This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC AND JUST THEORY OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

presented by

Harold D. Morgan

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Teacher Education

Major professor

Date June 5, 1997

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC AND JUST THEORY OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

By

Harold D. Morgan

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education

1997

ABSTRACT

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A
DEMOCRATIC AND JUST THEORY
OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

By

Harold D. Morgan

Proponents of social-reconstructionist multicultural education declare their commitment to just democratic polities in their introductory works in the field. They deem multicultural education especially fitting for modern, liberal, pluralistic democracies, and they set the furtherance of equal educational opportunity, the reduction of discrimination and social inequalities, and the pursuit of social justice as prominent goals for the field. However well-intentioned these claims may be, a close study reveals their status as largely ritual incantations, for the multicultural-educational literature lacks a systematic, rigorous, theoretical discussion of democracy and justice. Given the centrality of these concepts in political philosophy and their obvious relevance to educational matters, such theoretical neglect is particularly disappointing.

This study seeks to fill this gap by drawing on respected works in political theory to enhance an understanding of multicultural education's dedication to democratic and just political systems. A review of C. B. Macpherson's historical-conceptual analysis of liberal democracies shows that what constitutes democracy is not self-evident. Protective, developmental, equilibrium, and participatory models of democracy employ varied political mechanisms and presuppose differing goals for democratic polities, some of which are more compatible with the objectives of multicultural education than others. Moreover, John Rawls's landmark analysis situates justice squarely within the broad tradition of pluralistic, liberal democracies while implicitly questioning multiculturalists' fervent attention to cultural identity and difference.

The study concludes by first examining briefly the controversies surrounding the very notion of curricular theories and accordingly proposes to offer some fundamental elements from which a full-fledged theory might subsequently be developed. It then considers the possibility that social-reconstructionist multicultural education is equivalent to an enhanced civic education; it challenges the multiculturalist preoccupation with cultural identity; it makes a case that the concern for social justice that characterizes modern liberal societies inheres in the definition of democracy itself; and it illustrates the advantages a principled treatment of justice can bring to currently typical lessons in multicultural education.

To my parents,

Walter Clayton Morgan

and

Blanche Anna Green Morgan,

for their steadfast encouragement and support.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"Not to name the school and the masters of illustrious men is a kind of historical fraud," declares Michael Oakeshott, paraphrasing Dr. Johnson. For us lesser mortals who write doctoral dissertations, to withhold such recognition would be similarly misleading. Therefore, I would here like to honor those who have brought me to this point.

As those most intimately involved with this research, the members of my dissertation committee deserve first mention. After cajoling a reluctant dissertationist into undertaking this project, Susan Melnick graciously agreed to become the chair of the committee. She offered both regular encouragement and constructive criticism as the work progressed. Perhaps more importantly, she believed in the significance of this work even when it was still an incipient idea. Robert Floden, my program advisor, supplied helpful advice throughout my career at MSU and insisted I be clear about my study's contribution from the outset. Bruce Miller guided and enhanced my growing familiarity with political philosophy, and Wanda May supported my efforts in curriculum and educational theory while asking important questions that I would have preferred to avoid. As a group, they provided the most important services one can expect of a dissertation committee: They kept me focused on the essentials and insisted that my analysis be accurate, honest, fair, and thorough. Their questions, criticisms, and recommendations have strengthened this dissertation in numerous and immeasurable ways.

I never would have pursued this research had not my professors at Lebanon Valley College introduced me to the rewards of cultivating a life of the mind. In this regard, Elbert Wethington, Edwin Welch, Robert Clay, James Scott, and Elizabeth Geffen were especially influential. They led me into a fascinating world of ideas far beyond the

adolescent imagination of a boy from rural Pennsylvania. In subsequent years, Morris Zelditch, Nathaniel Gage, and Nel Noddings at Stanford, and Margret Buchmann, Suzanne Wilson, and Martin Benjamin at Michigan State offered additional models of insight and wisdom worthy of emulation.

Numerous friends and colleagues regularly encouraged me and took an active interest in my academic pursuits. I can mention here only a few: Kathy Sernak, Tammy Lantz, Cathy Siebert, Neli Wolf, Shirley Miske, Corinna Hasbach, Michael Michell, and Lynn Brice at MSU; Jack Wenrick, Charles White, Cathy Bauer, and Charise Neugebauer from the Salzburg International Preparatory School; and David Davies and Betty Williams from Wyoming Seminary. Representing the department of teacher education, David Labaree supplied helpful financial assistance so that I could devote full attention to my writing in the spring semester of 1997. By putting their houses at my disposal during sabbaticals and vacations and at other times, Lauren Young, Jay and Helen Featherstone, Susan Melnick, Jack and Sharon Schwille, and Corinna Hasbach and Michael Michell allowed me to live much more comfortably than I had any reason to expect. And through one of those rare interventions of fate, I was privileged to enjoy Terry Woodward's delightful companionship during the writing of this dissertation. I extend my sincere appreciation to all of you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# CHAPTER I:

# MAKING THE CASE FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND JUST THEORY OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

That schools reflect the societies in which they are situated may be a truism, but being such neither minimizes its significance nor clarifies the occasionally problematic and always complex relationships between the two. The history of American primary and secondary education is replete with evidence that the purposes schools pursue are not selected arbitrarily or without consideration of society's current understanding of itself. Puritan New England passed the "Old Deluder" laws in 1647, requiring that children receive instruction adequate to reading the Bible for themselves. Benjamin Franklin proposed a practical education commensurate with the needs of a thriving, commercial, colonial economy. Thomas Jefferson advocated a curriculum that would foster an informed citizenry for the new republic, and Horace Mann's efforts to establish a system of universal primary schooling in the 1840s coincided with the first major influx of non-English-speaking, non-Protestant immigrants to the United States.

The contexts and the particulars would vary, but for the next century and a half the pattern remained the same: American public schools were charged with purposes believed to be appropriate for the prevailing social, economic, and political conditions.[1] Of immediate interest are the social changes of the past generation. The drive for equality of opportunity for all Americans, regardless of racial or ethnic background, religion, gender, social class, or sexual orientation, has not proceeded without significant consequences for the schools. Recognizing that schools have frequently perpetuated the unequal relations among social groups (see, e.g., the essays in Karabel & Halsey, 1977), educators have sought to reform schools so that they "provid[e] meaningful and equitable educational

[1]This is not to imply that there was unanimity of interpretation of these conditions. Rarely was that the case, allowing Herbert M. Kliebard (1986) to refer to a "struggle" for the American curriculum. But none of the interlocutors in the debates over schooling ignored the circumstances of the society on whose behalf they claimed to speak.

opportunities for all...children" (Larkin & Sleeter, 1995, p. vii). Conceptually subsumed under the rubric of "multicultural education," these efforts have been a prominent and controversial element of primary and secondary education in recent years.

## Defining Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is sometimes regarded as a monolithic strategy of education for social reform and social justice. Actually, this is far from being the case. From the outset, multicultural education[2] has allowed varied--and competing--conceptions of purpose and method to take shelter under its umbrella. Several typologies have been developed to clarify the confusions to which such an eclectic term as multicultural education is prone. Of these, two are worthy of note here--for their prominence, for their insights, and for their historical settings. The first, proposed by the anthropologist Margaret Alison Gibson (1976/1984) when multicultural education was in its infancy, faults multicultural theory for its inconsistent attention to the overarching purposes its programs are intended to promote. Following an extensive review of the literature, Gibson divides the myriad works in multicultural education into four basic categories with their concomitant purposes:

| Approach | Purpose(s) |
|---|---|
| 1. Education of the Culturally Different, or Benevolent Multiculturalism | 1. to equalize educational opportunity for culturally different students |
| 2. Education About Cultural Differences, or Cultural Understanding | 2. to teach students to value cultural differences, to understand the meaning of the culture concept, and to accept others' right to be different |
| 3. Education for Cultural Pluralism | 3. to preserve and to extend cultural pluralism in American society |
| 4. Bicultural Education | 4. to produce learners who have competencies in and can operate |

[2]Some advocates have proposed an alternative designation--"educating for diversity"--a term generally regarded as synonymous with "multicultural education."

> successfully in two different cultures
>
> (Gibson, 1976/1984, p. 95)

She then proceeds to lay bare the assumptions regarding values, strategies, outcomes, and target population that underlie each approach, and she concludes her treatment of each category with a discussion that summarizes its shortcomings. In so doing, Gibson not only makes the taken-for-granted problematic, she also forces adherents to confront potentially serious weaknesses in their positions. She does the former by bringing often unquestioned assumptions to light and thereby exposing them to public scrutiny. She accomplishes the latter by pointing out, for example, that benevolent multiculturalism "accepts without question that cultural differences are the cause of minority groups' failure in mainstream schools" (p. 97), whereas education for cultural pluralism confuses ideology with theory (p. 104).

