

# Multicultural Education as Values Education

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## I. Multicultural Education: History and Current Controversy

### Historical and Social Sources of Multicultural Education

The current movement of "multicultural education" is a response to several social and historical circumstances<sup>1</sup>. Probably most US Americans connect it with the changing demographics of our national student population, and of our society more generally. Between 1976 and 1986 the public school "minority" population went from 24% to almost 30%<sup>2</sup>. According to latest census Bureau counts, the current non-Hispanic white population is 73.6% of the total population<sup>3</sup>. Continuing immigration of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Latinos and higher birth rates among these groups and blacks than whites will push that figure higher<sup>4</sup>, whatever the outcome of the current wave of anti-immigration sentiment and policy. Taking into account the younger average age of these groups compared to whites, by the early years of the 21st century, whites may no longer be a majority of school children. The most rapidly increasing portion of the population is neither "black" nor "white", diversifying the ethno-racial picture and making the predominant "black/white" way of thinking about race and ethnicity increasingly obsolete.

But multiculturalism is a response not only to the diversity itself, but to striking social, economic, and educational inequalities. In 1989 the median family income for whites was \$33,915, for African-Americans \$19,329, and for Hispanics \$21,769<sup>5</sup>. The poverty rate for African-American children is almost triple that of whites. In education, blacks have made tremendous progress in the past half century. By 1991, the percentage of blacks completing high school was almost equal to that of whites<sup>6</sup> (although the Hispanic rate is much lower)<sup>7</sup>. However, black college completion rate—strongly and increasingly related to income—decreased throughout the '80's, and is

now only about half that of whites<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, the pattern of deprivation is very unequal in the black community, with a bottom third of urban residents in a state of poverty and social disintegration, worse off than in the 1960's, while the top third, and to some extent the middle one, have greatly benefited from the Civil Rights revolution.

Regarding these inequities, blacks have struggled since the end of slavery, and even before, for education, and eventually for equal access and educational parity with whites. This ancient struggle must be seen as a second source of the current multicultural movement. Education has always played a central role in blacks' struggle for racial equality<sup>9</sup>. The *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954 promised equal schooling, and many black leaders in the desegregation struggles of the 1950's averred that by the 1960's this goal would finally be achieved<sup>10</sup>. Equity was linked with school integration, and rested on the assumptions that once blacks had access to the same schools as whites, and once whites got to know blacks, obstacles to social and education equality would disappear.

These assumptions proved false; because of white resistance, continuing residential segregation and the abandonment of cities by whites in large numbers, coupled with residence-based school assignment, schools remained much more racially segregated than integration activists and the *Brown* court anticipated. Movements of black parents to take control of their increasingly segregated schools sought educational change and improvement while abandoning, at least temporarily, the goal of integration.

While access to educational opportunities provided to whites has been a dominant goal for the black community, a second important strand in the black view of education has been a criticism of white-dominated education. This constitutes a third source of the current multicultural education movement. Carter Woodson, the African-American historian and educator, in his

The Mis-Education of the Negro in 1933, criticized white-controlled or white-influenced educational institutions (including primarily black ones) for providing a form of education that portrayed blacks as inferiors and deprived them of the educational wherewithal to comprehend their own history and their situation in the United States<sup>11</sup>. W.E.B. du Bois also came to advocate, or at least accept, separate schools for blacks<sup>12</sup>.

The Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power movement of the '60's continued this dual focus on equity, and on black pride and emancipation from white domination (both political and educational). The Afrocentric wing of the current multicultural movement is a direct descendant of Woodson and of black nationalist currents that have always been present, to a greater or lesser extent, in the African-American community.

The movement for black equality has, in turn, inspired other groups to seek equality and recognition in education and society—women, gays, the disabled, linguistic minorities, other "racial minorities". These movements and the groups in question have, to a greater or lesser extent, been incorporated into the general understanding of "multicultural education" and constitute a fourth source of the current movement.

American civic self-understanding contains a strong element of equality, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the post-Slavery and Reconstruction amendments (13th, 14th, and 15th) to the Constitution, that has provided a shared reference point for movements for educational equity. But an additional, though much weaker, strand in our public political culture that has lent support to multiculturalism is the challenge to assimilation in the name of cultural pluralism. Immigrant groups often struggled to preserve cultural and linguistic institutions reflecting their country of origin. German-Americans, for example, fought, successfully, for German-language schools in Cincinnati and other mid-Western cities<sup>13</sup>.

In the 1920's a philosophy of cultural pluralism was propounded by Randolph Bourne and, more influentially, by the pragmatist Horace Kallen<sup>14</sup>. Earlier W.E.B. du Bois had put forth a similar philosophy but with a recognition of race absent in Bourne and Kallen; and in the 1920's and '30's the African-American philosopher and Harlem Renaissance figure Alain Locke articulated a more race-inclusive form of semi-relativist cultural pluralism<sup>15</sup>. We should eschew the philosophy of assimilation, they all argued, and

welcome and help to preserve our nation's rich cultural diversity.

This outlook never attained nearly the public legitimacy of equality-based approaches to difference; nor did it have a strong impact on schooling, which remained in the grip of powerful assimilationist pressures. (Indeed, schools were the primary locus of explicit assimilationist policy.) However, in the '30's and '40's the "intercultural education movement" propounded a weaker version of pluralism that did have influence in some school districts<sup>16</sup>.

The rise of Nazism and other forms of fascism, and then their defeat, led, after W.W.II, to a concern that schools contribute to reasserting democratic principles. This involved a pallid form of cultural diversity education in the intercultural education movement; much stronger was a push to assert values of equality and democracy as against prejudice, discrimination, and racism<sup>17</sup>. Still, this history of support for cultural pluralism constitutes a fifth historical source for current multiculturalism.

### **Political Ferment Over Multicultural Education**

Versions of multicultural education have been with us since at least the mid-1970's, and have penetrated the world of education in a substantial way since the 1980's. Beginning in the early 1990's multicultural education began to be criticized, often quite intensely, in major news media, and then in a spate of books. Much of the criticism was directed against versions of multicultural education in the world of higher education, where it was also referred to as "political correctness" and "identity politics"; but substantial attention focused on the K-12 arena as well<sup>18</sup>.

Major battles were fought over textbooks and over state and national curriculum standards, especially for social studies. In the early 1990's, Thomas Sobol, then a recently-appointed Commissioner of Education in New York, commissioned a group of largely minority educators to prepare a report to guide the teaching of social studies. Their report, *A Curriculum of Inclusion*, garnered extraordinary public opposition among some prominent historians and other educators. The critics claimed that the report "contemptuously dismisses the Western tradition", promotes racial division, and fails to give allegiance to commonly accepted standards of evidence in history<sup>19</sup>. (The committee contained no historians.) The criticisms led to the appointment by the State Board of Regents of a second commission whose membership included some of these

multicultural education is seldom explored. Nor has moral education itself, or the current educational movements in favor of it, made much connection with multiculturalism. The value dimension of multicultural education has not been sufficiently distinguished from its other educational purposes—its contribution to a more accurate picture of US American history or literature, for example. In this essay I want to highlight this suppressed value element in multicultural education, while also giving due attention to subject matter concerns as well.

Multicultural education involves values that apply to distinct entities in the educational process, of which we can distinguish four—individual, teacher, school, society. The *individual* level are those values taught to *children*—values that the pupils are meant to acquire in the process of multicultural education. Examples might be respect for persons of other cultures, treating people as equals regardless of race and, a disposition to intervene to prevent or mitigate racial injustice.

However, a second locus of multicultural values are *teachers*—values meant to inform their practice and professional ethos. Examples are treating each student fairly, showing respect for the culture of each child, ensuring that each child is given a form of education appropriate to her particular abilities, and the like.

A third locus is the *school*, to which many of the same values apply; but these are to be implemented not only in individual classes but throughout the culture of the school as a whole, in its interaction with parents and the community.

Some but not all versions of multicultural education imply that the *society* itself should attempt to embody certain values as well. Examples might be equality of opportunity, racial integration, affirmative action.

Most of this paper will concern the *individual* values implicated in multicultural education. Individual values are the subject of “character education”, which concerns the teaching of values meant to become personal qualities in the individual student. Examples generally cited are honesty, responsibility, courage, compassion. To speak of character education signifies that students are not merely to be taught *about* these values, or how to think about them or examine them critically—but actually to *acquire* them as part of their personal character. They are to be taught actually to *be* honest, courageous, compassionate, responsible.

In general, the most visible proponents of character education have been cultural conserva-

tives<sup>23</sup>, whose prominence in this field depends on several claims that often accompany the advocacy of “character education” and have shaped its public meaning. One is that character education, or character more generally, is the primary solution to a number of large social ills, such as teen-age pregnancy, violence, general anti-social behavior, and the like; the role of economic and other structural factors in producing or contributing to these conditions are ignored. A second is an opposition to other moral education approaches, such as Lawrence Kohlberg’s cognitive-developmentalism and Sidney Simon’s “values clarification”, both of which (despite their differences) emphasize the student’s thinking critically about moral dilemmas and coming to terms with a plurality of moral positions. A third, related association is that the favored traits of character are to be inculcated to a significant degree through exhortation and appeals to authority (religion, parent, or teacher). Fourth—a related point—character education is often associated with religious belief, as though the only secure foundation for values lays in religion.

However, character education can be uncoupled from these four associations, and recently the character education movement has been joined by people of all political stripes<sup>24</sup>. The movement for multicultural education would be greatly strengthened by a frank acknowledgment that some of what it should be aiming to teach to children are traits of character appropriate to a culturally pluralistic society with a legacy of racial discrimination.

Within the domain of individual character values a distinction between *moral* and *civic* values is useful. Though there is no sharp line between these, civic values engage more directly with the polity (at various levels—local, national, and international). Older traditions of “civic education” connected civics very closely with government and with participation in official political processes (voting, petitioning, and the like). However, the conception of civics employed here extends further to encompass civic life or civil society more generally—associations intermediate between the family and the state, such as churches, clubs, neighborhood associations, unions, that affect the quality of interaction between citizens<sup>25</sup>. My own conception goes a bit further to include the general quality of civic interaction in public spaces. Thus activity that improves the sense of commitment to quality of life in a neighborhood would count as civic activity, even if it were not organized through an actual “neighborhood association”<sup>26</sup>.

critics. Their 1991 report, *One Nation, Many Peoples*, while much more moderate in its multiculturalism, was still dissented from by two historians on the commission, Kenneth Jackson and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Their dissents were widely cited in anti-multicultural articles and books; a version of Schlesinger's appeared in *Time*.

California presented a different but equally conflictual scenario. The state had adopted a set of textbooks supervised by the prominent historian Gary Nash of UCLA; but the selection had to be certified by the state's curriculum commission. That body's public hearings on the series generated criticisms from particular ethnic, racial, and religious groups, alleging that the books demeaned their groups, as well as pointing out inaccuracies. (For example, Jews objected to the use of "Old Testament" rather than "Hebrew Bible".) The commission adopted the texts, after the authors changed them in response to elements of the criticisms they regarded as valid; but it was still left to particular districts to choose not to adopt the series. In hearings in the Oakland district (with a largely black school population), Nash himself appeared (in 1991) to defend the series. He and the textbooks were attacked as racist and Eurocentric. Oakland eventually became the only district in the state of California to reject the series<sup>20</sup>.

Ironically, Nash, a pioneer in the social history reflected in the textbooks, was himself very close in spirit to the New York report's brand of multiculturalism that had been attacked from the right as too divisive, anti-American, and anti-Western. Clearly these multicultural issues had touched a nerve in the public; but just as clearly the form of the debates had lost their moorings in the realities of the particular documents actually at issue. "Multiculturalism" became, in the increasingly culturally powerful voices of the moderate-to-right conservatism, a stalking horse and umbrella term for what they claimed as a host of (often unrelated) social ills—tolerance of homosexuality, affirmative action, validation of non-white groups' experience as historically and educationally significant, "group-think" and divisiveness, an attack on patriotism, a decline in general social responsibility, and the like.

Perhaps the most striking and extraordinary incident in the public flap over multiculturalism was a resolution in 1995 by the United States Senate condemning—by a 99-1 vote—the result of a several-years-long project to craft voluntary national guidelines for the teaching of history and social studies. These guidelines had been strongly supported by the National Endowment

for the Humanities under the stewardship of Lynne Cheney, and the federal Department of Education. They were, like the California textbooks, crafted by Gary Nash. But the attack on Nash eventuating in the Senate resolution was led by Cheney herself<sup>21</sup>.

What, then, is multicultural education? And what should it be?

## II. Values and Multicultural Education

### Some Definitional Matters

Before proceeding further, we must fine-tune our definition of "multicultural education". Do we confine the groups about whom multicultural education is concerned to *ethnic* and *racial* groups (or "ethno-racial" groups, as I, following David Hollinger's usage, will call them<sup>22</sup>); or do we also include sexual orientation, gender, and disability, and, more broadly, any socially significant bases for exclusion and discrimination? (Where religious groups fit into this division will be discussed below.) Without denying the legitimacy of the latter, more expansive, definition of multicultural education, and of many educators' allegiance to it, this essay will confine multicultural education to the more restricted conception—race and ethnicity as its central concerns. All agree that those issues are central to multicultural education, and they are sufficiently complex and controversial for this essay. (Furthermore, some of the same analytic framework developed here would apply to these other groups, though some would not, and it would differ for the different groups.)

Multiculturalism is, also, more than curriculum; it embraces classroom pedagogy, teachers' interactions with students of different ethno-racial identities, the role of parents in the school, the relation between the school and its surrounding community or community from which its students are drawn, and, more generally, the culture and "moral atmosphere" of the school. While the indivisibility of curricular and non-curricular domains applies to all education, it has particular force in the area of multicultural education.

### Values and Value Education

While the public debates about multiculturalism have focused primarily on curriculum, multicultural education is unavoidably a form of *values or moral education*. However, the range and character of the values implicated in

Accounts of civic values in the literature on civic education and civic life seldom take up issues of race and ethnicity. Yet everyone increasingly recognizes that relations between ethnic and racial groups are deeply unsatisfactory, that they take a great toll on the quality of civic life in the US. So values and qualities of character bearing on issues of race and ethnicity should be seen as quite important to civic education in general.

The second sub-category of *individual* values—*moral* values, such as courage, honesty, integrity, justice—are, compared to civic values, less involved in direct engagement with one's society. "Justice" as a moral quality, for example, involves being just in one's own dealings with people. It is distinct from the civic value of commitment to social justice in general (though the latter can be seen as an extension of the former). Moral values are not, however, limited to behavior within the domain of one's domestic or personal life (much less to sexuality or gender relations, as the conception of "morality" promoted by religious conservative groups has tended to imply). They also include the personal treatment of strangers, or those otherwise unknown to oneself. No sharp line can possibly be drawn between moral and civic values.<sup>27</sup>

The distinction between moral values and civic values cuts across the other three domains mentioned—teacher, school, society—as well as individual (though the moral is most closely tied to the individual). For example, an attempt to make a class or a school a form of democratic community involves a civic value; the attempt to make them caring environments for each individual student, a moral value. Again, there is no sharp line between a moral and a civic value.

### Values and Multiculturalism

In the domain of *individual* values, four distinct families of related values can lay claim to centrality in multicultural education. I will call these "antiracism", "cultural respect," "commitment to cultural pluralism", and "inter-ethnic or inter-racial unity or community". Some of these values span the other domains of value, but I will focus on their individual manifestations. I will distinguish from these four a fifth, teacher-centered and school-centered, value I call "culturally sensitive teaching".

Distinguishing these different values allows recognition of potential tensions among the values (and between their component parts as well); one can not always be pursued without risk or loss to another. Yet recognizing such tensions can also point us toward forms of

pedagogy and curriculum that will at least minimize those tensions and losses. Moreover, the relations between the distinct values are not always ones of tension; to a large degree the different multicultural values support and enhance one another. Distinguishing them clearly from one another allows us to recognize this as well.

