably. By leading a party to a majority victory, he or she becomes a veritable dictator who commands the legislative agenda in addition to running the executive. By comparison, the President has much less domestic power. Congress may oppose a President's legislative initiatives with impunity. From the above snapshot, it seems clear that the United States has a much healthier democracy. This Canadian wishes his American neighbours well as they go to the ballot box next November.

Recent Canadian polls suggest that no party will be able to win the majority of seats in the House of Commons on June 28. For the first time in twenty years, Canada may be ruled by a minority government. This is a hopeful prospect for short-term democracy: minority governments are more responsive to the wishes of the electorate because they are vulnerable to being defeated at any time in the House of Commons. Perhaps this prospect will spark Canadian citizens to consider ways of reclaiming their responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society for the long term. As Kingwell (2000) reminds us, we need to create public spaces where we can talk about these things in a climate of mutual respect. One can only hope....

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Cultural Diversity and Brown vs. Board of Education after 50 years

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Educators never fathomed the greater impact on the teaching of multicultural students when the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 on the landmark case of Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. The court's mid-century decision would come to have an

even more dramatic impact on schooling by the close of the 20th Century. The ruling's affect on education has made school available to all children on equal terms, stating that it is unconstitutional to operate segregated schools under the premise that they are separate but equal. The Brown ruling was, of course, primarily aimed at the integration of black Americans who were being segregated in their own schools. It was demonstrated that many of the black students studying at black schools were not even close to the same level of excellence as those of their white counterparts. It was argued successfully that separate schools for black students caused low self-esteem and could never adequately give these children the same opportunities for education that others enjoyed. Since that time our country has witnessed a population boom among other racial and cultural groups along with a determination among these other groups to secure their rights in schools and other social institutions. As children from Hispanic and Asian cultures have entered our country in ever increasing numbers, the Brown ruling has come to take on new meaning. Not only do we have students of varied cultural/ethnic backgrounds in the classrooms, they also come from different language environments, as well as different family customs and values. Those blatant as well as subtle changes in school populations have necessitated an urgent need for multicultural thinking and approaches in education.

Even so, many educators continue to teach the same subject matter using the same methods they have always used with little regard for the changes going on around them. Sensitivity on the part of many to the variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds currently within our communities is evolving slowly. This is probably due to our inherent resistance to change. But as more groups are coming to demand change, more emphasis is being placed on educating all Americans equally. In 1979, Edmundo Vasquez, a consultant for multicultural education from the University of New Mexico, outlined four goals for all children. They were:

- To reflect diversity and life in the world
- To recognize and reduce racism and discrimination
- To provide alternatives for personal choice
- To increase student mastery of basic skills by using culturally relevant materials (Rothkopf, 1979).

While more than two decades old, these goals for multicultural education are valid today, even though the world of today is vastly different from the world of 1979. We are in one sense a world grown closer by vast changes in technology, while at the same time harboring a population that is more diverse than it has ever been. Census figures from 2000 indicate the multicultural changes in enrollment of all K-12 United States students from the mid-1980s through the1990s as follows (NCES, 2001) in the chart below.

This chart reflects a changing school population. A population that must be understood and developed if educators are to adequately prepare these young people for the future.

Race/Ethnicity of Students	**Fall 1986**	**Fall 1991**	**Fall 1998**
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
White			
non-Hispanic	70.4	67.4	62.9
Minority	29.7	32.6	37.1
Black			
non-Hispanic	16.1	16.4	17.1
Hispanic	9.9	11.8	15.0
Asian or Pacific Islander	2.8	3.4	3.9
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.9	1.0	1.1

Melting Pot or Puzzle Pieces?

As immigrants from diverse backgrounds came to this country, Americans began calling themselves the "Melting Pot" of the world. This came to mean that these unique cultural groups were fulfilling their respective hopes and aspirations by deliberately submerging their identities into a melting pot. They were giving up their individuality and becoming a part of a greater more or less homogeneous nationality. Mitchell (1980) expressed the melting pot theory as this formula: A + B + C = A, where A, B, and C represent different social groups, and A represents the dominant one in America, white Anglo-Saxon. Over a period of time, all groups would eventually conform to the values, mores, and lifestyle of the dominant group. Students in this situation are therefore taught from a one-background point of view, which happens to be one of Euro-centrism.