Gibson reveals her training as an anthropologist by the prominence she assigns to culture in each of her four categories of multicultural education. This move is not unreasonable, given the designation of the field as multicultural education. Indeed, that cultural distinctions of one kind or another are at the core of the differences in educational outcome and opportunity which this movement seeks to address is an assumption held by all writers in the field. Nevertheless, this aspect receives varying treatment according to the goals that accompany the more general concern with cultural difference. For some, culture is only a factor (and a not-very-precisely-defined one at that) to be considered in an attempt to correct past imbalances in educational opportunity or to bring about reforms to make society itself more just. For others, culture is the lens through which all aspects of multicultural education must be viewed. Much of this division can be credited to the historical development of the field in the years since Gibson's typology appeared. As a result, use of the term occasions a fair amount of confusion, since multiculturalists rarely specify the exact understanding of culture that they employ in a given context. This leads observers and commentators outside the field (see, e.g., Bernstein, 1994, pp. 5–6, and

Coughlin, 1992) to fault multiculturalists for a lack of serious attention to culture in the standard anthropological sense.[3]

Of more recent vintage, the second typology, proposed by Christine E. Sleeter and Carl A. Grant (1994), incorporates developments in the two decades since Gibson first surveyed the field. These authors identify five versions of multicultural education:

| Approach | Purpose(s) |
|---|---|
| 1. Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different | 1. to help low-achieving students catch up and succeed in school so they can "make it" in the mainstream of society; not to criticize or try to change the mainstream itself, but to build bridges between children and that mainstream |
| 2. Human Relations | 2. to improve affective dimensions of the classroom: how students relate to each other, how they feel about themselves, and how they feel about diverse groups in the community and society |
| 3. Single-Group Studies | 3. to teach about one specific group, or one group at a time, such as African Americans, Native Americans, women, or people with disabilities |

---

[3]The following definition may be deemed typical of an anthropological understanding of culture:

> A culture is the total socially acquired life-way or life-style of a group of people. It consists of the patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are characteristic of the members of a particular society or segment of a society. (Harris, 1975, p. 144)

A key component of anthropology involves the identification of and the discrimination among these ways of life. Richard Bernstein accuses the multiculturalists of ignorance of important distinctions within what multiculturalists indiscriminately refer to as "Asian culture" or "African culture." Coughlin reports on the concern of some anthropologists that they have been unaccountably excluded from debates on multiculturalism, a field they think could especially benefit from their expertise.

| | |
|---|---|
| 4. Multicultural Education | 4. to reform the entire educational process to reflect and support diversity; to develop a culturally pluralistic mainstream that does not require assimilation for success |
| 5. Education That Is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist | 5. to call attention to issues of social justice and to empower young people to make social changes; to reform the entire educational process by focusing more explicitly on social critique and democratic citizen participation (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. vi–vii) |

Not only do these authors treat each of these approaches thoroughly (stating goals, surveying the theoretical and conceptual background, recommending practices, sketching scenarios, summarizing critiques, and offering references), they also conclude their review with a defense of the perspective they prefer--the social reconstructionist. In doing so, they align themselves with other prominent advocates of multicultural education.

## Multicultural Education and Social Reconstruction

Sleeter and Grant's view that multicultural education should promote the achievement of social justice by reforming society is widespread. James A. Banks, most recently distinguished as the primary editor of The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education, has asserted that "the development of decision-making and social action skills is the key goal for the multicultural curriculum" (Banks, 1991, p. 24). Sonia Nieto, author of Affirming Diversity (1992), an introductory textbook on multicultural education, includes "education for social justice" (pp. 216–218) and "critical pedagogy" (pp. 219–221) among the seven basic characteristics of multicultural education. And Christine I. Bennett, author of another basic textbook, sets as the ultimate goal of multicultural education the "development of social action skills" (Bennett, 1986, pp. 212–214). All begin with a

commitment to equality of educational opportunity, but, recognizing that such a promise could be fulfilled while leaving unequal and oppressive societal structures intact (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 77–79), they proceed quickly to calling for a reform of society itself, not just the schools.

There is much to admire in this effort to provide a more equitable education via the establishment of more equitable relations in society. Yet one cannot help but wonder at the impression of novelty and innovation that seems to accompany this defense of social justice, for such strivings have an established history in American education, a history stretching back three quarters of a century (Kliebard, 1986, pp. 184 & 187). In the 1920s George Counts began drawing attention to the tendency of American education to serve the interests of social elites--not only in the content of that schooling, but also in the access to it (Kliebard, 1986, p. 184). The crash of the stock market and the onset of the Great Depression exacerbated the economic and social disparities long present in the United States, leading Counts (1932) boldly to question, Dare the School Build a New Social Order? This issue served as the crux of American educational debate throughout the 1930s, until concern with growing belligerence in Europe diverted Americans' attention from their own society's shortcomings to the threat of armed conflict abroad (Kliebard, 1986, pp. 186–193, 207–208).

World War II may have diverted Americans' attention from the inequalities and injustices in their own society, but it failed to remove such concerns from the public mind--or at least the minds of educationists--permanently. In fact, in the midst of an educational era pervaded by a life-adjustment curriculum seeking to mold pupils for success in society as it was (Kliebard, 1986, pp. 240–254), B. O. Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores (1950) issued a renewed call for "a continuous reëxamination and reconstruction of our social ideals, beliefs and institutions" (Smith, Stanley, & Shores, 1950, p. 186). This position preceded by at least half a decade the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court decision, the civil-rights movement that that decision triggered, and the subsequent

educational concerns with multiculturalism.[4] It is therefore unfortunate that this long and noble history of social reconstructionist education is either ignored by contemporary multiculturalists--neither Counts nor Smith, Stanley, and Shores appear in Bennett's (1986) or Nieto's (1992) text--or receives only passing, almost perfunctory, mention (e.g., Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 235; Gay, 1995, pp. 26 & 31). At the least, locating themselves within this tradition should make multiculturalists more acutely aware of the obstacles they will face and could further legitimate their struggle as part of an ongoing strand of American educational history.

## Multicultural Education and Critical Theory

The failure of these advocates of multiculturalism to connect their interpretations to earlier writing in social reconstruction does not mean that their arguments are ungrounded. Contemporary multiculturalists concede that their positions support social reconstructionist goals in education, but they prefer to trace their intellectual heritage to the developments in critical social science. Born with the founding of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research in the early 1920s (Bredo & Feinberg, 1982, p. 271), the "critical school" of social research matured and expanded its influence--at least in education--in the 1970s.[5] Adherents to this approach hold that

> knowledge must be seen in the context of its constitution in and potential contribution to social evolution, where social evolution is conceived of in terms of the possibility for progressive material and symbolic emancipation. (Bredo & Feinberg, 1982, p. 272)

In their desire to use educational institutions to effect social change (as embedded in the notion of social reconstruction), multiculturalists understandably find ready allies in those who view knowledge as a source of "progressive material and symbolic emancipation."

---

[4]This sentence is obviously not intended to provide an authoritative historical summary of the civil-rights era, but rather a brief reference to the commonly understood relationship among the three listed events. Those seeking a thorough historical treatment of the Brown decision and its aftermath might consult Kluger (1975).

[5]Indeed, none of the sources that Bredo and Feinberg cite in their review of the critical approach to educational research was published before 1971 (see Bredo & Feinberg, 1982, pp. 290–291).

The alliance may indeed be ready and the cause common, but the partnership between critical social science and multicultural education is not without its problems. The first of these concerns the internal consistency and theoretical integrity of critical social science itself. In a thorough review of the critical tradition, Brian Fay (1987), a formerly ardent disciple of critical theory,[6] finds himself chastened by a systematic and honest evaluation of the limits of this perspective. Acknowledging the centrality of a belief in the power of human reason to critical social science, Fay confesses that his analysis persuaded him that "there are limits to the power of reason both to know what we as human beings are and to engender political revolutions which will be genuinely liberating" (Fay, 1987, p. 143). Of four general types (viz., epistemological, therapeutic, ethical, and power), these limits to rational change pose formidable challenges to an exaggerated belief in the ability of rational thought to promote change. When confronted by a physical oppression--i.e., one that "leaves its traces not just in people's minds, but in their muscles and skeletons as well" (Fay, 1987, p. 146)--by people's inflexible self-understandings that give inordinate force to certain forms of persecution (p. 157), or by the often underestimated weight of tradition (pp. 159–164), critical social science may ultimately be much less liberating than its proponents envision.

Even if it were possible to revise critical theory to reduce its dependence upon faith in human reason and thereby minimize the pitfalls that accompany such faith, this epistemological approach may still be less compatible with multicultural education than is commonly supposed. On the one hand, there is some common ground between multicultural education and critical theory. Given that one of the functions of critical social science is "the organization of action" or "the conduct of the political struggle" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 147), multiculturalism's emphasis on social action reflects this perspective nicely. Multiculturalists want students and teachers to "recognize their right and responsibility to take action" (Nieto, 1992, p. 220), to "take personal, social, and civic

[6]Fay (1987, pp. 4–6) presents a persuasive case for not using the terms "critical theory" and "critical social science" interchangeably. However, his distinctions appear not to be crucial in the present context.

actions to help solve the racial and ethnic problems in our national and world societies" (Banks, 1991, p. 25), to "help youth become more effective agents of change" (Bennett, 1986, p. 212), and to "[prepare] future citizens to reconstruct society so that it better serves the interests of all groups of people" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 210). Even earlier social reconstructionists argue for "the building, and not merely...the contemplation, of our civilization" (Counts, 1932, p. 37) and for "a continuous reëxamination and reconstruction of our social ideals, beliefs, and institutions" (Smith, Stanley, & Shores, 1950, p. 186).

Social action is evidently a leading concern--perhaps the foremost concern--of social reconstructionists and critical theorists in education. Admittedly, Grant and Sleeter believe that one "encourages social action by having students actually work on social issues" (1989, p. 214), and their example of putting multicultural and social reconstructionist curricula into practice involves having pupils investigate the controversy surrounding proposals to close or renovate a local hospital (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 232–234). Furthermore, not only were the pupils to investigate the matter, they were to publish their findings in the local newspaper with the hope of influencing "city hall," if perhaps not on this issue, then on future issues (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 233).