## III. Four Values in Multicultural Education

### Antiracism

Antiracist values revolve around racial equity and racial justice, and the evil and wrong of racial hatred and bigotry<sup>28</sup>. The central antiracist value on the moral character level is treating others as human equals independent of their race. One part of antiracism is "nonracism". This is not the same as "color-blindness"—not noticing, or entirely overlooking, someone's physical features that are taken to constitute their "race". Rather, the nonracist attitude acknowledges the historical, social, and experiential differences that "race" signifies, but it, and antiracism more generally, sees a *common human worth* independent of those differences.

A *civic* antiracist value is the commitment to and disposition to promote racial justice and equity. This civic value has both a negative and a positive dimension. The negative one is to counter racism—for example, by intervening in racist incidents or by protesting racial injustice. The positive involves the promotion of the ideal of racial justice. (Both of these go beyond merely being "nonracist" in one's own personal dealings with people of other races.) These civic values encompass a set of diverse virtues that students can be taught. For example, antiracist interventions often require courage, for courage is the promotion of a good in the face of risk or danger. Antiracist virtues may require being an attentive listener and negotiator in highly-charged (even if not actually dangerous) situations. What does a child who is antiracist say or do when her friend hurls a racial epithet against another child? Antiracist education must address questions of this sort. It must help students to develop the sensitivities to recognize and deal with racist actions and attitudes. Students can, in a manner appropriate to their age group, learn to be informed about public and political matters relating to racial and ethnic groups; they can, to take just one example, research and monitor laws and regulations relating to fair housing in

their communities, anchored in a commitment to fair housing as a form of non-discrimination. Allotting class time to discussions of how the school might go about reducing prejudice within its own borders helps students to become more sensitive to the presence of racism, helps them think of actions to be taken to counter it, and, by the fact that the teacher lends her or his authority to the issue by taking it seriously, encourages students to see antiracism as an important value.

Antiracism applies to teachers as well, in part because a teacher who harbors prejudices and racist stereotypes will be greatly hindered in being able to teach students antiracist values. So teachers must be committed to examining their own attitudes and behaviors for racial discrimination and prejudice.

Yet being free of racial animus and bigotry does not by itself guarantee that the teacher will avoid racial discrimination. For example, mere discomfort with students of certain ethno-racial groups may lead a teacher to make less eye contact, and generally to give less attention, to children from those groups. Similar ethno-racial discomfort may make such teachers less comfortable communicating with parents from those groups, leading to a diminished quality of parent-teacher contact in those cases. Racial discrimination is the result, though unintended and not motivated by racial animosity or bias.

The value foundations of antiracism, then, lie in familiar and age-old traditions of religious, philosophic, and US American civic ideals of human equality and common humanity. These are "sameness-based" values, a dimension of multicultural education often lost or masked by the constant focus on the idea of "difference". This sameness/equality dimension is a reflection of multicultural education's roots, mentioned earlier, in the Civil Rights movement, other movements for social and political equality in the U.S., and in black Americans' struggle for equal education. But "antiracism" goes beyond the provision of equal educational opportunity by itself, to encompass a range of individual (moral and civic) values to be taught to students.

To say that the *value* foundation of antiracism is a human sameness does not mean that antiracist education is blind to differences in historical and social experiences of different groups. On the contrary, on the curricular level for example, antiracist education requires attention to these differences and to the differing social meanings infusing racial designations ("white", "black"), quasi-racial ones such as "Asian-American" and "Native-American", and

partly racialized ones ("Latino" or "Hispanic")<sup>29</sup>. The study of racist systems and practices, such as segregation, apartheid, Nazism, slavery in the modern world, exclusion of "non-whites" from full citizenship in the US., and the like—integrated into larger units of study in social studies, history, or literature—would be staples of antiracist education on the curricular level. However, historical study *by itself* is not sufficient to secure the value dimension of antiracist education.

An exemplary antiracist values education approach, rooted in a historical study of Nazism and the Holocaust, is that of Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO). FHAO combines straightforward historical study of the 1933-1945 period with a constant effort to draw out civic and moral insights and explorations. Students are invited, for example, to imagine themselves as German youth around 1936, pressured to join the Nazi youth groups. They are also asked to imagine what they themselves might have done once they knew that Jews were being rounded up, endangered, and possibly killed. The students study rescuers and bystanders, with the goal of impressing upon them the need for, possibilities of, and requisite abilities for coming to the aid of those endangered, understood not only as moral action but as a civic responsibility<sup>30</sup>.

### Education for Cultural Pluralism

Distinct from the family of antiracist values are those associated with cultural pluralism and respect. The values involved here are implicated in the idea that curricula should give attention to all the ethno-racial groups that compose the US, that education should serve the needs of children from all groups, and the like. Indeed, cultural pluralism and respect are perhaps the notions most commonly associated with "multicultural education" by most educators and the general public. (This stands in contrast to scholars and theorists of education, most of whom articulate a distinct antiracist strand in their conception of multicultural education.) Especially in the United States, notions of cultural respect and pluralism are much more widely known and accepted than "antiracism"<sup>31</sup>; indeed the latter notion carries an unfamiliar or somewhat threatening, confrontative, and "radical" connotation that "respect for different cultures" does not.

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to use the expression "multicultural education" to refer to what I am suggesting is only one component of that protean term. "Education for cultural pluralism" points to that component of multicultural education specifically focused on

educating children for a culturally pluralistic society and world. The term "cultural pluralism" goes beyond "cultural plurality" and "cultural diversity" to suggest that the plurality is a particular form of society or social organization, the appreciation of which is the core of this element of education. It thus has a normative connotation lacking in the terms "diversity" and "plurality", which invoke the mere empirical existence of differing groups, without implying that this is good (or bad).

### Historical Truth as Value and as Standard

The family of values involved in cultural pluralism education is a rich mixture of intellectual, social, and character (civic and moral) values<sup>32</sup>. Let us begin with the obvious and bedrock point, disputed by almost no one in theory (though frequently not honored in practice), that a good part of multiculturalism in general is simply setting the historical record straight. It is grounded in a search for truth, and that truth is that the histories of the African-Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Americans are a central part of US American history itself; moreover, until recently history and social studies textbooks and teaching have failed to honor this history.

There are two distinguishable pieces to this correction of the old European settler-centered version of American history. First is that non-white groups contributed much more to shaping American culture and institutions than had been credited. Second, the historical experiences of these groups, their struggles and triumphs, are as worthy objects of historical study, and are as integral to what we should regard as our national history, as is the history of our political institutions and leaders. As Gary Nash (the main author of the National Standards for U.S. History discussed earlier, p. 2) notes, recognition of the importance of these ethnic groups' experiences is a product partly of a more general turn in the past thirty years or so within the discipline of history to the study of ordinary people's lives. This development is known as "social history" and, as Nash points out, there has been a significant time lag in its adoption by school history textbook writers<sup>33</sup>.

While multiculturalism, especially at the university level, has sometimes allied itself with intellectual currents that question historical intelligibility on a large scale or historical truth—or, rather, question any particular interpretation of history as providing a secure foundation for claims to truth—in fact multiculturalism need not go that route at all. It is on much firmer

grounds allying itself with traditions of historical objectivity and methods of historical research as they have evolved within the historical profession. An aspiration to historical truth must inform multicultural initiatives, and provide a standard against which these can be assessed. In that case knowledge and truth itself provide one important intellectual value inherent in multicultural education.

By now these multicultural developments in history/social studies teaching are well known and accepted by all but the most reactionary nativists. They are worth mentioning, however, because many of the critics of multiculturalism portray the new inclusion of the experiences and achievements of ethno-racial groups other than whites as driven purely by political ideology and ethnic boosterism. However, as Nash documents<sup>34</sup>, the standards of historical scholarship themselves have supported these multicultural developments.

Of course historical truth by itself underdetermines what is to be *taught*. To take an obvious point, it seems legitimate for education to give "unequal time" to students' own *national* history and traditions simply because they are theirs. We expect Senegalese and Germans to give disproportionate attention to the history of Senegal, and of Germany, respectively. This obvious case is just the tip of an iceberg of choices that teachers, schools, and textbook writers must make about what material to present. And it is consistent both with multiculturalism and with a regard for historical truth, that in, say, a predominantly Mexican-American school, somewhat more emphasis be placed on the historical experiences and role of Mexican-Americans in American life than in some other school. But the "somewhat" is significant here. The multicultural history belongs to all Americans, and the teaching of that common history is for all students. While it is appropriate to teach that which one has reason to see as likely to be meaningful and interesting to one's students, one needs to avoid in any way implying that Latino history is only for Latinos, African-American history only for African-Americans, and the like.

### Guidelines For Educational Presentation of Ethnicity

In the presentation of ethno-racial groups within the curriculum, six guidelines emerge from both current historical scholarship and the needs of multicultural value education. These guidelines apply not only to strictly historical study, however, but to literature, to other dimensions of



social studies, and, more generally, to any recognition of ethnicity and race inside or outside the curriculum.

1. Adequate attention should be paid to the cultures<sup>35</sup> and histories of ethno-racial groups.
2. The role and impact of the major ethno-racial groups on our national narrative, culture, and history must be stressed.
3. Ethno-racial cultures should not be portrayed as static. Every ethno-racial group has undergone significant change in its character throughout its history within the US. These changes involve internal adjustments to various external factors: pressures to assimilate, contact with more "mainstream" culture, extent of influx of immigrants from the ethno-racial group at a given time, generational differences, contact with other ethno-racial groups. The dimensions on which ethnic identity manifests change over time include the degree to which ties to national homeland have been emphasized; the degree to which nation-of-origin identification has replaced regional identification (within nation of origin); the degree of emphasis on that culture's distinctiveness from "mainstream" culture; forms of cultural expression; connections to religion; and the like. What it means to be Irish-American, Jewish-American, or African-American has undergone substantial change since members of these groups have arrived on our shores<sup>36</sup>.
4. Interaction *among* ethnic groups should be stressed. That which is called a distinct ethno-culture at any point in time will generally itself have been formed from interaction with cultures that would have once, and perhaps still, been thought of as distinct from it. This is true not only of self-consciously *mestizo/a* and *creolized* cultures—that is, those formed from interaction between Spanish and indigenous Americans, and Europeans (and their ancestors) and Africans, respectively—but virtually any culture whatsoever. French culture, Norwegian culture, Ethiopian culture—all have been influenced by "other" cultures, and those influences incorporated into the current form of the named cultures. Within the US the character and identity of what we now think of as distinct ethno-cultures have been formed by interaction with other ones, either in residential or work proximity, or, more broadly, in the struggle for acceptance and advancement within American society.
5. Individual ethno-racial "hybridity" should be recognized. Students should not be given the idea that every individual has a single ethnic heritage, or that those who do not are somehow

deficient. Contact among ethnic groups has always led to intermarriage, and to other forms of complex or "adopted" ethnicities. This has been less true across *racial* lines, but it has happened, and a full picture of American ethno-reality requires its acknowledgment. Whole ethno-cultures have themselves become hybrids through these interactions.

6. Finally, the *internal* variety within ethnic groups should never be far from sight, or allowed to disappear because of the necessary emphasis on the *group* as the ethnic unit. Italian-Americans and Mexican-Americans, and any other group, contain internal diversities of class, gender, age, occupation, and individual differences. Ethnic identity is always "inflected" by these other differences; individuals with the "same" ethnicity can nevertheless bear quite different relationships to that ethnicity, some identifying with it very closely, others hardly at all.

The full moral and civic significance of these guidelines will emerge in the subsequent discussion. But collectively the guidelines reject a view (sometimes called "essentialism") of ethnicity as a primordial and unchanging cultural unity permeating every member of an ethno-racial group, and distinguishing each group irrevocably from every other. While acknowledging the personal and social meaningfulness of ethnicity<sup>37</sup>, these guidelines contravene an overemphasis on distinctness and lack of connection between ethnicities; a "cultural nationalism" that requires and postulates (non-existent) sharp boundaries *between* groups and that underrecognizes diversity *within* a given group; and a normative cultural determinism that pretends that an ethnic identity yields a clear and well-defined set of distinct values and precepts grounded in an age-old tradition, that can guide behavior independent of individual interpretation and choice.

With these guidelines on ethnicity in mind, let me now discuss the family of cultural pluralism values, then explore their differences and convergences with antiracist values.

### Cultural Respect

Education for cultural pluralism contains two primary subvalues, or families of subvalues. The first individual value is "cultural respect"—respecting the cultures and cultural identities of individual students. Cultural respect itself has two strands, one inward-focused—respect for one's own ethno-culture—the other outward-focused—respect for the ethno-cultures of others. These can be (but do not have to be) at



odds with one another; yet both have a rightful place in education for cultural pluralism. Our task is to find a balance between them that does justice to each.

Because of the value of culture to the individual, the individual has reason to appreciate her own culture, to have a loyalty to it, to wish to sustain it and have it respected by others. It gives her a reason to know about it, its history and traditions. Everything else being equal, schools have reason to provide this learning and, more generally, to validate the individual's attachment to her own culture. That is, schools have reason to respect the cultural dimension of their students' identity. (Qualifications of this below.)

Aside from the bare fact that students' cultural identity is important to them, schools have two other reasons to show respect for cultural groups. One is that each ethno-cultural group has its place in the history of its nation, and has contributed to the formation of its national culture and institutions. The other is an extension of this point to the world level. The ancestral cultures of ethno-cultural groups in the US are world civilizations that deserve attention in their own right. Schools have reason to study Chinese civilization, or the component civilizations of Mexico, because these are great world civilizations.

The form of study prompted by the latter two reasons must be strictly bounded and guided by norms of historical accuracy and responsibility. One does not falsify the role of a given group in the national history, nor exaggerate the world importance of its ancestral culture, simply in order to affirm the cultural identities of students. Nevertheless, such study is likely to have the effect of providing some "ethnic validation" of Chinese-Americans, or Mexican-Americans as a cultural group, and thus of students from those groups present in a class. This effect is to be welcomed.

The second, outer-directed element in cultural respect is the respect for cultures *other* than one's own, a respect grounded in the same considerations—the values of cultures *to* their individual members, acknowledgment of the role of those ethno-cultural groups in the shared national historical narrative, and appreciation of the values of the ancestral cultures as world civilizations. There is a further, civic, reason for teaching respect for the culture of others—as a corrective to the familiar human tendency of *ethnocentrism*, understood either as a tendency to privilege one's own group's ways of being over others (normative ethnocentrism), or to use one's own

culture as the sole lens through which other cultures and groups are seen and comprehended (epistemological ethnocentrism). Ethnocentrism is an important obstacle to civic harmony and understanding<sup>38</sup>.

### **Commitment to Cultural Diversity and Pluralism**

The other component of education for cultural diversity, and thus the third multicultural value, is the treasuring of cultural diversity and pluralism itself. We want students not only to respect each particular culture, and its individual members, but to welcome the fact of cultural diversity itself. We want them to be pleased and proud rather than fearful or discomfited by the range of different cultural groups that exist within their society. We wish students to feel themselves personally enriched by this diversity, and able to derive personal enhancement from their ability to attain some access to those cultures. We want them to see that their own society in particular is enriched in what it is able to accomplish and in what it stands for by the presence of manifold ethno-cultural groups.

This value has a crucial civic dimension. We wish student to appreciate cultural pluralism as a dimension of their political and social system. This appreciation involves recognizing how different groups can have different interests, developing the ability to respect those interests, and learning to deliberate with members of other groups to reach political decisions. As mentioned earlier, the civic aspect reaches beneath political processes strictly defined to encompass all sorts of intermediate institutions, as well as informal social contacts. A commitment to cultural pluralism involves learning to work together with, and communicate across the boundaries of, differing ethno-racial groups, in all these contexts.