The more recent trend in the education of diverse cultures is referred to as *pluralism*. It is considered more like the fitting together of various puzzle pieces. In a pluralistic society people of different ethnic backgrounds learn to live together, side by side, celebrating their differences with mutual respect. In this setting the existence of diverse cultural backgrounds is encouraged, as well-fitting puzzle pieces, rather than melting together and losing their individuality (identity). The most current philosophy seems to be encouraging a *pluralistic approach* to education. Here it is hoped that when a school's curriculum includes and emphasizes a variety of cultural backgrounds reflective of all its students a clearer picture of individuality will emerge. This approach has become known as the "shotgun approach," which focuses on the differences rather than the similarities of its constituents (Nieto, 2002/2003).

The purpose of the analysis that follows is to determine how administrators can become more aware of the varied backgrounds of their students. This awareness needs to focus on the diversity of an administrator's student body while at the same time attempting to develop understandings of similarities and common elements and focus of all students. Finally a pluralistic goal for achieving multicultural education needs to be identified by school administrators. That goal should be directed toward either creating a more harmonious fitting of the "puzzle pieces" thereby *not* "melting" students together, or to use the "shotgun approach" when working with diverse cultures. Specific ideas and strategies for dealing with either of these positions as well as a few methods for reaching *all* students successfully is what follows.

Problems with Diversity in the Classroom

It has long been known that children do not come to the classroom as "empty vessels" but come with internalized standards of communication, interaction, language use, and behavior from their home environments. These standards are affected by parenting styles, family structures, and rules for social interaction all of which are heavily influenced by cultural values and traditions (Bigelow, 1999). An example of the influence of one's cultural values and traditions can be readily seen in our native American children who are encouraged to be only spectators at adult activities. This situation causes them to become somewhat skilled observers of the nonverbal, as well as being able to better understand behavior cues of the adults around them. These same children tend to use these nonverbal communication strategies more frequently than verbal ones. Of course this kind of "personality difference" could easily be misconstrued in a mainstream classroom as the student is disinterested or misunderstood. The rules for social interaction are often discrete and hidden especially given the example of the native American.

As stated earlier schools have historically been structured to reflect middle class, Euro-centric cultural standards. In this kind of setting students from diverse backgrounds will experience cultural conflict constantly since their accustomed methods of learning and communicating will probably not match the mainstream standards. Students from varied backgrounds also bring with them generally only one type of culture and it is usually completely foreign to the average performance levels of the school and the

backgrounds of fellow students. When two or more cultures are not compatible, the schooling process ultimately fails to teach, students fail to learn, and little if any socialization takes place (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991). It should be noted that often times it is not a student's lack of desire to succeed or a low ability that holds him or her back. Often the failure can be traced directly to cultural clash. In most cases a teacher may misread a student's aptitude, intent, or ability as a result of the differences in styles of language use and international patterns. Also, a very common clash for teachers comes when they use teaching strategies or discipline models that are at odds with the cultural backgrounds of the students. What could be considered a typical punishment for a classroom offense in this country may never be used or even considered in another country's schools. The approach is then pointless as a strategy for effectively dealing with that foreign student. One interesting research finding that supports this finding indicates that a classroom that allows for greater movement and interaction can better facilitate the learning and social styles of African American boys, while a more structured, inhibitive class will unduly penalize these same boys. Perhaps cultural sensitivity on the part of teachers in allowing African-American boys to interact more with peers in their classrooms while performing assigned tasks will ultimately reduce the number of African-American boys assigned to special education classes. The significance of this finding could have dramatic effect (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991).

Another important problem that occurs in Euro-centric classrooms is that the minorities in a classroom may resist learning within the white cultural frame of reference because to learn within that mode they feel that they would lose their identity, self-worth, and sense of community. Furthermore, those who do "conform" to the mainstreaming form of learning being preached are often accused of "acting white," which easily causes loss of friendships within their own culture. These conforming students may not necessarily be accepted into the white culture either. They are then faced with the dilemma of "acting white" and being successful academically while losing their loyalty to their minority group (O'Neil, 1997/1998).