Yet on the other hand, there is reason to challenge multiculturalism's affiliation with critical theory, for this drive toward social engagement may not be as uniform as it first appears. Sleeter and Grant talk about the preparation of <u>future</u> citizens and emphasize the need for various types of <u>understanding</u> (1994, p. 210). Bennett speaks more of "understandings," "values," and "attitudes" (1986, p. 206) than of direct action; she is also concerned that pupils "perceive, evaluate, and comprehend different beliefs and behaviors" (p. 206). And even George Counts, who wants the school to build a new social order, points out that

> this does not mean that we should endeavor to promote particular reforms through the educational system. We should, however, give to our children a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead and endeavor to enlist their loyalties and enthusiasms in the realization of the vision. Also our social institutions and practices, all of them, should

> be critically examined in the light of such a vision. (Counts, 1932, p. 37)

Hence, the relationship between study, contemplation, and understanding on the one hand and action on the other is less straightforward than critical theory asserts. Both aspects seem to play important roles in the critical, social-reconstructionist visions, but their balance and emphasis remain to be clarified.

## Multicultural Education and Democratic Politics

Multicultural education's commitment to promoting the democratic ideal is less ambiguous. Each theorist--not only in multicultural education but in social reconstructionism as well--makes explicit reference to the requirements of a democratic polity when making his or her case: the goals of multicultural education "are part of this nation's basic democratic ideals" (Bennett, 1986, p. 55); multicultural education is unmistakably connected to "students' future rights and responsibilities in a democracy" (Nieto, 1992, p. 218); it promotes "an active and informed citizenry capable of making reflective personal and public decisions" (Banks, 1991, p. 25); it can help schools "actively encourage democracy" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 223); a wholehearted commitment to social reconstruction can lead to "the conscious and deliberate achievement of democracy" (Counts, 1932, p. 40); and social reconstruction is even termed "democratic reconstruction" (Smith, Stanley, & Shores, 1950, pp. 190 & 191). For multicultural and reconstructionist education there appears to be no confusion about a distinct and solid commitment to democratic principles.

Unfortunately, this unity of background and intent is deceptive. Upon closer inspection one detects that it incorporates more the form of a ritual incantation than of a conscientious review of the demands of democratic participation on the education of the young. This is not to say that the previously cited commitments are insincere or fraudulent, for most rituals reflect deeply held beliefs and trace their origins to some perception of the truth. But the assertions at issue here rarely go beyond this stage in substance, whatever their sometimes eloquent elaborations in form. For example, at a minimum these advocates

fail to specify which conception of democracy they consider definitive for their arguments--or even to acknowledge that democracy may assume multiple forms. While "democracy" is not a completely open concept, historically there has been enough variation in its structures and its demands upon its constituents to pose problems in the undifferentiated use of the term.[7]

More damaging, perhaps, is the theoretically weak explanation of the relationship between multiculturalism and democracy. The unsubstantiated assumption is that pluralistic societies place new demands upon democratic polities. Some political theorists have in fact begun to analyze in new ways the demands that multiculturalism exerts on democratic societies. For instance, if liberal democratic governments are obligated to recognize primary goods (e.g., religious freedom, freedom of speech, education, income) as central and fundamental to their citizens' being treated as free and equal, and if people need a secure cultural context in order to make their choices in life meaningful, then a secure cultural context becomes a primary good deserving of protection--and perhaps promotion--by liberal democratic states (Gutmann, 1994, pp. 4–5). The multicultural attention to cultural identity is at least as strong, with many proponents granting it a prominent place in their work (see, e.g., Banks, 1994, pp. 40–42, Gollnick & Chinn, 1990, pp. 14–17, and Nieto, 1992, pp. 127–131 & 230–231). Each author seems to assume the self-evidence of the role of cultural identity in achieving true democratic participation in pluralistic societies.

Self-evidence can be a tricky thing, though, for it often becomes a designation for the lack of an alternative vision. But, interestingly enough, standard theories of the foundations of justice in a democratic society offer a powerful and long-standing alternative to the particularist approaches mentioned above--without relying on the ideological critique of critical theory. Of these standard views, John Rawls's description of the "original

---

[7]For a succinct yet comprehensive review of possible alternatives, see C. B. Macpherson's (1977) The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy.

position" in determining just actions is the most prominent and the most widely accepted in contemporary political theory:

> It seems reasonable and generally acceptable that no one should be advantaged or disadvantaged by natural fortune or social circumstances in the choice of principles. It also seems widely agreed that it should be impossible to tailor principles to the circumstances of one's own case. We should insure further that particular inclinations and aspirations, and persons' conceptions of their good do not affect the principles adopted. The aim is to rule out those principles that it would be rational to propose for acceptance, however little the chance of success, only if one knew certain things that are irrelevant from the standpoint of justice. For example, if a man knew that he was wealthy, he might find it rational to advance the principle that various taxes for welfare measures be counted unjust; if he knew that he was poor, he would most likely propose the contrary principle. To represent the desired restrictions one imagines a situation in which everyone is deprived of this sort of information. One excludes the knowledge of those contingencies which sets men at odds and allows them to be guided by their prejudices. In this manner the veil of ignorance is arrived at in a natural way. (Rawls, 1971, pp. 18–19, emphasis added)

A more drastic contrast to the particularist approach would be difficult to imagine, for here justice demands that reasonable, free, and equal citizens regard all of their specific traits (e.g., ethnicity, gender) and commitments (e.g., to religious ideals, to friends) as irrelevant to the determination of a just basic structure for society. While these traits and commitments may be central to individuals as they live their daily lives, this perspective prevents their influencing the establishment of basic principles of justice.[8] The consequences of the perspectives presented here are twofold and significant. The first raises the question of whether particular identities, commitments, and traits are relevant to the formulation of basic principles of justice and the design of a just basic structure of society. The standard liberal position as represented by Rawls argues that they are not,

---

[8]Rawls dedicates his recent book, Political Liberalism (1993), to a clarification of the metaphysical confusions that arose from A Theory of Justice. One of these misunderstandings is a failure to recognize that the original position is a "device of representation...[with] no specific metaphysical implications concerning the nature of the self" (Rawls, 1993, p. 27). Rawls also takes care to state that his conception of justice is political, not metaphysical, with implications only for the restricted domain in which persons are seeking to live together reasonably, as free and equal citizens (Rawls, 1993, pp. xv, 4–15). Neither of these clarifications requires a revision in the original position as just summarized.

whereas other positions, especially those of communitarians (see, e.g., Taylor, 1992/1994), hold that they are. Resolution of this debate one way or the other has serious repercussions for a just social framework. The second consequence arises in the instance of a liberal approach to justice. While this model excludes particularistic considerations from the establishment of principles of justice and a just basic structure of society, those considerations may be found relevant to actual claims of justice within a functioning society. This is especially so if people who possess given traits find themselves the victims of systematic discrimination because of those traits. Careful attention to the issue at hand is necessary if the relevant demands of identity are not to be confused with the irrelevant. Despite their concern with both cultural identity and justice, multicultural theorists in education seem oblivious to these nuances and hence fail to consider potentially consequential factors in an understanding of social justice and the schools' possible contributions to its realization.

## The Issues and Their Significance

The preceding discussion identifies several problematic yet related areas within multicultural education that are worthy of further investigation and which form the foci of the present study. The first of these is the connection between multicultural education and democratic theory. The aforementioned ritual incantations about democracy neither suggest deep understanding on the part of the multicultural advocates nor offer helpful guidance to practitioners. But volumes have been written--many of them substantive and insightful--on the forms and demands of democratic political systems. The most disturbing gap in the literature on multicultural education is the absence of any insights that political theorists of integrity, intellect, and renown might provide. They are strangely missing from The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education (Banks, 1995a) and from the introductory textbooks in the field that serve as the basis for the present study. In fact, John Dewey represents the only regularly cited philosopher of democracy and its educational demands, and he often appears only in passing (e.g., in Sleeter & Grant, 1994,

pp. 218–219, and in Gay, 1995, p. 32--this latter instance constituting the only reference to Dewey in the entire Handbook). This study proposes to compensate for this oversight by reviewing the contributions of political philosophers to democratic theory and democratic education.

The contributions of political philosophy are not limited to theories of democratic political systems. They offer valuable insights into justice, its justification, its prerequisites, and its demands. Multiculturalists' concern for social justice appears to be of the same order as that for democracy. It is assumed to be an unequivocal and self-evident good, but no systematic treatment of the issue is offered in any of the prominent texts. Recommendations for action are therefore presented without a solid grounding. This study does not question a priori the appropriateness of including social justice among the objectives of multicultural education; it does propose to investigate the theoretical justification for such an inclusion and its connection to democratic theory. The work of John Rawls, the foremost philosopher of justice in the United States, will serve as the basis for that evaluation.