This third value is outward-focused. It does not directly affirm the individual's attachment to her *own* culture (though it is not inconsistent with that value). Like respect for the culture of others, it points the individual beyond her own cultural affiliations toward other groups. But, in contrast to that respect, its object is not *each culture* in its own right, but rather the total set of cultures in one's national society, or in the world.

### **Culture-Sensitive Teaching and Cultural Pluralism**

In a different value category from cultural respect and commitment to cultural diversity, yet sometimes confused with them, is *culture-sensitive* teaching. The former are values to be taught *to students*. Culture-sensitive teaching, by contrast,

is a mode of pedagogy, and thus a value *for teachers* rather than students. It recognizes students' cultural background as a potentially significant factor in their learning, and enjoins teachers to become familiar with and knowledgeable about the cultural backgrounds of their students. The culture-sensitive teacher must be willing to tailor her teaching, at least to some extent, to the students' culture. For example, Southeast Asian immigrant children who have been taught to revere teachers, with whom they have had a very formal relationship, are often made uncomfortable by American classrooms in which the teacher is informal and friendly, and the student is expected to speak out and ask questions. The teacher should adjust her expectations of these students' participation, though she need not abandon the goal of finding ways to elicit more participation from them.

A general assumption operating here is that too much dissonance between the student's home culture and the expectations of the school harms the student's educational progress. There is room for a range of opinions on this issue. It is virtually an article of faith in some multicultural writings that minimizing this dissonance should be an overriding educational guideline. A more moderate position is the one stated above, that teachers should be willing to make some adjustments in the direction of accommodating students' cultural characteristics. As Sonia Nieto points out, if the classroom itself is itself culturally diverse, it would be impossible fully to accommodate *every* child's cultural characteristics<sup>39</sup>.

Moreover—a principle not exactly denied but often lost sight of in much multicultural writing—one dimension of education is precisely the exploration of the unknown, of what the student is not initially familiar with. A student may well be uncomfortable with that with which she is unfamiliar, or that which challenges her received beliefs. We do not want a teacher to refrain from pressing students to examine beliefs and values that they bring to school; the necessity for learning critical thinking, itself an important component of a democratic sensibility, requires no less. A strict "home-school dissonance minimizing" stance would severely constrain that educational goal. There is room for balance here. Clearly some children's learning is harmed if the clash between the home and school cultures is too great<sup>40</sup>. A child has to feel sufficiently comfortable in the classroom in order to venture into the realms of critical thinking, challenging of received opinions, and, more generally, into worlds she has not previously confronted.

Culture-sensitive teaching generally encompasses a further principle, which has been most persuasively developed by Lisa Delpit, a leading educational theorist in this area<sup>41</sup>. Delpit enjoins teachers to look for *strengths* in students' cultures, and to build on them. She writes with great insight about instances of teachers wrongly thinking that a student is stupid, cannot speak English, cannot speak "standard English", or cannot read. As instances of strengths on which teachers can build, Delpit cites (as a broad generalization) the African-American community's valuing of oral style—verbal adroitness, quick wit, facility in rhythm and rhyme—and of a developed storytelling ability in Native American children of certain tribes. In one particularly striking example, Delpit describes a teacher confusing the correcting of a child's dialect with teaching her to read, and missing the fact that the child has actually understood the reading selection (Delpit, 58).

The injunction to seek out cultural strengths—and not to assume too readily that a particular element of the child's culture is a deficit—takes the cultural accommodation stance one step further. The cultural accommodationist takes "cultural mismatch" to be a prime cause of underachievement in some black, Latino, and Native American children<sup>42</sup>. That view does not place any *value*, either positive or negative, on the cultural differences, but simply invites recognition of their educational impact. (Both views, however, contrast with the "cultural deficit" view, which sees the child's culture as itself the cause of educational failure.) Delpit's view, by contrast, places a *positive* value on those cultural differences, or at least encourages the seeking of value or strength in those differences<sup>43</sup>.

While Delpit's cultural strengths approach should certainly play an important role in pedagogy and teacher training, a final position on the matter of cultural differences must acknowledge that cultures and life situations have *both* strengths *and* weaknesses with regard to the educational achievement of its youthful members, and that educators must recognize both in order to best support that achievement.

The basic *value* engaged by culture-sensitive pedagogy is that of equality of opportunity—a value that operates at the teacher level, but is applicable equally to the school and the society-wide levels. Culture-sensitive teaching is a way of recognizing differences in order to shape pedagogy, and perhaps curriculum and school culture, in such a way as to give every student an equivalent learning situation, that is, a learn-

ing situation that will maximize her opportunity to learn to her particular best abilities. Delpit, Nieto, and others enrich our understanding of equality of opportunity in education by pointing to the myriad ways that cultural differences interface with schooling. They help to establish that treating children "the same" is not necessarily, or even usually, the way to provide them with equivalent learning opportunities, and they expand our conception of the differences relevant to achieving equality of opportunity in education. As Nieto points out, it is often difficult to get teachers to see that acknowledging cultural differences should not mean having lower educational expectations for some students.

This advance in our conception of equality of opportunity is, or should be seen as, a permanent and secure contribution to education theory, somewhat analogous to the ways that African-Americans' struggles for equality in the US have enriched our public conception of what "equality" means. It is an extension of the philosophy underlying the Supreme Court's requiring of some form of bi-lingual education (for non-English-speaking Chinese-American students, in the plaintiff's case) in the 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* case<sup>44</sup>; different resources and pedagogy are required for students differently situated, in order to provide them with "equal education".

Equality of opportunity is an important value in multicultural education. But it, and the culture-sensitive pedagogies that support it, do not engage the range of character and social values in either cultural respect or commitment to cultural pluralism. While these pedagogies do, in a sense, involve a notion of 'respect for culture' on the part of the teacher, they do not necessarily or essentially involve teaching *students* to respect *one another's* cultures, nor to value cultural diversity. Culture-sensitive teaching involves neither moral nor civic values. This is why, as values, cultural respect and cultural pluralism go substantially beyond culture-sensitive teaching.

### **Multiculturalism and Religion**

Let me comment briefly on the role of religion in the conceptual map of multicultural education, and, in particular, on its relation to cultural respect and cultural pluralism. The drive for a greater public presence of religion, including in schools, has emerged rather recently in relation to disputes about multicultural education, and stems from a much more socially and politically conservative ideological place. However, the two movements have now become intertwined, for religion is a large component in the ethno-

cultural identity of many groups. Cultural respect and affirmation must, in that sense, be extended to the religious dimension of cultural identities.

Religion has two faces, however. It can be regarded as a faith, doctrine, or belief-system adhered to and chosen by individuals, though usually shared collectively with other like-minded individuals. Yet it also has an ethno-cultural dimension, as part of the culture of a group one is born into; in this mode religion unquestionably warrants recognition under our definition of multiculturalism. It is more something one inherits as part of family and community than a matter of purely individual choice. Thus, ethno-religious rituals and holidays, such as Chinese New Year, Day of the Dead, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa are, properly, a staple of multicultural education in schools. They are part of what is acknowledged in learning respect for different cultures. It is not inappropriate for multicultural education to accord recognition to religion in its ethno-cultural dimension yet to refuse it in its purely doctrinal dimension. This is so for two reasons. One is that the "cultures" with which multiculturalism deals are predominantly *ascribed* ones. While no sharp line can be drawn between ascribed and chosen identities, children, especially, experience their ethno-racial identities as *given* rather than *chosen*. Purely individual religious faith would, then, lie on the "chosen" side of this divide.

A second, related, reason for denying multicultural recognition to religious doctrine is that multicultural education (even on the more expansive definition considered at the outset [p. 3f.]) is not concerned with *all* forms of "diversity". In particular it does not deal with diversity of opinion or belief per se (except insofar as these can be reduced to ethnic or racial differences). In fact this is one reason that the appellations "diversity education" or "education about difference" are somewhat misleading when taken, as they often are, as synonyms for "multicultural education". The purely doctrinal aspect of religion falls under this rubric of opinion or belief, hence is not part of the core meaning of multicultural education.

One implication of this is that a purely faith-based group—like Presbyterians, or fundamentalist Christians—has less claim to "cultural respect" than does an ethno-cultural group, even though the latter may contain a religious element in its self-understanding. Still, a sharp line can not be drawn here, and faith-based groups have certainly staked a claim to educational recognition analogous to that accorded ethno-cultural groups. Efforts have been made to think

through the implications of an educational commitment to pluralism in the case of religions-as-faiths.

A rough guideline for such education must be based in part on the evolving understanding of the First Amendment. Earlier interpretations of the First Amendment's injunction against "establishment of religion" doctrine led to an almost complete absence of mention of religion in the schools. But under pressure from religious groups, and to some extent from the multicultural movement, that understanding has been abandoned in favor of a more nuanced (and still developing) realization that religion should, indeed, be part of the school curriculum<sup>45</sup> However, there are proper and improper ways of presenting religion. A rough guideline is that schools can teach *about* religion, but they must remain agnostic as to the *validity* of any particular religious faith, or even of religion (as opposed to atheism) itself. Religions are to be presented knowledgeably and with respect, each religion as one among others; but the teacher and the school must not try directly to affect the religious convictions of any student.

However, the pluralistic context of instruction about religion may itself seem threatening to certain forms of religious conviction. A child's parents may fear that a mere respectful exposure to other religions will weaken their child's attachment to his own religion. A well-known legal case, *Mozert v. Hawkins* in Tennessee in 1987 (6th Circuit) illustrates this. Several evangelical Christian families brought a case against their local school board, objecting to an elementary school reading program that, they averred, implicitly demeaned and undermined their own religious views, hence their free exercise of religion (also protected by the First Amendment), merely by exposing the children to a range of religious views<sup>46</sup>.

Religion is analogous to culture here regarding the potentiality that exposure to alternative cultures (presented as legitimate, or as worthy of respect) will have the effect of weakening one's attachment to one's home culture. Whether one regards this as a good thing or (as the parents in the *Mozert* case did) a bad thing, this dynamic does accompany living in a culturally pluralistic context. Education in cultural respect is only one small part of the set of factors that culturally plural living will bring to bear on some traditional cultural identities. Children's mere contact with one another in schools, out in public, in other settings where parents are not present, as well as the pull of "mass culture", are more powerful forces in this regard than any explicit

values education in cultural respect within the school. And parents worried about this effect (weakening of attachment to home culture or religion), who send their children to public school, could hardly expect the school to teach that their particular religion (or ethno-cultural practice) is *superior* to all others<sup>47</sup>.

In addition, the antiracist strand of multiculturalism makes it appropriate for teachers to point out in condemnatory fashion aspects of religion that are racist and discriminatory, and to attend to efforts within religions to excise those elements<sup>48</sup>.

So multicultural education in its anti-discrimination and cultural pluralism dimensions has the effect of putting pressure on religio-cultural groups, as it does on ethno-cultural groups in general, to become more tolerant of differences, to be more respectful of others' options in cultural and religious arenas. As implied earlier in our discussion of guidelines for thinking about ethnicity in the US, many ethnic and religious groups' identities have shifted and been reshaped in adjusting to this context.

At the same time, the "cultural affirmation" strand of multiculturalism is, nonetheless, to some extent supportive of religions, including conservative ones, especially in their ethno-cultural form. If multiculturalism contained no "cultural affirmation" dimension, and was solely a form of anti-discrimination education, there would be no problem condemning religious beliefs that treat women unequally, or that condemn homosexuality as unnatural or immoral<sup>49</sup>. However, because multicultural education has several distinct strands, the cultural affirmation one can be in tension with the anti-discrimination one. Even if one privileges the anti-discrimination strand, the idea of cultural respect should affect how one deals with a student who holds religiously-based sexist and homophobic beliefs.

## Culture

The values of cultural respect and commitment to cultural diversity and pluralism make use of a notoriously slippery concept, that of "culture". This concept is used in the context of multiculturalism and the "culture wars" in several different ways. I have already rejected one—the "essentialist"—conception of culture; but much unclarity still remains.

While a full-scale discussion of "culture" is not possible here, we can distinguish different conceptions particularly relevant to multicultural education. An obvious point is that, in these contexts, "high" culture as well as "folk" culture

constitute only *part* of "culture", which embraces the ways of life of a people, and so includes norms, values, communicative styles, family relationships, "folkways", rituals, foods, modes of dress, celebrations and the like.

A second distinction is this: Certainly one meaning of culture invokes an idea of tradition and heritage carried by families and passed on to children from generation to generation. The celebration of ethno-religious rituals within a family or community—Day of the Dead, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Christmas, Diwali, Loy Krathong, Samichlaus, Las Posadas, Id-ul-Fitr, Odun Kekere, Kwanzaa, Sint Nicolaas<sup>50</sup>—are part of culture in this sense. But so are cultural values, such as veneration of ancestors in Confucian and Japanese cultures, or conceptions of gender roles in Muslim cultures.

But "culture" can also refer to something quite different—generation-specific tastes, norms and behaviors, such as styles of dress, tastes in music, and rituals of personal interaction, that are not part of a family-transmitted "heritage" or "tradition". These elements of the students' culture link the student to her peers, but not backward in time to her parents and ancestors; or at least they do not do so directly. Take rap music for example. Rap is certainly a part of inner city black youth culture<sup>51</sup>, and of black youth culture more generally. It can be a defining cultural/racial marker for these students; the choice of music to play at interracial schools' dances is often very emotionally charged with these cultural allegiances<sup>52</sup>.

At the same time, rap music is not a part of African-American culture *in general* in the way that, say, the Black Protestant Church is. Rap is very much a *youth* phenomenon, and many older blacks feel no affinity for it at all; in fact, if they did, the music could not play the specific youth-solidifying cultural role that it does<sup>53</sup>.

Schooling needs to be attentive to both forms of culture—peer culture, and "familial/ancestral" culture. Both are part of students' identities, and both are part of the "culture" that is the proper object of acknowledgment and respect. However, there is a very important difference between them. One of the reasons that cultures are worthy of respect as part of individual identity is that they anchor an individual in a tradition and heritage, one that links her to her family and forbears and provides a deep sense of roots and belonging. The affirming of an individual's connection to her familially-transmitted heritage affirms a deeper part of that person's identity than the more time-localized peer-culture of her generation.

There is, of course, a distinction to be drawn between respecting a child's *cultural heritage*, and respecting her *family background*. A child, especially an older one, may affiliate with an ethnic tradition that has become dormant within her own family, or she may "convert" to and affiliate with an ethno-religious group and tradition (Black Islam, or Judaism) different from that of her parents. On the other side, the family (and the child) may itself have little ethnic identity to speak of. Yet a child's connection to its family still deserves acknowledgment and respect as part of the child's identity<sup>54</sup>. Nevertheless, in general, ethnic culture is carried by family, and this connection is part of what distinguishes the stronger respect due *ancestral* than *peer* culture<sup>55</sup>.

These two forms of "culture"—ancestral/familial, and peer—are to be respected largely because of their importance *to the individual*. But we saw that some reasons for respecting cultures concern the culture's *own* value—to humanity as it were, or to a specific nation. From the point of view of cultural respect as a value, cultures warranting this sort of respect comprise yet a third conception of "culture", distinct from either peer culture or even ancestral culture, though having some connection to the latter. The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, in his influential essay on multiculturalism, says "One could argue that it is reasonable to suppose that cultures that have provided the horizon of meaning for large numbers of human beings, of diverse characters and temperaments, over a long period of time—that have, in other words, articulated their sense of the good, the holy, the admirable—are almost certain to have something that deserves our admiration and respect, even if it is accompanied by much that we have to abhor and reject."<sup>56</sup>

### **Antiracism and Education for Cultural Pluralism**

In the United States, what is generally referred to as "multicultural education" is seldom clearly distinguished from "antiracist" education. They are either run together or antiracist education is ignored. There are, however, distinct differences between what I have called education for cultural pluralism, and antiracist education. As mentioned earlier, it is important to gain a clear view of the differences in order to recognize when choices have to be made between them, and also to give thought how to minimize the tensions and emphasize the reciprocal support they can offer.