Since the Brown decision has reached this fuller inclusion of *all minorities* in the school, educators have been called upon to teach more about the contributions of blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and other ethnic and racial groups long absent from the curriculum. If one looks at an ethnocentric approach that is based on a study of the values and behaviors of a variety of ethnic groups, one might begin to view the world as if they were "using another lens to view the world, and [that] my way of looking at it is different than yours"(Viadero, 1990). The shotgun approach to education, where the focus is on the differences of cultures instead of the commonalities, has been challenged by critics such as Thomas Sobol (Viadero, 1990). Sobol, as a separatist, attempts to approach individuals separately rather than as a group which embodies pluralism. Others, such as Asa Hilliard (1992), feels that the ethnocentric curriculum carries too much baggage. Focusing on cultures rather than excellence in education is what he advocates.

A spin-off of ethnocentric education, Afrocentrism is a focus on Africa and American blacks. A number of school systems have developed curricula to focus on this newest approach. The Milwaukee school system is going so far as to create two separate schools that will specifically cater to the academic and social needs of black males. These "magnet" programs are not off-limits to whites and females but are focusing on the specific needs of black males. A final problem identified through research indicates without a doubt that black children are faring poorly in the public schools. They typically enter only slightly behind others, but by the time they reach the third grade they have slipped 6 months behind and by the 6th grade they have fallen a full year behind (Reissman, 1994). Most believe that white students are succeeding because the school's curriculum makes them *feel* as though they are at the center of the universe. Of course the opposite is true when they fail. Afro-centric curricu-

lum proponents contend that by focusing on a feeling of centrality with the African American students a feeling of centrality can develop, thus raising the students' feelings of self-esteem as well as raising their achievement levels.

A Pluralistic Approach to Culturally Sensitive Instruction

Once the culture conflicts have been identified, educators can proceed to adapt their curriculum to meet the needs of all their students, especially including those from culturally diverse backgrounds. Protheroe and Barsdate (1991) cite four features for developing a culturally sensitive approach to instruction. The first of these is to maintain a pro-student philosophy, capitalizing on each student's strengths, viewing cultural ways of learning as resources to be used, rather than deficits to be remedied. A second feature relies on the premise that there is no best way to effectively teach all of the students all of the time (Brown, 1990). Educators postulate that to successfully teach multicultural children, "most students can learn the same things but they learn them for different reasons." In order to reach the diverse population, it is necessary for the teaching techniques to be varied. This should encourage students to develop their own reasons for learning. A third feature of culturally sensitive instruction for a teacher is to rely on the path of least change. Students build on knowledge that they have already acquired; the challenge for teachers here is to use that body of knowledge already attained to facilitate the acquisition of new skills. The fourth and final feature of cultural sensitive instruction is to maintain high expectations for achievement for all students, modifying only the methods for attaining the outcomes. Too often students from diverse backgrounds are put into a slow learner track because of a misunderstanding of cultural values and customs. A student often will work to reach their expectations if there is no miscommunication between all interested parties. If one accepts the above four features as sound educational thinking, questions are then easily raised as to how these features can be applied to culturally sensitive instruction. Two studies are noted here which reflect research developed to increase the school's success in implementing a culturally appropriate curriculum program. The first study known as the "KEEP Program" took place with Native Hawaiian students (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991), and the second with Eskimo and Indian children in Alaska (Noordhoff & Kleinfeld, 1993).

The "KEEP Program," (Kamehameha Early Education Project) was developed to increase a school's success when working with low-achieving Native Hawaiian students. The heart of the program is to modify the classroom routines in order to "mesh" all students cultures in ways that will ensure a "generation of academically important behaviors" (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991). This was accomplished by observing learning that was actually taking place both in the home and in the school setting. Any cultural conflicts would readily appear in this approach. It was determined that at home the family concentrated on group learning while the school setting was emphasizing independent work. These differences were producing a cultural discontinuity that hindered the educational process.

The school where the "KEEP Project" was housed began to modify its teaching techniques by encouraging cooperative learning. By building on a familiar mode of learning, the students on-task behaviors increased. Using the premise of "least change," the teachers were able to capitalize on prior student knowledge. After four years of implementation the KEEP Program reported dramatic achievement gains. These results gained national attention, but critics of the project reported that this type of research is not replicable with other cultures. The key here, however, is to find the culture clash that exists and modify classroom instruction to match the target population's cultural patterns.