The current concern with the implementation and practice of multicultural education may lead one to question the need for further solely conceptual work on the topic. With a democratic polity in desperate need of redemption and a society crying out for justice, the contemplation of theory seems a rash luxury indeed. Ironically, this attitude pervades much intellectual work in education, a field presumably dedicated to intellectual pursuits. And, as Robin Barrow suggests, the consequences of an avoidance of theory can be serious:

> One sympathises with the widespread desire on the part of teachers to get on with teaching rather than theorising about what to teach, but surely one must insist that there be some good reasons to get on with whatever they want to get on with, and probably that they should have some understanding of those reasons. (Barrow, 1984, p. 17)

Not only might theoretical reflections aid in determining what is worth doing but also whether there is good reason to believe that the stated goals are compatible with the

intended methods of their achievement. For example, despite the passionate commitment of multiculturalists to democratic processes and to social justice, their efforts on behalf of these ideals could well be for naught if they are based on a flawed understanding of the claims of justice and democratic governance. Theoretical engagement offers the best promise of clarifying these connections. Finally, if multicultural education is to become a recognized field of study--or "discipline," as Banks & Banks (1995, p. xi) would have it--it is rightly expected that it be built upon a solid theoretical framework, as a theory of education and a theory of practice (cf., e.g., de Castell & Freeman, 1978, and Kerr, 1981).

Much reference is made in the literature to theories of multicultural education (see, e.g., Banks, 1994, p. 7; Ladson-Billings, 1996, p. 101). Yet it is unclear to what extent typologies, such as those constructed by Gibson or Sleeter and Grant, or programs for educational practice, such as those that comprise the bulk of most textbooks on multicultural education, constitute genuine curricular theories.[9] Several domains of the field have certainly been the focus of theoretical work--particularly that dealing with the interaction of ethnicity, class, and gender on educational experiences and opportunities (see Banks, 1995b, p. 3). But virtually no attention has been devoted to the core themes of multicultural education reviewed here--namely, democratic polity and social justice. This study will conclude with a brief review of the demands of curricular theory and draw on the investigation of political theory in democracy and justice to lay the groundwork for a more complete theory of multicultural education. Given the breadth of the field, the full theory may still be some time in coming, but consideration of these fundamental themes is long overdue.

## Assumptions of the Study

Because social and cultural contexts quickly lead one to take for granted certain ways of thinking and of viewing the world, it is impossible to identify all assumptions and

---

[9]A more thorough summary of the controversies and ambiguities surrounding the topic of curricular theory appears in Chapter 4. Suffice it here to note that curricular theories deal at a minimum with the question of what should be taught, why it should be taught, and how it should be taught.

suppositions that underlie a study such as this. But it is possible to enumerate three assumptions that have significantly influenced both the initial undertaking of the present effort and the direction it ultimately followed. The first concurs with Barrow's conviction of the importance of theoretical work. Proper attention to theory results in several distinct benefits: it forces clarification of basic terms and ideas; it bounds a field by defining what is properly within the jurisdiction of that topic and what lies beyond its conceptual borders; and it offers guidance for and a justification of practice. A second assumption of this research is that multicultural education is not simply a political movement disguised as an educational program (as Bernstein, 1994, among others, suspects) but potentially a legitimate area of endeavor with worthy pedagogical goals. A third assumption of the study is that the fundamental features of multicultural education are best sought in the basic, introductory publications in the field, not in specialized monographs or fugitive works (such as materials in the ERIC database, project reports, or unpublished conference presentations). Because these books are widely available and currently in use in classrooms around the country, introductory textbooks and general works such as The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education have served exclusively as the subjects of review in this project.

## The Conduct of the Research

### The Selection of Texts

The choice of basic, introductory works in multicultural education was accomplished in consultation with three sources. The first of these was the database version of the Citation Index.[10] The three indices were the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, the Science Citation Index, and the Social Science Citation Index. Variants of the terms "multicultural" and "diversity" were searched in each index for the following periods: the arts and humanities index, January 1995 through August 1995; the science index, January through December 1992, 1993, and 1994, and January through September 1995;

[10]Reference is made here to the compact-disc edition of this work, issued by the Institute for Scientific Information, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-3389.

and the social science index, January through December 1991 and 1993 and January through September 1995.[11] The results were assembled into one large file, and those authors whose names appeared five or more times were identified. These authors were Gwendolyn C. Baker, James A. Banks, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, W. E. B. Du Bois, Geneva Gay, Henry Giroux, Carl A. Grant, Sonia Nieto, and Christine E. Sleeter. Several authors were eliminated from consideration because of the period in which they wrote (Du Bois) and because they are most closely associated with other, albeit related, fields of activity--curriculum (Gay[12] and Giroux) and language arts (Cochran-Smith).[13] Introductory texts in multicultural education written by the five remaining authors were then acquired for review.

The second source of recommendations came from Carl A. Grant, who was the president of the National Association for Multicultural Education at the outset of the research. In addition to the Handbook, he suggested Making Choices for Multicultural Education (Sleeter & Grant, 1994), Education for a Pluralistic Society (Gollnick & Chinn, 1990), and An Introduction to Multicultural Education (Banks, 1994). The final source of recommendations came from colleagues abreast of developments in the field of multicultural education or familiar with basic texts on the topic from having reviewed them for adoption for use in their classes. These added Nieto (1992), Bennett (1986), and Baker (1983) to the preceding list. The final compilation of multicultural references included the following works (full bibliographic information may be found in the reference list):

---

[11]These periods were chosen by default. That is, they were the files available in the main library at Michigan State University at the outset of the study. Because of the coincidence of the three sources of recommendations for texts, there is no reason to believe that the missing years and months distorted the outcome of the search.

[12]Gay's work is included in the Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education, and consequently she is represented in the present study.

[13]Confirmation of this decision was that none of the other two sources of recommendations included any of the authors excluded in this manner.

Baker, Gwendolyn C.

- Planning and Organizing for Multicultural Instruction (1983)[14]

Banks, James A.

- The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education (1995)
- An Introduction to Multicultural Education (1994)
- Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies (1991)

Bennett, Christine I.

- Comprehensive Multicultural Education (1986 & 1995)

Gollnick, Donna M. and Chinn, Philip C.

- Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society (1990 & 1994)

Nieto, Sonia

- Affirming Diversity (1992)

Sleeter, Christine E. and Grant, Carl A.

- Making Choices for Multicultural Education (1994)
- Turning on Learning (1989)

The selection of texts for the treatment of democratic theory, the theory of justice, and curriculum theory was more straightforward. C. B. Macpherson's (1977) historical survey of the development of liberal democracy became a plausible candidate as a result of the complimentary reference to his work in Jane Roland Martin's (1981) essay, "Needed: A New Paradigm for Liberal Education." His recognition of the role of class in modern

---

[14]Because of an oversight, a newer, second edition of Baker's text (published 1994) was discovered only as the final draft of this study was being prepared. It could therefore not be included in the research. A cursory review of this book, though, suggests that Baker maintains her membership in the human-relations group of multiculturalists. She does now claim that empowering pupils is a goal of multicultural education (Baker, 1994, p. 26), but it is unclear whether this reflects a more explicit concern for social justice than that found in her first textbook. The implicit desire for justice of the order found in the first edition seems present.

democratic societies and his prominence in other surveys of modern democratic theory (see, e.g., Held, 1987) confirmed the appropriateness of this selection. Little reflection was necessary in deciding upon an analysis of justice, since John Rawls's work has dominated the field for the past generation. Valuable pieces on curriculum theory were identified by recommendations from professors in the field and from my own background in curriculum studies. I have long found the work of Robin Barrow particularly insightful, the essay by de Castell and Freeman was referred to favorably in an essay by Donna Kerr (1981), and the 1982 special edition of Theory Into Practice, devoted to curriculum theory, supplied additional helpful perspectives.

The Analysis, Briefly Summarized

In light of the foregoing arguments, the questions that will guide this research are specified as follows:

- How does multicultural education, especially its social-reconstructionist camp, understand its commitment to democracy and social justice?
- What insights to the benefit of multicultural education might political philosophy be able to shed on the concepts of democracy and social justice?
- What contribution might the answers to these questions make to the formulation of a credible theory of multicultural education?

In its overall pattern, the analysis proceeded largely as it is presented here. That is to say, following a determination that the references to democracy and social justice were indeed as vague as they appeared at first reading, I directed my attention first to clarifying the possible meaning of democracy. Macpherson's history delineated the topic, and reference was made to specific historical variants (e.g., those of Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, John Dewey) to provide a fuller understanding of the models. Attention was then redirected to the multicultural literature to gauge the extent to which the historical and philosophical perspectives could shed light onto the ambiguities noted therein. Essentially the same method was employed in treating Rawls. A thorough study of his Political

Liberalism was followed by a comparison with the limited and imprecise references in the works on multiculturalism. Central elements from these two analyses were identified as crucial to any potential theory of social-reconstructionist multicultural education, and their possible role in such a theory was explicated.

# CHAPTER II:

# THE AMBIGUOUS MEANING OF DEMOCRACY IN THE LITERATURE ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education often seems to have as many distinct goals as it has proponents. Yet certain themes recur in most of the treatises on multicultural education. Almost all begin with an acknowledgment of cultural pluralism in the United States (see, e.g., Baker, 1983, pp. 7–9; Banks, 1991, pp. 3–11; Bennett, 1986, p. 9; Nieto, 1992, pp. xxiv–xxv; and Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 3 ff.). Many then proceed to make explicit connections between this social reality and the need for multicultural education to prepare pupils for participation in a democratic society. Sonia Nieto (1992), for example, believes that "the connection of multicultural education with students' future rights and responsibilities in a democracy is unmistakable" (p. 218). Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant (1994) assert that the explicit purpose of schooling in the United States has been "to promote democracy" (p. 129). But, recognizing that "for many groups democracy is an ideal to pursue rather than a reality" (p. 129), they advocate multicultural education as a means to begin remedying this discrepancy, and they enumerate specific ways in which multicultural education encourages pupils to "practice democracy" (pp. 223–225).