## Common Humanity and Cultural Difference

Cultural respect is grounded in a recognition of *difference* at the level at which antiracism is grounded in an appreciation of *sameness*. The student is to be taught to see each culture in its distinctness from her own; to recognize that that which is not-her nevertheless has value; and, ultimately, to treasure the diversity and variety of cultures. By contrast, the root value behind antiracism is seeing others as sharing the same humanity and dignity as ourselves. There is no fundamental conflict between these two values. We are the same as others in (some) ways that warrant valuing, and different from others in other ways, some of which warrant valuing.

The contrast between sameness-based and difference-based values reveals that antiracism's value foundation has much stronger roots in the American political, legal, and educational tradition than does cultural respect, or respect for cultural diversity. Notions of equality permeate those traditions. Struggles for political equality and a broader equality of opportunity have driven movements of blacks (and others) against slavery, segregation, and of women and linguistic minorities and others for "equal rights". Underlying these struggles is a notion that we (Americans, human beings, creatures of God) are fundamentally the same in certain important respects, and thus deserve to be treated the same in certain ways. As noted earlier [above, p. 2 ], there does exist an American tradition of thought, though a much weaker one, that places value on the respect for cultural differences.

The antiracist perspective sees and seeks equality *independent of* or even *in spite of* difference. Prior to our current multicultural awareness, many committed white antiracists, including some activists, did not really have positive respect for African-American culture as such. They saw blacks as, *humanly*, equals to whites, but either were not aware of a distinct black culture or saw what they regarded as black culture as a degraded or inferior one, though this inferiority was not (seen as) inherent but caused by racism. Nevertheless this lack of cultural respect did not diminish the commitment to social, political, and perhaps economic equality for blacks, nor did it necessarily preclude the whites from seeing blacks—as a group and as individuals—as human equals to whites.

This equality-affirming but culture-nonrespecting attitude is and was not confined to whites. Alexander Crummell, a 19th century African-American minister and pan-African

nationalist, devoted his life to equality between the races; but he unequivocally believed African culture to be inferior to European culture (especially to Christianity and to the English language). He saw almost nothing of value in African culture as it existed, yet he believed that Africans, and all "blacks" (people of African descent) deserved equality with whites/Westerners, and were capable of that equality<sup>57</sup>.

A final example of a commitment to antiracist equality in tandem with absence of cultural respect is the attitude of most Christian rescuers of Jews during the Nazi Holocaust. By risking their own lives to shelter them, these rescuers expressed their belief in the equal worth of Jewish lives, lives threatened by a racist regime. There can hardly be a clearer case of an antiracist commitment, a deep recognition of the human dignity of those other than oneself. Yet few of these rescuers had any appreciation of or saw any value in Jewish religious or ethnic culture itself<sup>58</sup>. They did not see Jewish culture as itself a good to the world, or to the Jews themselves, and so as something deserving to be protected from the threat of extinction.

With our current focus on, or some might say obsession with, "difference", it may be hard to recognize that someone might truly believe in human equality without respecting the cultures of the groups or individuals who are regarded as equal. In a sense we have come to identify a person's ethno-culture so closely with her full humanity that a non-recognition or devaluing of the culture is taken as equivalent to a devaluing of her humanity<sup>59</sup>. Our humanity is expressed in our ethno-cultural being, but it also transcends it. Still, it is a distinct limitation of the antiracist outlook that it fails to assure cultural respect and a commitment to cultural pluralism; this is why the latter two values need to be given distinct attention in a multicultural program.

A multicultural education program must strive for *both* values—human equality and cultural respect. Helping students to see the wrong of racial discrimination and bigotry, studying the history of racist practices and resistance to them, learning about the civic, religious, and moral norms of human equality—these are directed toward the equality side. Studying different cultures, how they provide meaning and value to their members, giving students direct exposure to different cultural expressions and practices, while helping them to achieve a sense of respect for these cultures—these educational initiatives speak to the cultural respect dimension of multicultural education.

In much multicultural education literature, and in common multicultural-influenced parlance, one finds what amounts to a slogan of the movement, one that conflates its equality-seeking and its cultural respect dimensions. It is this: "Learning to affirm differences rather than deny them is what a multicultural perspective is about."<sup>60</sup> This quote omits the dimension of multicultural education that concerns affirming the equality of persons independent of race or culture, and the consequent moral injunction to secure their equality of opportunity (as well as other forms of equality). In doing so, it also sustains a very misleading ambiguity in the expression "affirm differences". One part of affirming differences is recognizing differences in the life situations of different groups, so that the differential resources needed to bring them to a condition of equality can be secured. Those differential resources can be material—funding for schools, smaller class sizes, up-to-date teaching materials—or cultural-sensitive pedagogy (discussed earlier). But the rationale for recognizing and providing for these differences is the goal of equality (or equal opportunity), supported by a sense of human equality and dignity. By contrast, "affirming differences" can, and should, also mean recognizing the positive value in cultures in light of their difference from one's own<sup>61</sup>.

### "Racial" Groups and "Cultural" Groups

Antiracist education teaches against discrimination, prejudice, hatred, and bias (including institutional bias) against *groups* (and individuals in light of their group affiliation). Cultural respect is also directed toward groups. However, the groups are not exactly the same in the two cases, and, even when they are, the aspects encompassed by the two forms of education are distinct. Blacks are targets of racism. If a Ghanaian, or a Jamaican, or an African-American is a target of racism it is because of his blackness, not because of his Ghanaian, Jamaican, or African-American cultural heritage.

In reality there are no such thing as "races" in the sense in which that term is normally used—human groups genetically distinct from one another in humanly significant ways (intelligence, temperament, qualities of character) and, generally, differing in physical appearance in ways that correlate with those humanly significant differences. The reason races do not exist is that neither genetic variation beyond the physiological traits nor humanly significant characteristics correlate to any notable degree with the visible physiognomic differences<sup>62</sup>. However,

racist acts, attitudes, beliefs, and institutional structures do target what are taken to be "racial" groups in something like this sense. Racism exists even though no "races" exist.

We need a term to refer to the groups that are the target of racism, and I will call these "racial groups". In our society today, such groups are taken to be distinguished by physical appearance<sup>63</sup>. The physical features generally taken as the basis of "racial" classifications—skin color, hair texture, shape of facial features—are to some degree arbitrary. However, racism does not actually *require* the group that is the target of the racism even to be thought to have physically distinctive features. A "racial group" can be an *ethnic* group that is regarded in a "racialized" way; that is, the racist regards the group as possessing an inner essence rendering its members fundamentally distinct and generally inferior to one's own group. This characterization fits Japanese racism against buraku and ethnic Koreans, and mainstream American prejudice against Southern European immigrants in the early part of this century. It applies as well to the Nazi view of Jews. In all these cases the ability of the perpetrator group to distinguish the target group through physical features alone was, or is, minimal; however, all of them involve a tendency of the perpetrator group to *believe* that they can or could distinguish the target group by its appearance. It may be a necessary feature of racism that such a tendency be present.

Within the United States, four or possibly five groups are regarded as the main "racial" groups—blacks, whites, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans (American Indians)<sup>64</sup>. The racialization of Asian-Americans and Native Americans is somewhat masked by their labels—geographical origin in the former case, indigenoussness in the latter; but both groups are generally regarded, in popular consciousness, in a racial or quasi-racial manner.

Latinos (Hispanics) tend also to be regarded in a quasi-racial way, despite the fact that the (1990) US census distinguishes between "white" and "black" Latinos (Hispanics). That is, the social image of Latinos involves having a somewhat distinct "look"—brown skin, but not as dark as "blacks". Other groups, such as Arabs and South Asians are vaguely thought of in quasi-racial ways as well, but their numbers and cultural presence are at this point much more minimal than the five primary groups, and their social images are not as clearly solidified as being "racial" or "ethnic". (As these groups come to attract more public notice, and increase their numbers, the general map of ethno-racial



groups, and overall conceptions of both "race" and "ethnicity", may shift in unforeseeable ways.)

The significant point here is that *none* of these mentioned groups is a "cultural" group, in the sense appropriate for the value of cultural respect. None of them is a single distinct culture, even a distinct hybrid culture (such as Mexican). Rather, what gives racial groups their identity as a group is having been the target of racial prejudice and discrimination, or, more generally, having been arranged in a hierarchy of advantage based on race. The group might have common or similar historical experiences; but that is not the same as having a culture.

Cultural groups—groups with distinct cultures, traditions, rituals, forms of cultural expression, ways of life, value systems, and the like—are Mexican-Americans, African-Americans, West Indians, Pueblo Indians, Korean-Americans, Sioux Indians, Jews, Polish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Haitian-Americans, and the like. These are the groups to whom cultural acknowledgment and respect is an appropriate educational goal.

What is the connection between cultural groups and "racial" groups? There is no simple answer to this question, but we can distinguish several components. First, members of the cultural groups are not without "race". They are, in current terminology, "raced", a useful concept indicating that having a race is a social process of categorization rather than a pure biological fact. Polish-Americans and Jews are (now regarded as) "white"<sup>65</sup>; Haitians and African-Americans are (regarded as) "black". Thus most persons have *both* a culture (that is, an *ethno-culture*, the form of culture in question here) *and* a "race". But this is not *necessarily* so. Some white persons, for example, are so hybrid in their ethnic derivation that they possess no single distinct ethno-culture. (This is true of some persons of color as well, including "mixed race" persons.)

Some white students with distinct ethnic identities may resist being called "white", because it may seem to imply that, unlike "blacks" or Hispanics, they have no ethno-culture. But, in terms of our current understandings, there is no contradiction between being *both* strongly Italian-American identified *and* "white". Similarly, American West Indian blacks are ethno-culturally distinct from African-Americans (understanding the latter group, in this context, as black Americans who trace their lineage to slavery in the U.S.). Yet racial discrimination *may* be directed against the Jamaican immigrant in no

different manner than against an African-American.

Effective antiracist education requires that students be willing to acknowledge their "racial" identities, in addition to whatever ethno-cultural identities they may have. Teachers need to help students understand the distinction between race and ethnicity, and also to provide a safe space in which racial identities can be openly acknowledged and racial attitudes forthrightly discussed.

At the same time, racial identities should not be allowed to dominate or mask ethno-cultural ones either. The white student is not *just* white, but also Polish-American, Irish-American, Jewish-American<sup>66</sup>. The Asian-American is not *just* ("racially") Asian-American, but ethno-culturally Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, or Japanese. The black is not *just* black but culturally African-American, Haitian, Anglophone West Indian, Nigerian. These distinct ethno-cultures all deserve to be recognized, acknowledged, and respected.

Of the two dimensions of identity, generally the *cultural* is easier than the racial to claim, acknowledge, and discuss in schools and other public spaces. Especially in our era of multiculturalism, "culture"—in the sense of ethno-culture—has come generally to take on a positive connotation. Racial identity, on the other hand, signifies victimization or victimizer, discriminator or discriminatee, and the like. It evokes guilt, anger, resentment. These are some of the reasons that teachers themselves find it easier to deal with "culture" than "race", just as they are reasons why students might be more reluctant to claim or acknowledge "race" than culture. Yet these difficulties attaching to "race" reveal precisely why antiracist education is so important a dimension of multicultural education; for these unfortunate connotations of "race" are the result of the racist practices and racial tension that pervade American history. Unless they can be frankly discussed, their origins explored, their histories mastered, their tensions defused through trusting classroom dialogue, progress in the racial arena is unlikely.

The picture I have drawn of a neat correlation between, on the one hand, antiracist education and "racial group", and on the other, education for cultural pluralism and "cultural group," is somewhat oversimplified. For one thing, as we saw earlier, the longer an ethnic group resides in the United States, the more it tends to lose its distinctive ethno-cultural identity within its umbrella "racial" group. Inter-marriage, assimilative pressures of other kinds, and the power of race and racism itself hasten this process. Third

generation black West Indian ethno-culture tends to become less and less distinct from African-American culture. Polish-Americans become less distinct from Italian-Americans. In fact, with intermarriage, it becomes less and less clear exactly who is—or who has the right to claim to be—Polish-American, or West Indian.

### Race, Pan-ethnicity, and Culture

Moreover, what I have referred to as “racial” groups function also as “pan-ethnicities”—quasi-unities of different ethno-cultural groups who forge this unity partly for reasons of social visibility and political influence, and partly because, while consisting in distinct cultural groups, these sub-groups may have more in common culturally than they do with groups in the other four “pan-ethnic” groups. So, while Japanese and Koreans may be culturally distinct, and in fact frequently quite hostile to one another, Japanese-Americans and Korean-Americans have more cultural commonality than either does with Puerto Ricans, African-Americans, or Italian-Americans.

Racism itself is a reason for ethno-cultural groups to make common cause in pan-ethnic groupings. For example, in 1982, the murder of Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American mistaken for a Japanese-American, was a watershed event for Asian-Americans to recognize a political reason for unity in the face of racist threats and animosity. Such unifying does not of course make the resultant group a “cultural” one; that is precisely the point of the distinction between race and culture. Nevertheless, it does feed into a sense of commonality that pushes genuine ethno-cultural groups toward a “pan-ethnic” self-definition.

While pan-ethnicity is not a cultural formation, it can be a personally compelling form of identity. K. Anthony Appiah, among others, has urged recognition of a difference between “culture” and “identity”<sup>67</sup>. Individuals can take on an identity as a member of a group, without that group having a distinctive *culture*. Indeed, that point is implicit in the distinction between race and culture; for races do not have *cultures* per se. The currently positive connotations accorded the term “culture”, discussed above, contribute to urging groups to claim to possess “cultures”, when they do not. For many students an identity as “Asian-American” is more personally significant than, for example, a weakly-sustained Japanese-American or Chinese-American *cultural* identity; yet the former is (partly but) more than being “racially” Asian, in the sense of a group discriminated against as part of white American attitudes

toward Asians. The five “ethno-racial” groups are not analogous to one another in this regard.

“Black” is the most difficult racial identity to escape, and the collapsing of distinctions among “black” cultural groups (Haitians, Anglophone West Indians, African-Americans, Africans, etc.) tends more strongly to a primarily “racial” rather than distinctively pan-ethnic identity. Latinos have a *linguistic* source of unity that mitigates the collapse into exclusive raciality, and, in addition, the pressures within the U.S. toward a racial identity are not as strong in their case as in that of blacks. This is to say that racism against blacks is, everything else being equal, a stronger cultural force than racism against Latinos, though there are many exceptions to this generalization.

While racism is a force encouraging pan-ethnicity, pan-ethnic groups are not the same as racial groups. Rather, to view a group as pan-ethnic is not the same as viewing it as racial. Pan-ethnicity is thought of as signifying cultural similarity among culturally distinct groups. In practice, however, the groups that are pan-ethnic are often thought of, as think of themselves as, racial or quasi-racial.

### Convergences Between Cultural Respect, Commitment to Cultural Pluralism and Antiracism

I have emphasized the distinctiveness of antiracism and cultural respect (or cultural pluralism more generally) within multicultural education, because they are so often conflated with one another, leading to a failure to give each its due. Somewhat different curricula and pedagogies promote the three families of values, and I have suggested examples of each.

Because they are distinct we will sometimes have to choose which to emphasize. It is impossible to give general guidelines on how much emphasis to give each. Of the three, however, antiracism is the more pedagogically challenging and even threatening. As the English multicultural theorist A. Sivanandan notes, “Just to learn about other people’s culture is not to learn about the racism of one’s own.”<sup>68</sup> Antiracist education opens up a more socially and emotionally loaded set of issues than does cultural pluralism education. It requires the teacher to establish an atmosphere of trust and yet of the value of controversy and the clash of differing opinions and perspectives. It requires skill at mediation, and an ability to make educational use of feelings of shame, guilt, anger, and resentment. Moreover, to really “get it right”, the antiracist educator must honestly examine her

own attitudes, biases, ignorance, prejudices—not an easy task<sup>69</sup>.