The second study focused on secondary teachers from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, who participated in a teacher education program called, "Teachers for Alaska" (TFA), which is a fifth year certification program. In this program teachers were instructed on the history and culture of Alaska's

Indian and Eskimo groups as well as pedagogical strategies for dealing with these populations. All strategies used were linked to the contexts in which these students worked best. The teachers were encouraged to learn experientially about their students as well as students families through discussions, home visits, and involvement in the community (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991). Results indicated that engaging the students in activities rather than exposing them to a teacher-centered approach was very successful in reaching them. The minority students relate that teaching is effective when subject matter is related to their backgrounds, enabling them to make connections. These results definitely bear on the development of a multicultural program. However, here again, the research was carried out with a select group of minority students, not the typical variety that is seen in many school districts.

A Basic Strategy for Dealing with Culturally Diverse Students

There are some basic ideas and strategies that can be effectively implemented for teaching students of culturally diverse backgrounds. Many of the ideas which teachers use with students are not new. Cooperative learning as an alternative approach that shifts the emphasis from competition to shared learning has been hypothesized to better match the cultural characteristics of many of our students, including Blacks, Mexican Americans, and Native Americans. Whole language strategies also encourage engagement of minority students, as they are able to use their background life experiences as a frame of reference for learning new material. Research cited by Harste (Protheroe & Barsdate, 1991) reflects that whole language is "the only approach to teaching reading and writing that does not deny children their culture."

It is important in the multicultural classroom to be able to modify instruction in order to match the cultural cognitive styles, which students possess. Using multiple stimuli in the classroom, as well as a variety of teaching strategies, are all helpful for reaching all students in a class. In a culturally sensitive classroom, however, the teacher must focus on those strategies from which the diverse students learn best. In an article on culturally assaultive classrooms, Clark, DeWolf, and Clark (1992) cite several examples of things to avoid when recognizing cultural diversity. Culturally assaultive classrooms include discussions of cultures only as they existed in the past, such as the Indians helping the Pilgrims at Thanksgiving. They might also promote incorrect stereotypes such as the characterizing of Indians in scant clothing, scalping people. These classrooms concentrate on the differences of the cultures rather than the similarities, emphasizing these particularly with "holiday units" rather than incorporating a year-round curriculum with cultural diversity.

An attitude of embracing diversity must saturate the classroom. Diversity must be given the endorsement of administrators, and teachers need to become active pluralists, encouraging the fit of the puzzle pieces rather than acknowledging the differences between them. The focus should be on the child's world of today, rather than on the world of the past. Children should experience enrichment from diversity, not fear, apprehension, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

A Design for Success

An ethnocentric approach to teaching cultural diversity is not feasible; it is a shotgun approach, giving students a smattering of many different cultures while ignoring the similarities. Teachers already have a crowded curriculum of information to impart to their students and adding more is probably not the best answer, but it will need to be an option. A broader, more truthful historical view of all cultures involved in a particular school should be incorporated into the basic curriculum. The melting pot theory has dissolved and basic ethnic characteristics need to be recognized and embraced in this democratic society. Human culture is the product of the struggles of all humanity, not the possession of a single racial or ethnic group. In a pluralistic society, the puzzle pieces must be put together to facilitate living side by side in harmony, with respect for each other.

It is interesting to note that many of the same teaching strategies that were used in the mainstream

classroom of the 1970s are encouraged in culturally sensitive instruction. Inclusion of whole language, cooperative learning, and the acknowledgement of cognitive learning styles have been embodied in the regular classroom during the latter part of this century. It is important to reinforce the use of these strategies among our culturally diverse population, enabling them to become more self-confident and thus more successful in the classroom.

These and other teaching strategies can reach many of our minority students but another step must be taken to ensure the success of these students. Teachers should be trained to become knowledgeable about the backgrounds of the cultures represented in their classrooms. If, for instance, a Native American student does not respond in a situation, it may be because of his/ her background culture, not lack of knowledge of the subject matter. Incorporating this information in a course for pre-service teachers is required to be developed. It should also be incorporated in in-service courses for experienced teachers in order for them to be able to truly relate to their students.