Other advocates of multicultural education, while placing emphasis elsewhere, recognize the important connections between their primary concern and a democratic society. Gwendolyn Baker (1983) focuses on pupils' becoming aware of themselves and their cultures and on their developing an appreciation of other cultures (p. 4), yet she points out that multicultural education can best be understood "within the context of a changing, pluralistic, democratic society" (p. 4). James Banks (1991) centers his attention on ethnic identity, but he nevertheless regards his proposed curriculum as appropriate for developing "an active and informed citizenry capable of making reflective personal and public decisions" (p. 25). Although Banks does not mention democracy by name, the abilities to

which he refers are clearly central to democratic citizenship. Lastly, Christine Bennett (1995, pp. 16–20) understands multicultural education to be primarily a means of advancing--and, ideally, guaranteeing--equal educational opportunity. Not only is this a matter of promoting academic excellence among pupils regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, but the nation's democratic ideals of "basic human rights, social justice, respect for alternative life choices, and equal opportunity for all" (p. 20) demand such efforts.

These apologists, therefore, believe that programs of multicultural education can make important contributions to the preparation of informed, responsible, and active citizens in a democracy. Their assertions possess a prima facie plausibility about the connection between multicultural education and democracy. However, closer inspection of both the particular competencies advocated above and their underlying--albeit tacit--justifications gives one cause for skepticism. As an illustration, Sleeter and Grant (1994) offer one of the most explicit statements of the democratic "skills" that multicultural education promotes: "Practicing democracy also means learning to articulate one's interests, to openly debate issues with one's peers, to organize and work collectively with others, to acquire power, to exercise power, and so forth" (p. 223). Certainly none of these skills taken individually is sufficient to guarantee democratic participation. Moreover, whether any (alone or in combination) is necessary to democratic participation depends upon one's conception of democracy.

A telling example of the connection between conceptions of democracy and the skills they demand regards the popular belief that voting constitutes the defining element of democracy. Through the ballot, citizens "exercise power" by selecting those who would govern them or, in rarer instances, by choosing one of several alternative courses of action. These paeans to citizens' involvement (even in this periodic, limited way) resound most forcefully around election days. Yet if voting is the only way most citizens are expected to exercise political power, the competencies Sleeter and Grant enumerate have no necessary

connection to registering one's choice in the voting booth. Consequently, what advocates of multicultural education mean by democracy, although generally only implicit in their writings, has an important bearing on the defensibility of the curricular programs they propose.

## Ambiguous Conceptions of Democracy

At the outset, it should be noted that for multiculturalists there is no confusion between democracy and other undemocratic or totalitarian systems of government. Instead, difficulty emerges from the apparent failure of any of the supporters of multicultural education to recognize that democracy--especially in its incarnation in industrialized Western societies, known as liberal democracy--has over the past century and three quarters assumed various forms to accommodate various conceptions of the function of the political system. Multicultural educationists regularly speak of an undifferentiated "democracy." Only rarely do they modify the term, and when they do, it lacks helpful clarification. Nieto (1992) talks of "culturally democratic" education (p. 112), which appears to mean an education in which pupils are helped to acquire the "learning styles" of both their ethnic group and their social class. And Nieto (1992, p. 21) and Sleeter and Grant (1994, p. 130) both emphasize the need to build a "true" democracy, presumably in contrast to the various imperfect democracies established in Western societies.

Ironically, Sleeter and Grant tacitly acknowledge the need for a historical perspective by quoting approvingly an earlier theorist of education:

> If democracy is to be conserved and fully realized, the American people must understand the meaning of democracy, both in its historical development and in its social bearing and implications for the world of today. (Newlon, 1939, p. 94, cited in Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 129, emphasis added)

Apart from passing mention of Thomas Jefferson, Noah Webster, and Benjamin Rush, though, these authors fail to incorporate into their survey any reference to historians or political theorists, let alone any adequate treatment of the historical development of democracy. In this respect they are no different from any of the other defenders of

multicultural education, whose similarly oblique references to a substantive democracy are scattered throughout the literature.

This neglect is troubling. It suggests the advisability of investigating the distinctions that may reasonably be drawn among the democratic systems of government prevalent in Western industrial societies, particularly in the United States. In so doing, an attempt will be made to forestall two problems likely to arise in the absence of such a review. First, because multicultural educationists do not discriminate historical variants of democracy,[15] confusions and seeming contradictions in the literature may be attributed to this failure to distinguish meanings of "democracy" and hence may be resolved by this analysis. Second, and more importantly, a clearer sense of the forms, requirements, and promises of different versions of democracy may reasonably be expected to enhance our understanding of the educational aspects that would allow citizens living under each type of government to fulfill their proper roles. Being serious about preparing pupils for democratic participation obliges one to learn what such participation entails.

## The Forms of Liberal Democracy

There is no shortage of theoretical treatments of democratic political systems from which one might enhance one's understanding of the demands of democratic education. However, several features of C. B. Macpherson's (1977) analysis make it especially relevant here. By elaborating historically successive models, he places each form not only in its immediate social and political contexts but also in its temporal context, that is, in a sequence including what had come before and what came after. This responds directly to Newlon's (1939, p. 94) insistence (reaffirmed by Sleeter and Grant, 1994, p. 129) upon understanding democracy in its historical development. Macpherson's analysis pertains to the types of society currently most concerned with multicultural issues, because his definition of liberal democracy presupposes an industrial, class-based economy. Indeed,

---

[15]As will become evident presently, these versions of democracy form something of a chronological progression. That is not to say, however, that each has been either superseded or usurped by subsequent models.

Macpherson carefully and explicitly distinguishes "liberal" democracy from its precursors (i.e., those stretching from the ancient Greek polis to Jefferson's society of yeoman farmers): these forerunners have all presupposed a classless or a one-class society.[16] Liberal democracy, in contrast, is faced with a class-divided society, one characterized by a capitalist market economy, and one in which the ultimately successful pressure for an expanded franchise has entitled people from competing economic strata to enter the political fray. This feature has significant consequences for each of the versions of democracy and consequently for the prospects for success in achieving the multiculturalists' ideal of democratic participation.

Macpherson also reveals assumptions about people and society embedded in the various models of liberal democracy.[17] For example, he demonstrates the incompatibility between the Utilitarians' model of man and society and their simultaneously held ethical principle of equality (Macpherson, 1977, pp. 23–43, especially pp. 29–30)--a contradiction, incidentally, which Jeremy Bentham and James Mill either never recognized or chose to ignore in favor of the promised benefits of capitalism.[18] Finally, his treatment of the subject is thorough enough to offer genuinely substantive insights into the various conceptions of democracy while remaining succinct enough to be manageable, considering the present emphasis is not upon democratic theory per se but upon the insights it can offer to multicultural theory. As a result, while other political scientists' work might provide worthwhile albeit different contributions to a study of multicultural theory, there seems no reason to doubt that Macpherson's treatment is ideally suited to the present need.

---

[16]For Macpherson (1977), a classless society allows "no individual ownership of productive land or capital" (p. 12), whereas a one-class society presumes that "everyone owns, or is in a position to own, such property" (p. 12).

[17]Jane Roland Martin (1981, pp. 51–53) lauds this aspect of Macpherson's work and uses his revelations as a model for challenging assumptions implicit in Paul Hirst's theories of the forms of knowledge and liberal education.

[18]Bentham unequivocally announces his commitment to property--seen as the foundation of "security," the term he uses more frequently--over equality: "When security and equality are in conflict, it will not do to hesitate a moment. Equality must yield" (Bentham, 1830/1931, p. 120).

This review will consist of two parts. It will follow Macpherson's chronology in tracing the history of liberal democracy--not for the purpose of duplicating his analysis but to afford a cogent summary of the central features of each type. This will facilitate comprehension of the type itself and comparisons with other versions of democracy. Each summary will be followed by a brief consideration of the educational implications of that model. The intent here is not to propose a complete curricular program but merely to furnish evidence for the assertion that general, often superficial, talk about democracy ignores important distinctions in the curricular strategies appropriate for each conception.

Protective Democracy

The first formulation of liberal democracy was proffered by the Utilitarians Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, writing in England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The main elements of this Utilitarian theory can be summarized thusly:[19] Human beings are governed by "two sovereign masters" (Bentham, 1789/1948, p. 1), namely, pleasure and pain. Not only do individuals act to maximize their pleasures and minimize their pains, they are morally justified in doing so. (If nature has indeed made these two masters sovereign over human existence, people have little real choice in this matter, for rare is the individual who would seek to maximize pain over pleasure.[20]) And this moral imperative applies to collectivities, not just individuals, so the best government is the one which can maximize the happiness of its citizens. However, the question of who should control that government is difficult to resolve, for each ready alternative poses the threat of abuse by the governor(s). Whether led by one individual (monarchy), a group of individuals (oligarchy), or the citizenry as a whole (democracy), the government may fall prey to the

---

[19]This synopsis draws on the following works: Bentham's (1789/1948) Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation and his (1830/1931) Theory of Legislation, Mill's (1820/1937) An Essay on Government, and Macpherson's (1977) The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy.