Nevertheless, we should not overstate how divergent antiracist and cultural respect/diversity different values are in practice. In many ways the teaching of antiracism supports education for cultural diversity, and vice versa. For a child of color, cultural respect and affirmation is likely to support her sense of herself as worthy and thus to help her see clearly the wrongness of racial discrimination against her. It might support her in the confidence to challenge racist actions against her and others. Both cultural respect and racial equality confer forms of worth on devalued groups and persons. Though they are distinct forms of worth, they are likely to reinforce one another. A Mexican-American child who comes to feel more valued as a human being is likely to be able to see appropriate value in her own culture; and the reverse is true as well. The same considerations apply to the individual respecting the other. If she comes to see worth in African-American culture (whether she herself is Asian, white, or Native American), this should also enable her more readily to see African-Americans as equal human beings.

While none of these links is assured, they are all probable. And educators should therefore feel that pursuing either antiracist or cultural diversity goals will have at least an indirectly supportive impact on the other. This is no substitute for facing up to the necessity to ensure addressing both of them, fully and responsibly, nor of recognizing when one is choosing one over the other. But at least it enables us not to feel that we are constantly having to abandon one in favor of the other.

### **Interracial/Interethnic Community**

Distinct from antiracism, cultural respect, and commitment to cultural pluralism, is *interracial* (or *inter-ethno-racial*) *community*. This value explicitly seeks friendly, harmonious, caring, and mutually committed relationships across ethno-racial boundaries. It seeks institutional forms for such connections, from the personal through the local to the national level. Our particular focus is on classrooms and schools as such interracial communities.

Interracial community is to be exemplified by children, but not so much held by them as an explicit value. If they learn to care for children from other ethno-racial groups, forge loyalties to groups and institutions containing that diversity, and take on a sense of mutual responsibility with such children, then they have exemplified the value I have in mind here. It is not necessary

that they recognize themselves as doing so. In fact, in some ways the sense of community is more authentic if the child experiences it as an organic part of her experience, rather than a value deliberately to be striven for. By contrast, antiracism as a value requires that the child be aware of holding the values of racial justice, the wrongness of racism, and the like.

It might seem that antiracism already contains or implies the value of interracial community. This is partly true. Antiracism aims at treating each person as an equal, independent of race. It emphasizes mutual respect grounded in a common humanity, and a shared dignity. But for children to respect each other, and accept each other as equals—e.g. as full and equal members and participants in the class—is not the same as these children really caring about one another; at best it is only part of that caring. Antiracism is consistent with a complete absence of friendship across racial lines. It is consistent with socializing only with members of one's own group. Yet the value of community can not rest content with that. It requires black, Latino, white, and Asian children to be able to care about each other as individuals across the ethno-racial divides, and to feel a personal loyalty, grounded in this caring, to their schools and classrooms as communities.

It is true that antiracist education requires engagement among students across racial lines in class discussion. As I have suggested, without open and honest discussion about the children's racial attitudes, stereotypes, differing experiences—without the children learning to listen to and hear each other about these matters—antiracist education is at best incomplete. And this classroom engagement opens the door to friendships and communal relations among the students. But it does not guarantee it. That is why attention to creating such community deserves attention as a distinct goal.

Moreover, some aspects of antiracist education have the potential to harm the development of such a sense of community. Antiracist education inevitably emphasizes racial identities. It understandably, and indeed appropriately, makes each child more intensely aware of her racial identity than does, say, mathematics. While I have emphasized the universal values underlying antiracist education, and have encouraged the presentation of racial justice as the cause of no single group but of every human being, still, much of the actual work of antiracist education involves highlighting the wrongs perpetrated by some groups on others; how different groups experience things differently; and the like.

At least on the surface level, this enhancing of the salience of racial identities is inimical to forging a sense of communal and caring unity in the class. It emphasizes difference rather than commonality; and this fact is often cited by teachers as a source of their reluctance to engage issues of race. There are some guidelines that can minimize the tension between this group-identity-centered portion of antiracist education and the creating of caring interracial communities. The "guidelines for ethnicity" contain some of them: Emphasize the internal variety within racial groups. Make sure to emphasize that "whites", "blacks", "Latinos" are not monolithic groups—not all whites were slaveowners, segregationists; some, indeed, were resisters of racism and heroes in antiracist struggle. Emphasize that not all blacks were slaves, not all blacks are or were poor, that blacks have a wide variety of opinions, livelihoods, family constellations. And similarly for other groups. All these guidelines have the effect of muting the idea that entire groups are pitted against other entire groups.

More significant, however, is that without antiracist commitment secured by antiracist teaching, cross-racial community will be unstable and superficial. It will remain on the surface: "Let's just emphasize our commonalities, and not our differences" is an oft-heard refrain. This is not a formula for real community, which requires a stronger personal engagement, a willingness to hear out differences, including potentially unpleasant ones. Antiracist education provides a space to create a stronger rather than weaker sense of community in a class and a school. It does not guarantee it, and, indeed, if done badly can destroy its possibility. But shoving the racial differences under the rug ensures trapping the sense of community at a superficial level.

Cultural respect and, especially, commitment to cultural pluralism, take us perhaps further than antiracism toward interracial community in schools and classes. These values involve a positive regard for others in light of their cultural differences, and a treasuring of the diversity present in the school and class. Such attitudes must be a component of any cross-ethnic sense of community.

Yet they are not sufficient. Respect is not the same as caring. Respect is consistent with emotional distance and disengagement. It can involve an appreciation "from afar"—the Asian or white child is thrilled by African-American music, and is eager to learn its associated history; but she does not really feel comfortable with the African-American children. She respects them, but she can not be friends with them; and vice versa.

Interethnic community requires caring and (some) friendship.

Many teachers resist the idea that providing a context that supports friendship between children is any part of their mission or responsibility<sup>70</sup>. A value education perspective requires extending our sense of professional responsibility to encompass the building of community in our classes; this does not mean actually *creating* friendships, for that is impossible. But it does mean forging an atmosphere conducive to them—using cooperative learning, preventing "clique" seating in the class, creating a caring atmosphere in the class.

This speaks to the flip side of the relation between inter-ethno-racial community on the one hand and antiracism and cultural diversity on the other. The presence of the former can enhance the latter. Personal connections (whether they attain the depth of an actual *friendship* or not) across ethno-racial lines can be an important contributor to children's acquiring a lived sense of why racism is wrong, why another culture is not strange, why it is good that there are children from different cultures in the class. Moreover the experience of community in class and school is a significant forum for the development of the wider attitudes of civic pluralism in the society at large that is a central goal of multicultural education.

To summarize, then, I have presented five distinct values implicated in multicultural education. Four of them—antiracism, cultural respect, commitment to cultural pluralism, and inter ethno-racial community—are individual character values, though they can apply as well to other entities (teachers, classes, schools, society). The fifth—culture-sensitive teaching—is a pedagogical value; it is for teachers rather than students.

#### IV. Challenges, Pitfalls, Concerns

Let us now look at some of the challenges, pitfalls, and concerns with regard to putting these values into practice.

##### 1. Antiracist Education in Demographically Distinct Schools

The character of multicultural education will necessarily vary depending on the ethno-racial composition of the student body in a class or school. On one level the latter feature might seem irrelevant. After all, every student no matter what her group should learn about the historical systems and practices of racism (sla-

very, segregation, Japanese-American internment camps, racial restrictions on citizenship and immigration), and about resistance to them (slave rebellions, Underground Railroad, Civil Rights Movement). All have reason to learn cultural respect, and to value cultural pluralism. All have reason to oppose racism, to understand racism, to learn how to engage the racism in the world around them. The racism that has been so substantial a part of American history—withstanding controversy about how deep that racism is, or about its current extent—is not the possession of its victims, nor a weapon against the descendants of its perpetrators. It belongs to all Americans.

Nevertheless, when it comes to presenting these matters in classrooms, the composition of these classrooms will inevitably, and should, shape the character and effectiveness of the educational pursuit of antiracist values. Experience suggests, for example, that everything else being equal, a skillfully-run class of ethnically diverse students is much more likely to generate illumination and understanding concerning racism than is a class of all white students, or all black students. Hearing the differing perspectives of individuals, stemming from (though not reducible to) their ethno-racial background, is one of the most powerful educational experiences promoting racial understanding. As one teacher said, to an antiracist educator in a pre-service class concerning racism, “students are hungering for conversation about racism”<sup>71</sup>. In fact, learning to listen to and then to communicate with those of other ethno-racial groups without defensiveness, inappropriate guilt, resentment, and rage is one of the most significant goals of the civic dimension of antiracist education. This can hardly be accomplished in classes of all one ethnicity, whether white, black, or Latino.

Nor are these goals readily accomplished in “mixed” classes heavily dominated by one ethnicity, but with a smattering of others. There is some critical mass generally necessary for members of any group to feel comfortable in voicing their views and giving honest responses to racially-charged material (though of course such willingness is dependent upon personality factors as well). Skillful and knowledgeable teachers are able to create an atmosphere of sufficient trust to overcome an inhibiting, unhealthy racial composition; but it is difficult.

All this is one reason in favor of ethno-racially mixed schools, from the point of view of multicultural education in general (and that, in turn, is an argument for encouraging more

racially mixed neighborhoods, locating schools between segregated neighborhoods, and the like.) However, as the earlier argument indicated, important elements of antiracist education can be accomplished in classes and schools with less favorable ethno-racial demographics. In fact much more thought needs to be given to how to run discussions concerning race in single ethnicity classrooms. The challenges here differ depending on the ethnicity. An all-white student body with little contact with other races may feel bored or put-upon by curricular attention to racist practices; attitudes reflecting parental views might contribute to this unfortunate result. The absence of members of the groups who have suffered from racism can make this material seem abstracted and ungrounded, though it need not do so. Without members of the groups in question present, it is also more difficult to challenge the demeaning racial stereotypes pervasive in our culture; but, again, it is by no means impossible to do so. The temptation on the part of teachers to refrain from challenging white students to examine honestly their own attitudes, their nation’s history, and current inequalities may be very great. Teacher training must find ways to help teachers engage such students in a productive, honest but not guilt-tripping manner<sup>72</sup>.

All-black or all-Latino classes and schools present a complementary difficulty—demonizing white people, or at least stereotyping them, blaming all the ills afflicting one’s group on whites or on racism<sup>73</sup>. It is the teacher’s responsibility to find forms of antiracist teaching in such schools that avoids these pitfalls as well.

Since many schools are close to being mono-ethnic, whether deliberately or not, antiracist education and education for cultural pluralism and respect would be very limited if it had no means of engaging such schools. The one value which seems impossible to convey in single ethnicity schools is interracial community. That value has a necessarily personal dimension not actually required in the other three values. The absence of possibility of interracial community is a deep loss in a single ethnicity school, and constitutes a further argument for ethno-racially mixed schools<sup>74</sup>.

## 2. Tokenism and Superficiality

A second danger in multicultural education is remaining content with a visible but superficial presentation of cultural pluralism—displays on classroom walls of accomplished but little known figures from marginalized groups, ethnic foods

dinners for families, recognition of ethno-religious holidays at younger grade levels.

The "holiday" approach can demean a cultural groups' rituals and holidays by conveying an impression of them as strange and exotic; or it can trivialize by treating them superficially and entirely apart from their full meaning in the culture's way of life. Even when the presentation accords ethno-holidays such as Ramadan, Kwanzaa (an African-American December celebration created in the 1960's and based on certain traditional African values), and Hanukkah genuine recognition and a measure of genuine respect, such classroom observances can be presented to majority Christian students in a way that implies that such holidays are "out of the mainstream", and are, as it were, not the "real", American, winter holiday, which is Christmas.

Teachers may unwittingly convey this attitude through their own lack of familiarity with and understanding of the holidays in question or through failing to exhibit real respect for the religious and ethnic groups whose holidays are being recognized. This is a kind of mechanical multiculturalism that fails to recognize that teachers must inform themselves and adopt attitudes of respect appropriate to their subject matter.

### 3. Contributions and Remarginalization

A related concern applies to curricular treatment of ethno-racial groups that emphasize the contributions made by a given group to national life. By emphasizing what the ethnic group contributes to the larger, dominant culture, the group's own marginal status may actually be reinforced<sup>75</sup>, partly because its distinctiveness is masked by being subsumed in the dominant culture's standards for what counts as a "contribution".

This criticism raises quite complex issues. It is true that teachers may feel a good deal less anxiety in presenting the positive aspects of marginalized groups than they do in presenting the forces of racism and exclusion that have shaped these groups' histories. That is, "contributionism" can be a way to avoid the essential antiracist dimension of multicultural education.

Nevertheless, one of our curriculum guidelines [see above, p. 8 ] is to give due credit to the impact of an ethno-cultural group on the larger culture. It is quite important for all students to recognize that there have been African-American, Latino, Asian-American, and Native American scientists (Benjamin Banneker, Ernest

Everett Just), business people (An Wang, Madame C.J. Walker), political activists (Rosa Parks, Dennis Means), union leaders (Cesar Chavez, Roy Wilkins). It is no trivial matter that children from subordinated groups see successful, prominent, and honored (or at least worthy-of-being-honored) fellow members, past and present. Nor is it a trivial part of creating a true consciousness of the culturally pluralistic character of our society that children from *all* groups recognize the centrality of all these groups to American life. Many white children, and perhaps others as well, still believe that virtually everything important in what we call the accomplishments of Western civilization was created by white people. And the burying of this view is vital, though in the past 25 years we have made undoubted progress toward doing so<sup>76</sup>.

It is, nevertheless, true that contributions whose value consists purely in furthering goals that pose no challenge to dominant cultural values (e.g. the contributions of scientists, professional people, most national politicians, business leaders) are less than what education for cultural pluralism should provide.

In fact, many of what we now acknowledge as contributions or achievements on the part of a particular group were in their time seen as valueless, or even worse. We now recognize that the roots of current mainstream popular music lay in black vocal music of the late '40's and '50's—rhythm & blues, which in the early '50's was still called "race music". When white youth began listening to and buying black records in the '50's, white (especially Southern) ministers fulminated about the degraded, "primitive", animalistic quality of this music, and warned of the end of Western civilization<sup>77</sup>. Yet there is now little in popular music that is not in some way "rock", the catch-all category for music whose origins lie in this African-American music.

Popular music may be the most dramatic example, but many forms of what we now think of as American music—jazz, blues, gospel—were originated by, and were once the sole "possession" of African-Americans, white America having not yet developed the aesthetic and musical sensibility necessary to appreciate them. As several recent commentators have pointed out, and as Ralph Ellison was among the first to note, now even racists enjoy black popular music<sup>78</sup>. Recently, literary scholars have demonstrated that the African and African-American presence has decisively shaped American literature<sup>79</sup>.

Such "contributions", then, transcend the values—in this case, aesthetic values—of the

dominant culture, and compel an expansion of those values. They constitute a different kind of contribution than a black scientist or businessperson, neither more nor less significant. These value-expanding contributions reveal that what we call "mainstream" culture has been irrevocably shaped by the presence of African-Americans, Native-Americans, and Latinos<sup>80</sup>. It brings into relief the ways that "we"—the "mainstream", the "dominant culture"—are *already* multicultural. Thus while some "contributions" fail to challenge the dominant culture, others do so.