Specific methods for dealing with multicultural students must become a part of teacher training to make them more culturally sensitive in their instruction while still maintaining valid scholarship as the goal for effective curriculum content. Changes remain the key to becoming proactive in preparing our students to deal with this pluralistic world. As Asa Hilliard (1992) has often expressed, "Nothing less than the full truth of the human experience is worthy of our schools and our children" (p. 15).

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Book Review: The President of Good and Evil: The Ethics of George W. Bush

Author: Peter Singer (2004).
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Patrick Shade (2001) has pointed out that, from a pragmatic point of view, hope is much more than the mere desire for something better. Rather, pragmatic hope is an active virtue that involves the persistent, resourceful, and courageous habit of attempting to make worthwhile things happen. If that is the case, then Peter Singer is a very hopeful man and his new book on President George Bush is a living example of this virtue. Professors of education can be well-informed by what Singer says, how he says it, and, most importantly, why he says it.

Peter Singer is the Australian-born, well-published, often cited, and intellectually provocative

Ira W. Decamp Professor of Bioethics in the University Center for Human Values at Princeton University. His book is based on the idea that if George Bush continually appeals to concepts such as good and evil and the importance of being a moral person, then it is more than fair, it is necessary, to examine what he says and does in the name of morality. According to Singer, Bush is inconsistent, dishonest, and dangerous in his thinking and actions. These are no small problems for those within and outside the borders of the most powerful nation in the world.

The book is broken into two parts sandwiched between a short introduction and a concluding analysis. In the first part, Bush's domestic ethics are examined in terms of implications for bringing people together, protecting rights from big government, respecting freedom of the individual, and using religious beliefs. Each of the four chapters in this part assumes sincerity on the part of Bush but shows the lack of clarity and consistency in his words and actions. Quite simply, under Bush's policies the gap between the rich and the poor has greatly expanded, states' rights have been overridden in many cases, and individual freedoms greatly curtailed. In the chapter on religion, Singer points out that it is not the content of Bush's beliefs that is the issue but rather the dogmatic way the beliefs are held and used to justify actions that require much more public scrutiny. There are great democratic dangers if public policy is not debated within the framework of public justification.

The second part of the book looks at the relationship of the United States and the rest of the world. Singer points out that the United States is not taking on its share of world responsibility, has violated just-war theory in using lethal force in Afghanistan, has used irresponsible and dishonest information to invade Iraq, and has created serious repercussions in international relations because of its disregard for the United Nations. Examples he cites to make these claims include the refusal to sign the Kyoto Accord, the fact that violence was not used as a last resort in deciding to invade Afghanistan, the deceptive use of information known to be invalid to justify claims of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and the choice to use preemptive measures anywhere and anytime that do not need to be defended to the rest of the world. It is difficult for other nations to look upon the United States as the ethical "beacon on the hill" if it follows such "might makes right" practices. This ethic of power makes the world a much more dangerous place.

In the final chapter, Singer points out that George Bush's position in not consistently based on individual rights, utilitarian principles, or Christian ethics. Bush too easily overrides individual rights, favors the few over the many in terms of the consequences of his actions, and is in disfavor with many orthodox Christian churches regarding his actions. Interestingly, Singer points out that Bush could be considered Manichaean, that is someone who sees the world in terms of a battle between the forces of good and evil. Singer also notes that the Orthodox Church considered Manichaeanism to be a heresy and St. Augustine thought that "seeing some kind of evil force as the source of all that is bad is a way of masking one's own failings" (209). Bush's ethical failing, Singer contends, lies in following an unquestioned intuitive ethic, in being a "gut player" who refuses to dig deeper into the more subtle and complex understandings needed to act with care, consistency, and responsibility. These are not small ethical faults for the "moral leader of the free world."

The President of Good and Evil is well-written, carefully argued, and provocatively insightful. The book does much more than point out the inadequacies of the ethics of George Bush. It also persistently illuminates complex social issues, resourcefully presents ethical examples and analogies, and courageously seeks to speak truthfully to power. The book serves as a beacon of hope for professors of education who strive to raise the level of public discussion in a world needing to be much more democratic. Its method of ethical inquiry should be used on all candidates.

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