[20]Bentham termed this inverse principle "asceticism" and rejected the possibility of its forming the logical basis of an ethical system (see Bentham, 1789/1948, pp. 8–13).

attempt of those in power to advance their personal happiness at the expense of the public at large.[21]

When persons of equal status--whether political, economic, or social--hold power over their fellow citizens, the dangers are serious enough. When persons of unequal status--specifically, persons of a higher social class--combine political power with the power inherent in their vaster resources of wealth, even greater offenses against the commonweal (understood as the greatest happiness) might ensue. The early Utilitarians recognized the potential for abuse in a political system in which persons of differing class backgrounds were presumed to have equal political power.[22] The ethical principle of equality, in conjunction with the economic model of human beings as maximizers of utilities and of society as a collection of individuals with conflicting interests (because different people find different things pleasurable or because numerous people find a limited resource pleasurable), led the Utilitarians to devise a mechanism for controlling the tendency of the powerful to abuse their power. This mechanism was an expanded franchise:

> The vote was political power, or at least the lack of the vote was lack of political power. Therefore everyone needed the vote, for self-protection. Nothing short of "one person, one vote" could in principle protect all the citizens from the government. (Macpherson, 1977, p. 37)

The franchise was deemed protective because, despite assertions of a belief in equality, the society remained one in which individual consumers sought to maximize private benefits in free economic and political markets. Not surprisingly, under such circumstances the rich would enjoy considerable advantage in influencing governmental policies; the poor were to use their newly acquired vote to protect themselves against such machinations.

---

[21]Whereas the potential for abuse is rather obvious in monarchical and oligarchical regimes, it is far from absent in democratic polities, for not all citizens can hold the reins of government simultaneously. The issue then becomes one of how the larger, governed populace can protect its interests against its smaller, governing contingent. Checks on power and rotation in office are two common methods for restraining the natural tendencies of the governors in a democracy.

[22]As mentioned earlier, the presence of class distinctions in a political system assuming equal political standing defines modern liberal democracies.

So asserts the theory. Ultimately the success of the model depended upon two features. First, the franchise must be extended universally. This, as it turned out, was done only grudgingly and in fits and starts well into the 20th century. Indeed, James Mill gave many pseudo-democratic reasons for believing that something much less than a universal franchise would guarantee the necessary protections of the people. His assertion that "all those individuals whose interests are indisputably included in those of other individuals" (Mill, 1820/1937, p. 45) could be denied the vote without any dire consequence seems ludicrous to late-20th-century citizens, particularly when one regards his examples: Children's interests were involved in those of their parents, women's in those of their husbands or fathers, and younger men's in those of older men, because "scarcely any laws could be made for the benefit of all the men of forty which would not be laws for the benefit of all the rest of the community" (Mill, 1820/1937, p. 47). This belief in common interest strikes the modern democrat as naive at best, but it coincides perfectly with the market model of economy and polity that dominated the early industrial age--namely, that political power should reside in those with clear economic interests. The consequences were profound, for not only could the resultant politically powerful groups justifiably protect their own interests, through the implicit paternalism (or, more favorably, noblesse oblige) they could decide what benefits to grant to the lower classes.

The second feature upon which the success of protective democracy depended is the ability of voters to act in concert to protect their interests. In this respect, an isolated, individual vote counts for little. Election-year rhetoric notwithstanding,[23] it is possible--

---

[23]A letter to the Lansing (Mi.) State Journal just prior to the presidential election of 1996 illustrates this perfectly:

> You may be hearing from the various press sources that the "election is already decided" and the polls have shown that your choice has "won" or "lost."
>
> Do not stay home on election day! Your vote is important because:
>
> —In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of German.
>
> —In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.
>
> —In 1867, one vote ratified the Alaska Purchase, which became our largest state.

especially in a winner-take-all system, such as that in the United States--for a citizen to waste a vote on a candidate with little chance of winning or for one citizen to cancel the vote of another in a two-candidate race. The protective model of democracy encourages persons negatively affected by the actions of incumbents to use their votes to prevent such actions by turning powerholders out of office if they have violated the public's trust. However, the principle of "one person, one vote" is deceptive, for it is not individuals who protect themselves at the voting booth, but rather collectivities:

> In actuality the right [to vote] is not fundamental because it secures benefits or other rights directly for the individual voter acting alone; it does so only if he or she votes as a member of a group. (Shklar, 1991, p. 55)

One person's vote cannot protect that person from a community which supports its representative(s) in enacting a policy to that person's detriment, unless that person bands together with enough others similarly affected to reverse the outcome of the election. Because people have varied interests, though, the groups to which they belong will vary depending upon the issue at stake. These shifting allegiances complicate the selection of a single candidate in the voting booth, leading the voter to "play the odds" that, in general, a certain candidate will act in that voter's interest more often than not. How much protection the voter ultimately enjoys in return is something that cannot be known in advance.

Citizenship education in a protective democracy will emphasize above all the need for citizens to vote. In this respect, it will look very much like what passes for democratic

---

> —In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
>
> —In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency of the United States.
>
> —In 1923, one vote gave Adolf Hitler leadership in the Nazi Party.
>
> —In 1941, one vote saved the Selective Service, just 12 weeks before Pearl Harbor.
>
> Exercise your right to vote. Vote on Nov. 5. (Hubert, 1996)

That every vote cited in this letter took place in a committee, party gremium, or other legislative body (where, because of the relatively small number of votes cast, each vote carried more weight) rather than in a general election is beside the point.

education in many schools today.[24] How one votes is almost universally regarded as less important than that one vote. (Ironically, the references to the sacred right to exercise one's conscience in the voting booth ignore the self-interest at the core of protective democracy.) An educational program for protective democracy cannot rest there, however. It must also persuade pupils of the need to act conjointly if votes are not to be "wasted" and if any semblance of protection is to be assured. Most difficult of all, this curriculum will need to address the question of how one identifies or defines one's interest, including how to resolve internal conflicts of interest. Given the controversial nature of this topic and given its implicit challenge to more flattering and noble conceptions of democracy, however, it appears unlikely that schools would be very successful in implementing such a curriculum even if they could be persuaded to adopt it.

Developmental Democracy

Even its originators concede that expediency is the strongest recommendation for protective democracy. In that model there is "no enthusiasm for democracy, no idea that it could be a morally transformative force" (Macpherson, 1977, p. 43). By the middle of the 19th century, however, the increasing deprivations of the working classes--leading to revolutions across Europe in 1848--and the simultaneous increase in literacy among those classes meant that "'the poor' could not be shut out or held down much longer" (Macpherson, 1977, p. 45). In the face of increasingly strident demands for political participation on the part of persons historically regarded as politically irrelevant or irresponsible (viz., the working classes), political theorists began reconsidering their assumptions regarding the demands of democratic polities. By rejecting the expediency of the protective model, John Stuart Mill redefined the function of government so that the working classes could be included in the polity without fear of their undermining democracy itself, for their very engagement in political processes was to effect their improvement not only as citizens, but also as human beings:

---

[24]Schools are not the only agencies that encourage voter participation. MTV, among other organizations, sponsors a quadrennial get-out-the-vote campaign.

> The first element of good government, therefore, being the virtue and intelligence of the human beings composing the community, the most important point of excellence which any form of government can possess is to promote the virtue and intelligence of the people themselves. The first question in respect to any political institutions is, how far they tend to foster in the members of the community the various desirable qualities, moral or intellectual....A government is to be judged by its action upon men,...by what it makes of the citizens, and what it does with them; its tendency to improve or deteriorate the people themselves, and the goodness or badness of the work it performs for them, and by means of them. (Mill, 1861/1962, pp. 32–36, emphasis added)

As the foremost way in which people establish the arrangements that enable them to live together peaceably, political engagement is crucial to a development of people's understanding of themselves. Developmental democracy transforms the purely mechanistic model of protective democracy into a moral imperative by rejecting a fundamentally calculating vision of humankind and replacing it with a vision of a continually developing being. No longer need individual citizens worry that their interests will be ignored or violated by privileged others ostensibly acting on their behalf. Nor need they employ some utilitarian calculus to determine their interests or to arrive at the number of like-minded individuals necessary to form a voting bloc powerful enough to protect their interests. Developmental democracy envisions a growing political engagement among all citizens that improves not only their economic well-being but their political, social, cultural, and moral prospects as well.

This hope for personal development through democratic participation continued through the 19th century and well into the 20th, with adherents on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Ernest Barker, former chair of political science at Cambridge University, saw no tension between the functions of government and the rights of individuals, for a democratic government is obligated to act on behalf of the right of "each individual person to enjoy the conditions necessary to the development of his capacities" (Barker, 1951, p. 269). The rights involved do exact a price--both financial, primarily in the taxes necessary to enable the government to act in this capacity, and spiritual, in the increased control over human

lives that accompanies the government's role in protecting individual rights. By attending more to the spiritual price than the financial (p. 270), Barker skirts the issue of how economically disadvantaged individuals may come to enjoy the conditions for development of personal capacities. Economic inequalities would be addressed "as social thought about justice grows" (p. 272)--apparently as a result of a growing progressive Zeitgeist rather than from the agency of a particular person or social group--and could be dealt with through agreements "based on voluntary consultation and issuing in voluntary co-operation" (p. 275). Barker's call for personal development via political engagement, then, presupposes a good dose of voluntary self-help of individuals by groups of individuals (p. 276).

As the foremost American proponent of developmental democracy, John Dewey both supported and extended Mill's vision. For Dewey, personal enhancement was not merely a possible, but a necessary outcome of democratic participation, for democracy was more than a form of government: "Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself" (Dewey, 1927, p. 148, emphasis added). Furthermore, this common engagement of individuals in civic affairs promotes a salutary interdependence:

> The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. (Dewey, 1916/1980, p. 93)

The result is both an expansion of the shared concerns of the members of the community and a freeing of their capacities for personal development. Requisite to the achievement of these goals is the individual's access to educational and intellectual opportunities--in the context of his life and work, an understandably central concern for Dewey.