Nor are the contributions of this mainstream-challenging type confined to "artistic" cultural forms (of both "high" and "mass" character). Our political culture too has been deeply shaped by groups other than the Western and Northern Europeans who designed our basic political institutions<sup>81</sup>. Popular as well as legal/political meanings of "freedom" and of "equality", for example, have been irrevocably shaped by the struggles of blacks against slavery and segregation<sup>82</sup>. The meaning of the Civil War as a struggle against slavery, rather than only a fight for national unity in the face of secession, was greatly influenced by the presence of runaway slaves and free blacks presenting themselves as recruits for the Union army, as well as by Frederick Douglass and other free blacks agitating against Lincoln's original hesitations<sup>83</sup>. Without needing to make the absurd claim that every distinct ethnic group has had an equal impact on American life, what we know as "American culture", including American political culture, is deeply enmeshed with the ethno-racial plurality of American society and history. This dimension of the "contribution" piece of education for cultural pluralism is an essential complement to the antiracist strand of multicultural education. Taught appropriately, "contributionism" avoids both the trivializing and remarginalizing that afflicts many multicultural initiatives in practice.

#### **4. Failure to Challenge Structures of Power**

A further criticism of the "contributions", "holiday", and similar familiar forms of multicultural education model is that they reinforce the power structure of the society; they do nothing to bring the "contributing" groups from the margins to the center in terms of political and economic power. I have rejected the idea that the contributions model actively *supports* the current power

structure; but it is quite true that it fails to challenge it. It can challenge *cultural* hegemony (as I have argued), but not political power.

This reveals a further distinction between cultural pluralist and antiracist education. Antiracist education takes as one of its goals the promotion of racial justice; cultural respect and education for cultural pluralism does not. Hence antiracist education does direct some attention to issues of social structure, and to its power relationships. It challenges the disparities in power, privilege, and resources among different groups in a way that education for cultural pluralism does not (or does only very indirectly).

Nevertheless there is a good deal in antiracist education that does *not* directly challenge large-scale racial inequities and is *not* directed at the social transformation necessary to correct these inequalities. The attempt to undermine racial stereotypes, the teaching of the evils of prejudice, even the inquiry into movements of resistance to racist systems and practices—these have value as part of an antiracist program in their own right, independent of whether they have the effect of encouraging students to be active change agents in their own societies, doing direct battle with structures of racial inequality and power imbalances

Antiracist education contributes to the civic vision articulated earlier—of forms of association, intermediate institutions, and public interaction informed by respect, justice, and care among ethno-racially diverse groups of persons. This vision is broad yet less politically transformational than doing battle with the racial inequality and injustice in the basic structure of society. Still, antiracist education does very much contain a push toward action. This is part of the character and civic dimensions of my general conception of multicultural education. I urge intervention in racist incidents, inquiries into community practices that may exacerbate or mitigate racial injustice, community service that involves a civic engagement with racial issues. Hopefully some students will emerge from this process with strong commitments to changing the structures of their society in a more just direction, or, more ambitiously, to dismantling the structures of racial oppression. But it is both too ambitious and too narrow a conception of multicultural or antiracist education in general for all its educational initiatives to require the latter as an ideal endpoint. The civic engagement that is integral to multicultural education in general encompasses a wide range of behavior and activities that impinge on the area of race and racial injustice; but not all of these could, by



any stretch of the imagination, be construed as full-scale attacks on the structures of racial injustice. [See 7 below for further elaboration of the argument here.]

## 5. Divisiveness

Probably the most common criticism made in the public debates about multiculturalism concerns its alleged divisiveness. Instead of bringing us together as a nation, the criticism goes, multiculturalism encourages us to “seek [our] primary identity in the cultures and homelands of [our] ancestors”, in the words of Diane Ravitch, an educational historian and theorist, and one of the most prominent exponents of this view<sup>84</sup>.

This criticism is seldom backed up by any careful research, or even any research at all, about the actual effects of multicultural education in schools. Yet it points to some genuine tendencies within multicultural education. Two stand out. Antiracist education can seem to pit groups against each other, and encourage anger in victimized groups and resentment among white students (“I didn’t have anything to do with slavery or segregation; don’t blame me!”). Cultural affirmation does encourage an inward-looking respect for one’s own group that, if the sole focus of education for cultural respect, would encourage lack of connection to other groups.

The most extreme form of ethno-racial separatism is ethnic-based schools—schools catering to one ethnicity on the grounds of enhancing the culture and attainment of that particular group of students. African-American (generally all-male) academies are an example. Another is a school based on shared religious creed. Such schools privilege cultural (religious) affirmation and maintenance over respect for others and valuing of diversity<sup>85</sup>.

Some theorists have suggested that a period of “ethnic self-immersion”, with an attendant unconcern or even hostility toward other groups, is a natural and understandable stage for children, especially those from subordinated, marginalized, or devalued groups in their society<sup>86</sup>. These theorists regard such a stage of development as less than optimal, but as a way station on the road to a sense of pride and comfort in one’s ethnicity, coupled with an ability to appreciate the cultures of others and to ally with others for common aims—in other words, toward a “stage” that corresponds to the ideal I am describing here of cultural respect and commitment to cultural pluralism. Of course such an ideal is often not reached, and it is

important to remember that the ethnic immersion stage has a psychic appeal, function, and logic of its own that is in no way caused by multicultural education and its cultural affirming element, as critics sometimes imply. Taken to an extreme, it can lead to a social and psychic separatism that refuses to extend identifications or sympathies outside one’s ethnic group.

Still, the “divisiveness” criticism clearly points to its own answer. These effects are symptoms, not of multicultural education, but of the privileging of one strand of it over the several others; that is, it is multicultural education poorly done. The criticism is a cautionary note to ensure that the boundary-crossing and unifying aspects of multiculturalism be continually emphasized. I have pointed to three such aspects: (1) The sense of common humanity and equal dignity underlying all antiracist teaching. (2) Education for cultural pluralism that calls not only for cultural self-affirmation, but respect for *other* cultures, and a valuing of the shared culturally plural polity. (3) The emphasis on inter-ethno-racial community at all levels that reinforces the ties we have to one another from friendships, through classes, schools, neighborhoods, all the way to the nation itself.

We can summarize the lesson of the divisiveness criticism by saying that the civic dimension of multicultural education—an element in all three of its core value families—must constantly inform our teaching. We must continue to remind ourselves that multicultural education is a national project, meant to enhance justice and the quality of life in the nation as a whole, and that the national identity is something we all share, no matter what our ethno-racial group.

The critics of multiculturalism as separatist have, I think, been somewhat irresponsible in taking some of the more extreme manifestations of multiculturalism for the whole. For example, some Afrocentrists do preach an educational philosophy that is separatist, divisive, and tending to demonize whites as a group<sup>87</sup>. While the critics are right to emphasize the importance for national unity and mutual responsibility of loyalty to shared institutions securing justice and freedom, they mislocate the primary threats to that loyalty. The creation of an internationally-oriented class of wealthy Americans with little loyalty to their nation, the flight of capital and jobs overseas, the enclaving of wealthy, and overwhelmingly white, people in self-enclosed communities (often with their own security systems), the decreasing lack of public contact between people of different classes<sup>88</sup>—all these are much greater threats to the unity and civic

health of the nation than any educational initiatives that teach children to acknowledge their ethno-racial identities and the role their groups have played in American history.

Apart from this point, the framework set out here has yielded several more concrete guidelines for muting an overintensifying of boundaries between ethno-racial groups—emphasizing that groups are not monolithic, recognizing that no group's ethnicity is "pure", that ethno-cultures have been formed by interaction with others and are constantly changing, emphasizing that, for example, many white people have courageously fought against racism; and the like. [See above, **Guidelines for Education Presentation of Ethnicity.**]

Finally, Ravitch and Schlesinger's conception of national unity that requires downplaying ethno-racial differences and the ravages of racism is actually a more superficial one that what could emerge from a honest confrontation with unpleasant historical and current racial realities. The forthright and open classroom dialogues expressing differing takes on these realities that good multicultural education encourages leads to a strengthened and deeper sense of community, and this holds for the national level as well<sup>89</sup>.

[See Appendix A for an example of a teaching approach to "ethnic heroes" that addresses criticisms 2, 3, and 5. It attempts to balance the particular and universal, while avoiding trivialization and marginalization.]

## **6. Distraction by Politicization**

Related to the divisiveness issue is that the public hoopla over multicultural education will filter into the classroom in unhealthy and undermining ways. One sign of this effect—visible especially at the university level, but manifest in high schools as well—is the labeling, and the dismissing, as "PC" (politically correct), any concern with social or racial justice, or other forms of discrimination and exclusion. This labeling allows students to feel justified in refusing to engage with issues of racism from the moment they are mentioned. Dealing with issues of racism, prejudice, cultural differences and strife, and the other difficult topics in multicultural education, is hard enough, without the further emotional "charging" and distorting of these issues by misleading and irresponsible public and media flame-fanning. Here the critics help to produce the very divisiveness they pretend to decry.

One can only hope that the processes by which multicultural educators aspire to create

trusting, open, and engaged atmospheres in their schools and classes will be sufficient to withstand this further obstacle. The challenges of multicultural educating and the changes in orientation from much traditional teaching required by them are substantial enough to deal with a good deal of the extra trouble created by the "PC" backlash. Even without the public dissension, many white students will resist antiracist teaching, many students of any group will resist the efforts of moral imagination required to see the world from others' points of view. The worry articulated here only reinforces the need for a community-building dimension as a core element of the values informing multicultural teaching.

## **7. Seeing Multicultural Education as a Panacea for the Ills of Schooling in General**

A final challenge to multiculturalism lies in an overambitious strand that sees multicultural education as a solution to all the ills of contemporary schooling, especially for low-achieving "racial minority" children. Consider for example, this statement by James Banks, one of the first and possibly the most influential theorist of multicultural education in the United States:

[Multicultural education] tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by ensuring that the total school environment reflects the diversity of groups in classrooms, schools, and society as a whole<sup>90</sup>.

"Equality of opportunity" is the concept I want to focus on, understood here as equal opportunity to acquire the education to become a productive worker, a contributing citizen, and a self-developed individual<sup>91</sup>. Clearly this must be a central goal of any fair and just educational system. Creating real equality of opportunity would require massive changes in the economic structure of school funding, to provide for low-income-area schools some kind of comparability to good suburban schools in class size<sup>92</sup>, range of offerings, and material resources. Real equality of opportunity would require more time for teachers' professional development, and perhaps higher teachers' salaries. Ultimately, it would involve greater equality in the social domains within which schools operate. None of the required resource issues have much to do with multicultural education. While providing a whole school environment that reflects diverse groups within it is a crucial educational goal, it should not be unrealistically burdened with the

hope of securing equality of educational opportunity; nor should it prevent us from facing up to the economic and political efforts necessary to secure that equality of opportunity.

An issue here, raised at the very beginning of this paper, is a confusion between the distinct levels at which different values operate. Equality of opportunity within a given school, or classroom, is, for example, a different matter from equality of opportunity within the educational system as a whole. While providing equality of opportunity for the students of color at a privileged suburban school may be a step toward racial justice—an improvement over such students being treated *unequally* there—it contributes nothing to remedying of the larger systemic racial injustice inherent in the great inequities between prosperous suburban districts and strapped urban ones.

Both forms of equality of opportunity are very important; but what it takes to achieve them differs greatly in the two cases. A school that is strapped in its resources can still provide equality of opportunity *within* or *among* its group of students; this may be the venue for equality of opportunity that Banks has in mind. Equality of opportunity is a comparative notion, and even if the school is not able to provide a fully *adequate* education for its students, it can at least provide an *equal* one, that does not privilege some students over others.

At the same time, education for cultural pluralism, as an umbrella for a set of multicultural values and goals at the individual student level, need not stand or fall with its connection to equality of opportunity. If becoming knowledgeable about the distinct ethno-racial subcultures that comprise the U.S., learning appropriate respect for cultural difference, gaining some degree of multicultural competence, gaining a cohesive picture of US American history as encompassing many diverse groups and their interactions, and the like, lead to greater equality of opportunity, that is well and good. But whether they do or not, they are valuable educational, moral, and civic goals in their own right, and deserve support on those grounds alone.

## APPENDIX A

### Balancing the Particular and the Universal or National: The Moral and Civic Dimension of "Contributionism"

Let me spell out in some detail how one might go about balancing the attention to the particular required by cultural respect and the focus on national unity required by the civic dimension of multicultural education. I will use an example of "contributions", further illustrating the point made in section 3 that contributions can be (though are not necessarily) a good deal more than a superficial and marginalizing part of multicultural education

I take Cesar Chavez as an example. Chavez founded and led the United Farm workers, a union of Mexican and Mexican-American migrant farm workers in California. Chavez is surely one of the great figures in Mexican-American life in the 20th century. He is a hero to Mexican-American young people, an inspiring leader of their people, a model to emulate.

At the same time Chavez's accomplishment is not confined to being a Mexican-American leader. He must be seen as a great national labor leader, a pioneer in linking labor and community in support of labor goals, and in developing (not inventing) the consumer boycott, a tactic used subsequently by many labor and political movements. Chavez must also be regarded as a great Civil Rights leader, in some ways approaching the stature of Martin Luther King, Jr. Like King, he helped to extend and shape our notion of the reach of American citizenship, and of the rights attached to it.

Cultural respect must both appreciate a distinct ethnic group in its own right, and also its role in the larger national culture. (See Principles 1 and 2, p. 8.) A teacher who presents Chavez solely as a leader of the Mexican-American community will discourage an important set of moral and civic attitudes in her students. Let us imagine a white student for example. To confine his respect to Chavez as a Mexican-American hero would be to see him too much as "other", as the hero of a group that is *not him* (*not that student*). The student would be missing that Chavez and his movement are part of the same moral and civic world—that is, the national community—that the white student already regards himself as belonging to.

On the other hand, there is a precisely opposite pitfall, illustrated by the teacher who presents contributions and accomplishments *only* to the larger national (or world) community. The

student who is not a member of the ethnic group in question is then encouraged to appreciate contributions *only* insofar as they benefit or enhance the society as a whole, or instantiate a universal value. For example, Dr. King is seen as a great humanitarian, as someone striving for a color-blind society; Chavez is seen as part of the labor movement or as a civil rights leader. But King is not acknowledged as a leader specifically of African-Americans, Chavez not seen in his particularity as a Mexican-American leader.

Just as the first deficiency lies in an inability to see the *universal* dimension of the contribution—one that, therefore, embraces the student *non*-member of the group—so the second pitfall lies in an inability to appreciate the *particular*. It involves a failure to extend one's respect and appreciation to another ethnic group in its difference from oneself. It is as if the student (in this case) can only acknowledge that group and its experience if she is able to see it contributing *to herself*, indirectly through its contribution to the society with which she is here taken to identify.

The civic dimension of cultural respect requires both pieces. The student from group X must learn to respect group Y in its own right, in its *distinctness* from herself. She must learn to see the value in that group's own heroes and accomplishments that remain largely within the group. A good example here is Mary McLeod Bethune, a distinguished black educator in the early part of the century, who co-founded an important vocational and normal school for black women. Bethune's contribution does not have the larger national impact of King's and Chavez's; however she is a key figure in African-American history and life. Students from other groups need to be able to appreciate the value of Bethune's accomplishments to the black community, precisely because, and solely because, African-Americans are a key group in American life whom cultural respect must embrace. This particularistic dimension to cultural respect requires crossing boundaries, extending one's sympathetic and respectful understandings to groups that one need not appropriate as one's own in order to do so.

But the other side of this is that this boundary-crossing particularism must be complemented by the universalism that recognizes when contributions *from* group X are made to the larger collectivity of which members of groups Y and Z are a part. The student must acknowledge that, on another level, groups Y and Z are *connected to her* as part of this larger collectivity. Achievements and contributions that affect the larger community (including the

community of humanity, as well as the national community) need to be appreciated on those grounds as well.

In this way the civic consciousness attached to cultural respect recognizes other groups both in their otherness as well as in their connectedness. Communication across the boundaries of groups, communication in the public realm, in search for common goals, and in debate over policy differences, requires both dimensions. If groups see each other exclusively as "other", they will miss how we share a national political community (and perhaps a local one as well) and the need and possibility of cross-cultural communication will be weakened. On the other side, if the particularity of the group is overlooked, then that communication will fail to recognize the differences in culture, history, and experience that inform that group's participation in our common life<sup>93</sup>.