Despite its claim to enhance the political knowledge, engagement, and satisfactions of the working classes, the developmental model proved unable to resolve the

contradictions between its political ideals and the demands of a market-based economy. The people deemed most needful of the moral and intellectual improvements that democracy could provide--namely, the lower and working classes, for the upper classes' long enjoyment of the franchise supposedly testified to their established political (and, presumably, moral and intellectual) competence--were the very members of society whose social and economic circumstances most frustrated the attempt and even the inclination to pursue social improvement. Most theorists of developmental democracy failed to recognize this contradiction or minimized its significance (cf., e.g., the discussion of Barker above). Only Mill and Dewey acknowledged the relevance of a capitalist economy to their analysis of democratic politics, but Mill failed to identify the connection correctly (Macpherson, 1977, p. 69) and Dewey was more concerned with the promise of a democratic liberalism than with a study of capitalism (Macpherson, 1977, pp. 74–75). Consequently, the potential of developmental democracy remained unfulfilled, in part because the insidious presence of class, ethnic, and other distinctions prevented the type of interaction envisioned here, but more generally because, as Dewey (1927, p. 148) himself conceded, the model portrayed a completed and perfected ideal incapable of ever being fully realized because of distractions and interferences in people's actual, everyday lives.

The expansiveness of developmental democracy's vision--as Dewey asserted, it is "the idea of community life itself"--justifies a similarly broad educational program. Since almost anything can be a focus of community life or contribute to personal development, excluding any but the most clearly antisocial ideas, attitudes, and behaviors would be difficult to justify (and these would ultimately be excluded from any educational program). Perhaps some genuine advantage is to be gained from the broad perspective that this model supports, for taking seriously the wide-ranging implications of democracy could indeed extend civil discourse and behavior far beyond the traditional domain of politics. On the other hand, the possibility of defending practically any course of action in an overcrowded

curriculum as furthering democratic or citizenship education could rapidly trivialize such programs.

Equilibrium Democracy

Mill's model of developmental democracy proved so attractive that it was not until the middle of the 20th century that a new model was proposed to supersede it. Interestingly, this model reverted to the market assumptions of the protective model. Its major advance is that it places these considerations squarely in the context of a modern pluralistic society, that is, "a society consisting of individuals each of whom is pulled in many directions by his many interests, now in company with one group of his fellows, now with another" (Macpherson, 1977, p. 77). Indeed, the market mechanism returned with a vengeance, for the equilibrium touted in the title is one that exists between the demand and supply of political goods. The voters became the consumers of political goods offered by the entrepreneurs--the politicians (Macpherson, 1977, p. 79). Citizens purchased different political goods according to their shifting interests and alliances as members of competing groups--class, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation (hence the pluralistic aspect of the model)--and the political system was expected to respond to those demands whose extent or intensity justified the creation, the "manufacture," of that political good.

Joseph Schumpeter makes his reliance upon a market model as explicit as does any theorist of equilibrium democracy, and he offers a good example of the parallels between economic and political theory:[25] In a democracy, the primary function of the elector's vote is to produce government. Generally, producing a government amounts to deciding who the leader shall be. But in the vast majority of instances, candidates for office present themselves to the electorate, which then chooses among the available alternatives; these candidates rarely emerge at the behest of the voting public. This applies even when--or perhaps especially when--the candidates are representatives of and backed by political

[25]This summary is based on the theory Schumpeter presents in Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy (1943/1987, pp. 273–283).

parties, which theoretically may have selected them from the entire pool of party members but actually chose them from a much smaller group of party members eager to occupy public office. These parties act much as businesses do in the economic arena. They attempt to sell their candidate to the public, contrasting his features with those offered by candidates affiliated with other parties. The parties' platforms respond to the demands of the political marketplace (or, in some cases, create that demand) by including provisions that will appeal to the consumers, the electorate. The candidate is then marketed in much the same way as any other product--with slogans, advertising, etc. The candidate whom most voters "buy" on election day wins the contest and enters office.

The educational implications of equilibrium democracy resemble those of protective democracy because the fundamental assumptions of the models are similar. The centrality of voters' interests parallels that of the earlier model, but the objective is no longer merely to protect oneself against the incursions of powerful groups. Instead, there arises the possibility of enhancing one's position through the adept forming of political alliances and through the judicious use of one's vote. The aspects that mark this system as political consumerism suggest that an appropriate educational program would incorporate elements of consumer education, shifting their application from the economic to the political arena. How to detect fraud and how to assess competing claims for the political products--in short, how to "spend" one's political vote wisely--would be important skills for young citizens to master.

Participatory Democracy

The last of the four models of democracy is less of a formal model than a conviction that more people should be involved to a greater degree in governmental decision-making. Arising out of the student and labor movements of the 1960s (Macpherson, 1977, p. 93) and seeking to make the state more morally, rather than bureaucratically, responsive to the interests of the citizenry (Held, 1987, pp. 257–258), this model has been the topic of fervent discussion in recent years. It can claim credit for some clear and some partial

successes. The model purports to remedy the shortcomings of blatantly market models and restore a moral component to democratic processes. It urges all citizens to involve themselves in political affairs, both for their own satisfactions and development and for the achievement of genuinely democratic decision-making. It reduces the apathy that plagues those without the resources to compete in a market-based system, for those without adequate resources, whether economic or political, to achieve their goals are inclined to withdraw their participation rather than to fritter away what limited resources they have or to face the prospect of repeated failure. The hold that the pure, direct democracy of Athens or the New England town meeting, to use Macpherson's (1977, p. 95) examples, exerts upon the popular imagination attests to the attractiveness of this approach.

The degree to which participatory democracy emerges from a dissatisfaction with the equilibrium model of democracy should not be underestimated. In fact, it addresses itself to the most harmful consequence of a market-based political system, namely, apathy. All political activity levies costs, be it in time, effort, money, commitment, or any combination of these. As in economic markets, in which consumers must decide whether the benefits of a purchase (e.g., in pleasure, in utility, in increased productivity) outweigh the costs of that purchase (e.g., the price itself, the loss of interest on money taken from savings to buy the product, the interest on a loan needed to purchase the item), political consumers are faced with similar cost-benefit analyses. Indeed, the market model encourages such calculations. Given the scarce financial resources of the lower classes, their limited familiarity with political mechanisms, and the meager benefits that political bodies generally assign to them, workers and the poor not surprisingly disengage themselves from political activity. This withdrawal from political involvement not uncommonly feeds upon itself, for reduced involvement brings in its wake reduced effectiveness, which promotes even less involvement. Frequently ascribed to apathy, this disengagement of the lower classes from democratic affairs could also plausibly be an

indication of their rejection of existing political relations. Macpherson indicts this cycle of political alienation as a moral, not just a political, failure of market politics:

> It is sufficient to say that in view of the unquestioned class differential in political participation in the present system, and assuming that that differential is both the effect and the continuing cause of the inability of those in the lower strata either to articulate their wants or to make their demands effective, then nothing as unparticipatory as the apathetic equilibrium of Model 3 measures up to the ethical requirements of democracy. This is not to say that a more participatory system would of itself remove all the inequities of our society. It is only to say that low participation and social inequity are so bound up with each other that a more equitable and humane society requires a more participatory political system. (Macpherson, 1977, p. 94)

Participatory democracy's demands upon the curriculum focus on the abilities necessary for citizens to engage in productive, thoughtful exchange with each other on political matters. The ability to articulate a position and to discuss its merits and shortcomings intelligently, the inclination to submit to refutation in the face of persuasive evidence and argument, and the willingness to recognize the legitimate political claims of others are essential traits of the mature citizen in this model.[26] Process prevails over substance, for there is no prescribing the issues of concern to deliberative communities. In conjunction with the increasing attention that participatory democracy demands as a political model, the concomitant abilities have become increasingly prominent in educational debates (see, e.g., Gutmann, 1987, and Sleeter & Grant, 1994, esp. p. 223).

## Models of Democracy and Multicultural Education

That proponents of multicultural education claim a commitment to democratic forms of government and that they see curricula in multicultural education as contributing to the

---

[26]There is a surprising but encouraging coincidence between these dispositions and the "intellectual virtues," as defined by Michael Oakeshott:

> But learning to think...is learning to recognize and enjoy the intellectual virtues. How does a pupil learn disinterested curiosity, patience, intellectual honesty, exactness, industry, concentration and doubt? How does he acquire a sensibility to small differences and the ability to recognize intellectual elegance? How does he come to inherit the disposition to submit to refutation? How does he not merely learn the love of truth and justice, but learn it in such a way as to escape the reproach of fanaticism? (Oakeshott, 1965/1989, pp. 60–61)

realization of more truly democratic societies is evident in their writings. Just what they mean by these claims is more problematic. None of the works under scrutiny in this study incorporates the insights of any theorist summarized above in its review of democratic principles--not even John Dewey, the most salient and likely example. Nor, for that matter, have the multiculturalists substituted other political philosophers for those in the preceding survey. In short, while one finds no solid basis for challenging the multiculturalists' commitment to democracy, one can only surmise about the meaning of the term as it is employed in their discourse. An attempt to match relevant assertions to the purposes as described by the theorists of democracy included here leads to the following conclusions.