We have been looking at the appropriate form of appreciation to be cultivated in students toward members of groups *other* than their own. But what about the attitude of students who are members of the same group as the hero/exemplar? What moral or civic stance does the teacher encourage in the Mexican-American student toward Cesar Chavez? The above analysis acknowledges that Chavez belongs to the Mexican-American in one special way that he does not belong to the Euro-American or Asian-American student. Chavez was a product of, leader of, and hero to Mexican Americans specifically, and this connection, I have argued, is important for students from the other groups to acknowledge.

However, in another way, Chavez belongs equally to all Americans. His accomplishment enriched our national political culture, bettered the lot of a significant number of our people (almost all of whom, from this angle, happened to be Mexican-American), and exemplified ideals all can aspire to live by.

In this way Chavez belongs to Mexican-Americans in one way in which he does *not* belong to non-Mexican-Americans; yet in another way he belongs to all Americans equally. Both are true, and there is no contradiction between them, though conservative multicultural critics will want to suppress the particularist dimension and ethnocentrists will want to suppress the common and shared dimension.

This bears on the issue of cultural respect. Teaching about Chavez is likely to tend to support the sense of worth of Mexican-American students, though that effect depends on the fact that mainstream US American culture, and the

educational system in general *fails* to accord adequate worth to these students<sup>94</sup>.

However, should the teacher call attention to this link in front of the class: "Chavez is Mexican-American, just like Esmeralda and Juan, and he is a hero to their people"? One reason *against* doing so is the likelihood that this will weaken the ability of other students to see Chavez as *their* hero as well. In our current historical context within education, since ethnicity is so strongly emphasized, the more challenging educational task in general is the promoting of shared dimensions of respect for ethnic heroes.

On the other hand, it would be entirely appropriate for the teacher to ensure that Juan and Esmeralda be given space to feel *their* entirely appropriate sense of ethnic pride in Chavez, and, moreover, that these students be given the teacher's validation of that feeling. This can be done outside the full-class setting, or the teacher can just make sure, in her presentation of Chavez, to present the ethnic dimension in a sympathetic and supportive light. While over-ethnicizing of identity may be a general problem in our culture and schools, it is also true that in most public school contexts, students from subordinate groups are still subject to a devaluing and a marginalizing that education for cultural diversity should attempt to correct for.

To summarize, a balancing act is called for here. The teacher needs to bring out the universal dimension that allows all children to see the "ethnic" hero as *their* hero as well; but at the same time, she must recognize the legitimacy and value of particularistic ethnic pride as well, especially for groups whose sources for group self-worth are not nurtured in the society at large, or the school in question. The task is difficult, but far from impossible.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> On most understandings, multicultural education also arises from a more acute sense of the world community, and of the insufficient attention to and respect shown for non-Western cultures in much American education. However, I will omit this international dimension of multicultural education and concentrate only on developments within the US and *concerning* groups within the US.
- <sup>2</sup> Thomas LaBelle and Christopher Ward, *Multiculturalism: Diversity and Its Impact on Schools and Society* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 39.
- <sup>3</sup> "Asians, Hispanics to lead US Growth, Census projects," *Boston Globe*, March 14, 1996, p. 3.
- <sup>4</sup> The Bureau estimates that by 2050 we will be 52.8% white, 24.5% Hispanic, 8.2% Asian, 13.6% black, .9% Native American. *Ibid.*
- <sup>5</sup> La Belle and Ward, 40.
- <sup>6</sup> Orlando Patterson, "The Paradox of Integration," *The New Republic*, Nov. 6, 1995, 25.
- <sup>7</sup> La Belle and Ward, 41. In 1989 49.1% of Hispanics had not completed high school.
- <sup>8</sup> Patterson, 25; La Belle and Ward, 41.
- <sup>9</sup> Karen Miller, "Aspiration and Resistance: Race, Status, and the Constraints of Black Education" (unpublished manuscript). The spirit of this drive for education and its link to wider equality is trenchantly captured in the words of a Mississippi freedman, soon after the Civil War ended: "[L]eaving learning to your children was better than leaving them a fortune; because if you left them \$500, some man having more education would come along and cheat them out of it." Miller, 31, citing Leon Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 473.
- <sup>10</sup> See L. Blum, "'Racial Integration' Revisited," in Joram Graf Haber (Ed.), *Norms and Values: Essays in Honor of Virginia Held* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming 1998).
- <sup>11</sup> Carter Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (Washington DC: Africa World Press, 1990 [1933]).
- <sup>12</sup> See e.g. "On Segregation" (1934), in Andrew Paschal (ed.), *W.E.B. du Bois: A Reader*, (Collier, 1971), 141-146.
- <sup>13</sup> Paula Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (Oxford, 1989). Nathan Glazer, "Multiculturalism and Public Policy", in *Values and Public Policy*, 122.

<sup>14</sup> Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America" (1916) reprinted in *War and the Intellectuals*. Horace Kallen, "Democracy versus the Melting Pot" (1915) and other essays in *Culture and Democracy in the United States: Studies in the Group Psychology of the American People* (1924).

<sup>15</sup> W.E.B. du Bois, "On Our Spiritual Strivings," in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and "On the Conservation of Races" in Paschal (1897). Alain Locke, essays in Leonard Harris (ed.), *The Philosophy of Alain Locke* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

<sup>16</sup> Reed Ueda, "Ethnic Diversity and National Identity in Public School Texts," and David Tyack, "Schooling and Social Diversity: Historical Reflections," both in Diane Ravitch and Maris Vinovskis, *Learning From the Past: What History Teaches Us About School Reform* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> La Belle and Ward.

<sup>18</sup> Some examples: Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education*, 1991; Richard Bernstein, *The Dictatorship of Virtue*, 1994; Robert Hughes, *The Culture of Complaint* 1993; David Bromwich, *Politics by Other Means: Higher Education and Group Thinking* 1992. These primarily concern higher education. William A. Henry III, *A Defense of Elitism* covers general social multiculturalism, including the K-12 arena. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America* 1991, remains the most influential popular critique of multiculturalism at the K-12 level.

<sup>19</sup> Committee of Scholars in Defense of History statement, printed in *Newsday* and widely circulated. Cited in Catherine Cornbleth and Dexter Waugh, *The Great Speckled Bird: Multicultural Politics and Education Policymaking*, (St Martin's, 1995), p. 100.

<sup>20</sup> The Oakland events are recounted in Todd Gitlin's, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars*, (New York: Henry Holt, 1995), ch. 1.

<sup>21</sup> For an account of the National Standards events, see Christopher Mauriello, "The Politics of National Standards," in *Thought and Action: The NEA Higher Education Journal*, vol. XI, #2, fall '95: 121-132.

<sup>22</sup> David Hollinger, *PostEthnic America* (New York: Allyn and Bacon, 1995).

<sup>23</sup> For example William Bennett, *The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children* (Simon and Schuster, 1992) and William Kilpatrick, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong* (Simon and Schuster, 1992).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. the Character Education Partnership; Colin Greer and Herbert Kohl, *A Call to Character: A Family Treasury* (HarperCollins, 1995) (a compendium of stories, poems, and fables meant as a liberal answer to

William Bennett's best-selling conservative compendium, *The Book of Virtues*); Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (Bantam, 1991).

<sup>25</sup> This broader conception of "civics" draws on a more recent conception of civic life, exemplified for example in the work of Robert Putnam ("The Strange Disappearance of Civic America," in *The American Prospect*, winter 1996), and Jean Elshtain [*Democracy on Trial*, 1995] but with antecedents in Alexis de Tocqueville and others.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Kathleen Hirsch, "Healing waters," *Boston Globe Magazine*, January 28, 1996. This article describes neighborhood people maintaining the Jamaica Pond (a large pond in Boston) area as an attractive, safe, and welcoming public site, drawing people of different races and cultures. I would regard such activity as an example of such civic activity.

<sup>27</sup> *Character* values are somewhat distinguishable from value commitments not directly conceived of as traits of character and not so directly implying behavior—valued to be *held* or *treasured*. While there can be no sharp line between these "social" values and "character" values, the distinction is useful in light of the literature on civic and values education. In the California History-Social Science Framework, for example—one of the most widely respected attempts to set curricular standards (used as criteria for the adoption of the California school system's textbooks)—emphasis is given to allegiance to core (purportedly) American civic and ethical values (liberty, equality of opportunity, and the like). But in the document the teaching of these values is framed not as a matter of character education—figuring out how to help students actually to *acquire* the value in question—but as learning about and seeing the worth of these values, coming to *hold* them as part of a personal philosophy. I criticize this feature of the Framework in "Antiracist Civic Education in the California History-Social Science Framework," in Robert Fullinwider, *Public Education in a Multicultural Society: Policy, Theory, Critique*, (Cambridge UP, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> I am including, as members of the set of groups who are the target of racism, *ethnic* groups as well as "racial" ones. So anti-Semitism, and early 20th century forms of anti-ethnic prejudice, are included under "racism". The criterion, explained below, is whether the ethnic group is viewed in a "racialized" manner, that is, as the inheritors of an inescapable identity carrying with it certain characteristics. Racism is distinct, however, from "nativism," prejudice against non-nationals (who can be "white" yet the target of "white" prejudice). However, racism is frequently closely tied to nativism when the groups in question are, or are seen as, different races. Since most of the

post-1965 immigration has been of people of color, prejudice against these groups has often been a mixture of nativism and racism.

<sup>29</sup> I will sometimes adopt an increasingly familiar convention of using scare quotes for racial terms. This is to indicate, what is argued for explicitly below, that there are no such things as actual *races*—only groups regarded as such.

<sup>30</sup> For an account of FHAO's curriculum and educational approach, linking it to value education, see Melinda Fine, *Habits of Mind: Struggling Over Values in American's Classrooms* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995)

<sup>31</sup> The United States contrasts strikingly with the UK in this regard, where the notion of "anti-racism" is part of mainstream discourse within education, though commitment to it is still quite controversial. See Alastair Bonnett, *Radicalism, Anti-Racism, and Representation* (New York: Routledge, 1993), for an account of antiracist education in Britain.

<sup>32</sup> I use the expression "intellectual values"—rather than "educational values"—to contrast with character (moral and civic) values, in order not to prejudice the case regarding teaching moral and civic values by implying that these stand apart from true "educational" values.

<sup>33</sup> Gary Nash, "American History Reconsidered: Asking New Questions About the Past," in Diane Ravitch and Maris Vinovskis (eds.), *Learning From the Past: What History Teaches About School Reform*, Johns Hopkins, 1995.

<sup>34</sup> Gary Nash, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> A case can be made to employ the term "subculture" where I am using (ethno-racial) "culture". The former term reminds us that the groups in question share a national culture, alongside their distinctive ethno-cultural characteristics. (Yet whether the United States itself contains a single, distinct shared national "culture"—as opposed to shared political institutions—is itself a matter of dispute. For the 'con' side, see K. Anthony Appiah, "Culture, subculture, multiculturalism: educational options," in R. Fullinwider, *op. cit.*, (1996); for 'pro' see Michael Lind, the *New American Nation*.) However, I will continue to utilize the more familiar terminology of "culture" to refer to "African-American", "Native American", "Mexican-American".

<sup>36</sup> The complexity of ethnic change is very helpfully described in K. Conzen, D. Gerber, E. Morawska, G. Pozzetta, and R. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the USA," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, fall 1992: 3-41. As part of this account, the article also covers guideline 4: interaction between

ethnic groups, and its impact on the identity of the given group.

<sup>37</sup> I thereby reject a notion of ethnic or racial identity as so much a matter of arbitrary "construction" that it is unable to provide any genuine sense of personal or social meaning to a person who is not entirely deluded. Such "constructivist" views are rife. See for example, Werner Sollors (ed.), *The Invention of Ethnicity*.

<sup>38</sup> In *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School*, p. 144, Neil Postman supports the "law of diversity", which enjoins understanding of and respect for diverse cultures; but he decries a school's support for "ethnic pride". However, if other cultures are worthy of valuing and attention in school, then so is one's own. It is inconsistent of Postman to support the outer-directed cultural focus while according no value to the inner-directed one.

<sup>39</sup> Nieto, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (Longmans, 1992), p. 120 (2nd edition, 148).

<sup>40</sup> When this is the case is a matter of great complexity, however. For example, school-home dissonance is much more of a problem when the child experiences the divergence between the two cultures as a matter of a forced choice of loyalties. On the other hand, in some immigrant cultures, divergence between home and school culture is expected, and the sense of debilitating dissonance is greatly minimized. Margaret Gibson, "Playing by the Rules," in George D. Spindler (ed.), *Education and Cultural Process* (Prospect Hill, IL; Waveland Press, 1987), and various works by John Ogbu, *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1978).

<sup>41</sup> Lisa Delpit, *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*, (New Press, 1995).

<sup>42</sup> "Cultural mismatch" theories, especially with regard to differences between oral culture and literacy culture and this difference's impact on students' learning to read, are described in John Ogbu, "Literacy and Schooling in Subordinate Cultures: The Case of Black Americans," in Kofi Lomotey (ed.), *Going to School: The African-American Experience*, SUNY 1990, 114-119.

<sup>43</sup> There are two potential dangers in Delpit's view. One is overgeneralizing about cultural differences, leading to a stereotyping of members of that group, with the result of overstating the differences between and understating those among groups; this, in turn, readily leads to false assumptions about individual students. This sort of criticism has often been made of claims that, for example, African-American children



have different "learning styles" than Euro-American children (more "contextual", less "linear" and the like). Delpit is quite aware of this danger and at one point speaks eloquently against it (167). Nevertheless she does not always avoid it. Sonia Nieto does a better job than Delpit of incorporating into her overall philosophy of multiculturalism the recognition that generalizations about cultures must be treated with great delicacy and tentativeness. But Delpit is unequalled in the range of her examples of cultural insensitivity, and in her articulation of the need for culture-sensitive teaching that seeks strengths in students' cultures.

A second danger of Delpit's 'cultural strengths' approach—the capitulation to this danger can be found in many instances of multicultural education writing, and perhaps practice as well—is to deny that students' cultures, or, more generally, their life situations, may well in fact contain "deficits", factors that work against school success. Poverty does, after all, put strains on families that may result in children having to work or having to take care of younger siblings and thus having less time for homework, parents being unable to help with school work or unable to be involved in the school, general emotional stress, or worse. Delpit does not deny these deficits; but she does soft-pedal them, focusing instead on the ways that what might look like deficits to white middle-class teachers may in fact be strengths, or potential strengths. She recognizes, correctly and importantly, that what *most* teachers need is not a confirmation of their already-existing stereotypes about the deficiencies of inner-city African-American and Latino cultures, but a self-critical exploration of such stereotypes, and guidance both in coming to understand the cultures of their students and searching out their strengths. To take one example, Nieto reports a study finding that teachers in inner city schools assumed that parents of their students did not want to be involved in the school, while the parents, most of whom worked full-time, "were emphatic about wanting the schools and teachers of their children to advise them about how to help their children at home." (Nieto, 104, reporting Joyce Epstein and Susan Dauber, *Teacher Attitudes and Practices of Parent Involvement in Inner-City elementary and Middle Schools*, report 33 [Baltimore: Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, Johns Hopkins University, March 1989].)

<sup>44</sup> See L. Ling-Chi Wang, "Lau v. Nichols: History of a Struggle for Equal and Quality Education," in D. Nakanishi and T. Yamano Nishida (eds.), (1995) *The Asian American Educational Experience: A Source Book for Teachers and Students*, Routledge

<sup>45</sup> Warren Nord, *Religion and American Education: Rethinking a National Dilemma* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995) makes a compelling case for inclusion of study about religion in a liberal education, and provides a nuanced discussion of guidelines for such.

<sup>46</sup> An insightful discussion of the *Mozert* case is Stephen Macedo's "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of God v. John Rawls," *Ethics* 105, April, 1995: 468-496; but there is a substantial literature on this case.

<sup>47</sup> The *Mozert* parents did not request this, but only that they be allowed to prevent their children from taking the religiously-pluralistic reading program. The Court rejected this request. Writing for the majority, Judge Lively defended the authority of the public schools to teach certain civic values, such as civil toleration, as long as they did not teach that those values have a religious underpinning. This priority of civic values over religious or ethnic particularity and identity is precisely what I am arguing for in this paper.

<sup>48</sup> Two recent example of such anti-discriminatory self-scrutiny are Catholic attempts to exorcise anti-Judaism from its teachings (a process begun with the Second Vatican Council in 1965); see, for example, "Catholics seek to end anti-Semitic teaching", *Boston Globe*, Dec. 12, 1995. And the (white) Southern Baptists apologize for having condoned racism," *Boston Globe*, June 29, 1995.

<sup>49</sup> A recent case illustrating this cultural conflict concerns the annual St. Patrick's Day parade, traditionally organized by the South Boston Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Veterans group forbade a self-identified Gay/Lesbian Irish group from marching in the parade under an identifying banner, on the grounds that this group violated the cultural spirit of Irish Catholicism and its "family values" that, they claimed, were defining of the event. The Supreme Court eventually heard this case, and found in favor of the Veterans group. However, the basis of its decision was not an affirmation of the Veterans' cultural outlook, but rather that the event was "private"; hence anti-discrimination strictures did not apply to it. Yet the public understanding of this complex case certainly involved a role for "cultural affirmation"; the moral question for many was whether that value should be seen as outweighed by anti-discrimination considerations (which would favor preventing the parade organizers from forbidding the gay/lesbian group to march in the parade).

<sup>50</sup> These items are drawn from a list put out in a parent newsletter of a Cambridge public school, inviting parents to discuss and share their holiday

celebrations at the time of Christmas/New Years with their children's classes.

<sup>51</sup> Rap is also part of some white suburban subcultures, and this is a not insignificant cultural fact. However, rap is taken by many inner city black youth (especially males) as directly *expressive* of their life experience and situation; while for the suburban white youth rap is something they may be attracted to, and even feel some affinity to; but it is not taken as theirs in the same way.

<sup>52</sup> A case of ethno-racial strife concerning music that attracted public notice was that of Brother Rice High School, a Catholic boy's school in Chicago, which in 1991 held separate "black" and a "white" senior proms, in large part because of cultural differences regarding taste in music to be played at the prom. See the brief discussion of this in Lani Guinier, "Second Proms and Second Primaries: the Limits of Majority Rule," *Boston Review*, September/October, 1992.

<sup>53</sup> On another level, however, rap music can be seen as part of certain distinct African-American traditions—of verbal wit and dexterity, social commentary, musical expressiveness.

<sup>54</sup> We should also distinguish between family enactment of ethnic cultures, and family cultures (and their rituals) which may have nothing to do with ethnic background. Some families devolve their own traditions apart from any ethnic traditions with which they may (or may not) affiliate. A child's familial but non-ethnic culture is *also* deserving of respect, though it does not involve the wider ethno-cultural aspect of value.

<sup>55</sup> The value of respect for the student's family may itself stem from three distinct sources. One, just mentioned, is respect for an important part of the student's own identity. A second, found in current thinking in education, claims that bringing parents, or parental figures, into the child's educational process enhances learning. James Comer has developed an influential form of school organization that centrally involves parents in children's learning. [Cf. R. Weissbourd, *The Vulnerable Child* (Addison-Wesley, 1996), ch. 10.] This approach carries a built-in notion of "respect for family". It does not derive from a culture-based argument, but it converges with it in the more general idea that reducing distance between home and school generally enhances school success.

Finally, a third source of respect for family is a general valuing of family in its own right. I think a sort of "pro-familism" is implicit in much multiculturalist educational writing, though not as a major strand. It stands in tension with a strong valuing of the child's personal autonomy, a value ambiguously related to multiculturalism.

<sup>56</sup> Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in Amy Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 72-73.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. K. Anthony Appiah's discussion of Crummell in *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), ch. 1.

<sup>58</sup> There were exceptions. A few rescuers in convents, who were in a position to convert Jews and especially Jewish children to Christianity (as many did) refused to do so out of respect for the children's Jewish identity. See Ewa Kurek-Lesik, "The Role of Polish Nuns in the Rescue of Jews, 1939-1945," in S. Oliner, et al. *Embracing the Other* (NYU, 1992). For evidence of the general claim that rescuers lacked respect for Jews as a people, a culture, and a religion, see L. Blum, "Altruism and the Moral Value of Rescue: Resisting Racism, Persecution, and Genocide" in the same volume. A more complete version of this article can be found in L. Blum, *Moral Perception and Particularity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>59</sup> Complicating this distinction is that some versions of contemporary racism do appear to target a group's *culture* rather than its "race" as the source of alleged inferiority. Culture can be a kind of stand-in for race, masking the racism of the individual who takes the view that the culture of a certain group is inferior. This form of racism has become more attractive to racists because explicitly race-based devaluings are frowned on in American culture in a way that culture-based devaluings are not. (It is much more complicated matter, however, if a person truly does *not* regard a group as racially inferior, yet *does* regard them as culturally inferior. Should this be called "racism"? It is not clear. On this point, see George Frederickson, review of Dinesh D'Souza, *The End of Racism*, in *New York Review of Books*, October 19, 1995.)

<sup>60</sup> Nieto, 109 (2nd edition, 136). In fact Nieto is quite firm in her commitment both to cultural respect and equality of opportunity and antiracism; and generally, though not always, she keeps them clearly separate. (Also, Nieto's book is quite possibly the best general account of multicultural education I have come across, so I feel a little badly using her as a source for this very common and obfuscating slogan. Common as I believe it to be, I have not managed to find another direct statement of it!)

<sup>61</sup> Nathan Glazer, in his excellent essay "Multiculturalism and Public Policy," in Henry Aaron, Thomas Mann, Timothy Taylor (eds.), *Values and Public Policy* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 116, conflates pluralism with non-discrimination. This conflation constitutes the entire conceptual framework of Dinesh D'Souza's *The End of Racism* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

<sup>62</sup> There is a large literature on the non-reality of race. See, for example, K. A. Appiah, *Color Conscious* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

<sup>63</sup> Paradoxically, this statement is not entirely true of "blacks"—simultaneously the most intensely "race-identified" group, and yet because of the "one drop rule" (one drop of black African ancestry makes you "black"), many "blacks" are not actually distinguishable from other groups by physical appearance alone. This complex matter is discussed in F. James Davis, *Who Is Black?: One Nation's Definition* (Penn State Press, 1991).

<sup>64</sup> The terminology here, as elsewhere, is both unsatisfactory and politically and emotionally charged. Some "Native Americans" object to the term "Indian" for the obvious reason of its derivation from Columbus's mistake. On the other hand most "Native Americans" do refer to themselves as "Indians" (often, though not always, in addition to a specific tribal affiliation). [Cf. article on pan-Indian identity in R. Alba (ed.), *Ethnicity and Race in the U.S.A.*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985]

<sup>65</sup> Poles, Jews, and other Southern and Eastern European immigrant groups were not always regarded unequivocally as "white". See Ian Haney-Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: NYU Press, 1996) and Matthew Jacobson, *Becoming Caucasian: Vicissitudes of Whiteness in American Political Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>66</sup> Again, this does not hold true for all whites. Some are just white, in the sense of not having a distinct ethno-culture. Of this group, some are now claiming a kind of pan-European ethnicity [see discussion of "pan-ethnic" identities below, p. 17] as "European-Americans".

<sup>67</sup> K. A. Appiah, "Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction" in Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>68</sup> Cited in Alan Fyfe, "...Anti-Racist Education..." in Alan Fyfe and Peter Figueroa, *Education for Cultural Diversity: The Challenge for a New Era*, (London: Routledge, 1993).

<sup>69</sup> See M. Cochran-Smith, "Uncertain Allies: Understanding the Boundaries of Race and Teaching," *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 65, #4, winter 1995: 541-570 for a description of the successes and painful difficulties attendant upon teaching pre-service teachers to be antiracist educators.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Janet Ward Schofield's excellent discussion of this point in *Black and White in School: Trust, Tension, or*

*Tolerance* 2nd ed., (Teachers College Press, 1989), ch 2.

<sup>71</sup> Sandra Lawrence and Beverly Tatum, "White Educators as Allies: Moving From Awareness to Action," in M. Fine, L. Weis, L. Powell, and M. Wong (eds.), *Off White: Critical Perspectives on Race*, (New York: Routledge, 1996)

<sup>72</sup> For descriptions of attempts to and ideas about engaging in such antiracist education, see Beverly Daniel Tatum, "Teaching White Students about Racism: The Search for White Allies and the Restoration of Hope," *Teachers College Record*, vol. 95, #4, summer 1994: 462-476; Marilyn Cochran-Smith, *op. cit.*; and Sonia Nieto, "From Claiming Hegemony to Sharing Space: Creating Community in Multicultural Courses," in Rudolfo Chavez and James O'Donnell (eds.), *Speaking the Unpleasant: The Politics of Non-Engagement in the Multicultural Education Terrain* (SUNY, forthcoming)

<sup>73</sup> Inner city students of color are likely to have more contact in schools with members of other groups than are white students living in all-white areas; for the former schools tend to have *some* mixture of immigrant children students, as well as black and Latinos, even if the school is dominated primarily by one of those ethno-racial groups. However, such students are no more likely to have contact with *white* students than are their isolated white counterparts with them.

<sup>74</sup> For a fuller argument on this point, see Lawrence Blum, "Racial Integration' Revisited," in Joram Graf Haber (ed.), *Norms and Values: Essays in Honor of Virginia Held* (Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming 1998).

<sup>75</sup> Michael Olneck, "The Recurring Dream: Symbolism and Ideology in Intercultural and Multicultural Education," *American Journal of Education*, February 1990: 147-173.

<sup>76</sup> In accordance with my focus here on the US, and the West more broadly, I emphasize contributions by non-white groups to American and Western culture. But of course a fuller multiculturalism will teach that civilizations other than Western are important as well.

<sup>77</sup> Johnny Otis, *Upside Your Head!: Rhythm and Blues on Central Avenue* (New England Press, 1992).

<sup>78</sup> Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972 [1964]). See also David Roediger, *Toward the Abolition of Whiteness* (New York: Verso, 1995).

<sup>79</sup> Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Harvard 1992) is the best-known expression of the impact of the presence of blacks on white literature. But a wealth of further evidence is provided in Shelley Fisher Fishkin's review of the literature "Interrogating 'Whiteness', Complicating

'Blackness': Remapping American Culture," in *American Quarterly*, Sept. 1995, vol 47, #3.

<sup>80</sup> These points are less true for Asian-Americans because of their overall smaller numbers and much more recent arrival than the other groups in any substantial numbers. But the role of Chinese-Americans in the creation of "the West" and the building of the intercontinental railroad are examples of seldom-recognized contributions of Asians.

<sup>81</sup> Even here it is generally acknowledged that Benjamin Franklin, and through him the Continental Congress, were influenced in the direction of the national government as a federation of states by the Iroquois Federation of tribes. There is, however, great disagreement as to *how* significant or extensive that influence was. (For Native American influence on American life and political institutions, see J. Axtell, "Colonial America without the Indians: Counterfactual Reflections," *Journal of American History*, March 1987: 981-996.)

<sup>82</sup> Celeste Condit and John L. Lucaites, *Crafting Equality: America's Anglo-African Word* (Univ. of Chicago, 1993).

<sup>83</sup> See Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution*.

<sup>84</sup> Diane Ravitch, "Pluralism vs. Particularism in American Education," *The Responsive Community*, spring 1991:33. Ravitch has written a number of articles expressing similar views. Arthur Schlesinger's 1991 *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, mentioned earlier, is probably the single most influential book-length expression of this criticism.

<sup>85</sup> Further, schools that are virtually all white because the residents of their communities are all white have a similar deficiency, even if those schools have not been explicitly created in order to be ethnic-based schools (and in that regard are disanalogous to Afrocentric schools). Such residential communities may, however, have been chosen by the students' parents because they were all white, or nearly so; or they may be a byproduct of such an intentional choice with regard to *neighborhood*. This suggests that the problem of dividedness in schools is driven by forces other than multicultural education itself.

<sup>86</sup> Janet Helms (1990), *Black and White Racial Identity: Theory, Research, and Practice* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press). Helms's work has been creatively utilized by Beverly Daniel Tatum in an influential article, "Talking About Race, Learning About Racism: An Application of Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom," *Harvard Educational Review*, 62 (February, 1992): 1-24

<sup>87</sup> Even Afrocentrism, however, contains many different tendencies. At one end it can simply mean a special attention and concern for the needs, and a sensitivity to the cultures of, African-American students; in that mode, it is little different from Lisa Delpit's culture-sensitive teaching. For an account of the range of Afrocentric theories in practice see Sara Mosle, "Separatist But Equal?", *The American Prospect*, fall 1993: 73-82. Yet, while Afrocentricity might be a "large tent", even at its most constructive and least problematic, it does not approach the range of civic and ethical values—ones concerning respect for different cultures, democratic interaction with those from different cultural groups, and the like—that a truly multicultural program should address.

<sup>88</sup> These trends are documented and analyzed in Christopher Lasch, *The Revolt of the Elites* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1994); Michael Lind, *The Next American Nation* (New York: Free Press, 1995); and Benjamin Barber's, *Jihad vs. MacWorld* (1995).

<sup>89</sup> Sheldon Hackney's attempts as the head of the National Endowment for the Humanities to foster "A National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity" were salutary steps in this direction, curtailed as a result the 1995 budget cuts to the NEH.

<sup>90</sup> James A. Banks, *Educational Leadership*, May 1994, cited in *Kaleidoscope: Changing Visions of Learning and Teaching*, vol 2, #1, October 1995, p. 1. (Since this is the only passage taken from Banks's article in this newsletter concerning the Cambridge public schools, one imagines that it represents the views of the editors of this publication's as well.) Banks is the primary author of the official National Council on Social Studies guidelines on multicultural education. (Banks's views in the full article quoted are more nuanced than the quote suggests; and in an interview with Margaret Crocco in *Social Studies Review*, Banks denies that multicultural education has been shown to have much impact on school achievement, somewhat calling into question the claim that it is necessary for equality of opportunity.)

<sup>91</sup> Paul Gagnon, "What Should Children Learn," *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1995.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Frederick Mosteller's massive study, reported in "The Tennessee Study of Class Size in the Early School Grades", *Critical Issues for Children and Youths*, vol. 5. #2, Summer/Fall 1995, showing improved achievement with smaller class size.

<sup>93</sup> The "sharedness" involved in appreciating contributions to common life—and, more generally, in fully acknowledging the place of "minority" groups in American national polity—is not the only form of "sharedness" involved in multiculturalism. It is distinct, for example, from the shared humanity lying

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at the root of anti-racism. The latter abstracts from differences, emphasizing characteristics shared simply as human beings. But the sharing of a national community specifically acknowledges and embraces cultural differences, yet sees the different groups as all part of a larger national, or world, whole. The relation between the two types of sharedness is beyond the scope of my enterprise here.

<sup>94</sup> I mention this because we should not believe that there is a tight empirical connection between respectful educational attention to group X and enhancing the self-worth of members of group X; it depends very much on the circumstances, and especially of the general level of "worth" accorded that group in the general culture. I don't think studying about Benjamin Franklin is likely to have the same enhancing effect on Anglo-American students; this is because Anglo-American students are in general validated by the overall culture, so specific curricular attention to a particular "hero"/exemplar of their group is less likely to have much effect on them.



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