In light of the protective model of democracy's heyday in the early-to-mid-19th century, its datedness would lead one to assume that it would have little relevance to the multiculturalists' goals for democratic education. This is not necessarily the case. Multiculturalists criticize quite explicitly the political and social arrangements that lead to unequal educational opportunity (Bennett, 1986, pp. 52–56), institutional racism (Nieto, 1992, pp. 21–29), or the oppression of the poor and minority groups (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 126–133). The protective model of democracy encourages persons so affected to use their votes to prevent such actions by the more powerful but presumably less numerous elites. However, this strategy falls prey to the misconception that individuals acting in isolation can protect themselves by voting. At a minimum, the use of the ballot in this manner needs coordination among citizens to serve as a stopgap against the more egregious abuses cited by the proponents of multicultural education. But the franchise alone plays no discernible role in promoting the wider civic virtues frequently credited to participation in political affairs.

Because educators in general (see, e.g., Purpel, 1989) and multicultural educators in particular (see, e.g., Nieto, 1992[27]) do regard themselves as being engaged in a moral

[27]This attitude is clearly implicit in Nieto's work (see, e.g., p. 222), although it doesn't appear to be stated explicitly in this text.

enterprise, the developmental model of democracy would seem to resonate with the goals of multicultural education. Yet the available evidence is surprisingly weak. Granted, some leading multicultural educators are concerned with personal development, whether in the general instance of cultural identity (e.g., Baker, 1983) or the more specific instance of ethnic identity (e.g., Banks, 1991). Most multiculturalists, though, go beyond these essentially personal, individual concerns to advocate collective social action, particularly in their emphasis upon social justice (e.g., Banks, 1991, p. 28; Bennett, 1986, p. 55; Nieto, 1992, pp. 216–218; and Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 171). These larger social goals obviously do not preclude individuals' engaging in political processes in order to come to a deeper understanding of themselves, but it appears that most multiculturalists would be sorely disappointed were their efforts to have such a limited public effect as this.

That the equilibrium model has purged democracy of the moral element introduced into it by John Stuart Mill is impossible to disguise. To that extent, educators of all stripes are likely to respond adversely to it. Yet multiculturalists in particular have been accused--and not always without justification--of promoting the very "special interest" politics found at the core of this model. After all, multiculturalists eagerly point to the categories of pupil that are generally disadvantaged by the current educational system: the poor, ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, etc. Interestingly, in encouraging such political activism, multiculturalists employ to their advantage the market techniques characteristic of the equilibrium model: Just as in a market economy, one dollar is equal to every other dollar--meaning that one is "entitled" to whatever one has the dollars to purchase--in the market polity, one vote is equal to every other vote, and any group with enough votes to achieve its political objectives is "entitled" to that political victory. Nevertheless, as with the connection between multiculturalism and protective democracy, one finds in the multicultural literature only potential and implicit support for the equilibrium model.

Lastly, participatory democracy claims its adherents among educators as well. Perhaps the most thorough and eloquent argument on behalf of educating pupils for this

type of democracy was presented by Amy Gutmann in her book, Democratic Education (1987).[28] Multicultural educators weigh in on the side of citizen participation, too. They emphasize the "important role of citizens in ensuring and maintaining the privileges of democracy" (Nieto, 1992, p. 218); they strive to develop "an informed and active citizenry" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 219) that can "openly debate issues" (p. 223), "organize and work collectively with others" (p. 223), and "exercise power" (p. 223), one that is "capable of making reflective personal and public decisions" (Banks, 1991, p. 25). In fact, participatory democracy can reasonably be understood to encompass what multiculturalists mean by the phrase "true democracy" (Nieto, 1992, p. 21; Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 130), although admittedly this term suffers from the same ambiguity that surrounds all of the multiculturalists' references to democracy and that have been the focus of this review.

## Limitations of Participatory Democracy and of a Concern with Democratic Form

Given the growing attention devoted to both the political and the educational aspects of participatory democracy (see, e.g., Macpherson, 1977; Barber, 1984; Held, 1987; Gutmann, 1987), it deserves some further consideration here. Despite its popularity, participatory democracy has yet to be implemented in any extensive manner in Western societies. This has less to do with its attractiveness, which seems substantial, than with several serious problems complicating its implementation. First, the problem of size means that although widespread popular participation in governmental affairs may have been feasible in the Greek city-state or in local governments (whether or not they are run as a town meeting), it strikes one as impossible to expect a comparable degree of involvement by the thousands or millions at county, state, and national levels of government.[29] For this reason, various surrogate mechanisms for direct participation have long been in place in democratic societies. (The electoral college and representative legislative bodies are two

---

[28]Gutmann, however, prefers the term "deliberative democracy," although the essentials of the model appear the same as in the participatory model.

[29]Macpherson (1977, pp. 95–98) details the formidable difficulties that would remain were even massive technological resources marshaled to avail every citizen of access to direct-balloting machines.

handy examples from the United States.) Second, the problem of self-definition means that people accustomed to viewing themselves, even tacitly, as consumers of political goods who make their purchases in periodic elections must now begin to understand themselves as exerters and developers of their own capacities and adjust themselves to the demands of their new roles. And third, the inequalities of wealth and power that characterize any market system would have to be redressed if people are to feel they have a fair chance of influencing the outcome of political deliberations (Macpherson, 1977, pp. 98–101).

Several uncertainties derive from excessive attention to participatory democracy as the form which democratic processes should assume. M. B. E. Smith (1975) points out that, in the absence of a persuasive case that participation in political affairs is an inherent good, recommendations for democratic polities must consider not only the method by which decisions are made, but also the quality of the decisions rendered. He claims that there is no a priori reason to believe that greater participation leads to better and more efficient results; indeed, he asserts the opposite conclusion is more reasonable. In a related vein, the concern with form presupposes substantive interest among the citizenry in political affairs. But Judith Shklar (1991) argues that, at least in the United States, the right to vote is important for the standing it grants to citizens apart from any use they may make of that right. Multiculturalists should take these challenges to heart. Their desire to involve ("empower" is the favored term--see Sleeter, 1991) previously disfranchised or discouraged groups in political activity, both for the direct advancement of their interests and for the more indirect personal edification that accompanies such engagement, is commendable. A sense of democratic fairness requires nothing less. But their assumption that greater participation by greater numbers of citizens will have very specific, desirable, substantive results remains questionable. Multicultural educators' commitment to social justice represents this expectation more than any other, but it is unclear that placing trust in a merely formal procedure--even when it is democratic--can guarantee particular outcomes such as a just society.

# CHAPTER III:

# MULTICULTURALIST EDUCATORS' SINCERE COMMITMENT TO-- BUT FLAWED UNDERSTANDING OF--SOCIAL JUSTICE

Despite the varied and wide-ranging goals of multicultural education, the movement's commitment to preparing pupils for participation in a democratic society finds a central place in the literature. The specific form that democracy might assume--given the historical alternatives--remains to be clarified, as does the instructional program that would be most appropriate for promoting citizens' involvement in that form. Yet this focal commitment to democracy does not exhaust the multiculturalists' engagement with political (as opposed to cultural or economic) affairs. Except for the increasingly limited numbers of advocates for the human relations and single-group studies approaches to the field (e.g., Baker, 1983, 1994), multiculturalists expand their interest in democracy with an equal concern for social justice.

Social justice as a goal commensurate with democratic participation is a theme prevalent in the literature on multiculturalism. Banks (1994) wants pupils to learn "to participate in civic action to make society more equitable and just" (p. 1), in the process extending to all citizens "the democratic ideals...that the Founding Fathers intended for an elite few" (p. 6). Gollnick and Chinn (1990) assert this purpose in a pair of goal-statements: "to promote social justice and equality for all people" and "to promote equity in the distribution of power and income among groups" (p. 31). Sleeter and Grant (1994) hope their support of "education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist" will promote "a vision of social justice for all groups" (p. 210). Bennett (1995) elaborates on her belief in social justice as a means "to combat racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination" (p. 301), while Nieto (1992) straightforwardly asserts that "multicultural education is education for social justice" (p. 216). Few of the varied objectives of multicultural education command as many champions as does social justice.

Anyone who reads the cases these authors make on behalf of the goal of social justice would be hard pressed to question their passion or sincerity. Beyond that, one would find it quite a challenge to argue against the goal of justice per se and, seemingly, against appropriate measures to impress upon budding democrats in schools the overriding claims of justice upon a truly democratic society.[30] Just what those claims of justice might be, though, is difficult to say with any certainty--at least based upon the multicultural literature itself, for not one of the leading multicultural treatises surveyed in this study makes reference to any of the standard, accepted philosophical or political-theoretical analyses of justice. Instead, multiculturalists rely on plausible but unexplicated notions of justice, apparently assuming that commonsensical beliefs reflect an adequate understanding of the issues involved. Its popularity and satisfactions for day-to-day living notwithstanding, however, common sense often suffers from distortion and incompleteness (see, e.g., "Fragile Common Sense" in Regal, 1990, pp. 87–110). Hence, these dangers make common sense a questionable basis for educational policy on social justice. A systematic review of the demands of justice is therefore warranted.

Such a review need not result in a challenge to the principles advocated by multicultural educators. After all, those commitments have a prima facie validity: among others, to equal opportunity for all people and to an equitable distribution of power among all ethnic groups (Gollnick & Chinn, 1990, p. 31); to equal protection under the law and to the protection of basic liberties (Bennett, 1995, pp. 301–302); to the (fair[31]) distribution of power, status, and rewards (Nieto, 1992, p. 218); and to a society that better serves the interests of all groups of people, particularly those who have most been the victims of oppression and discrimination (e.g., people of color, the poor, women, gays and lesbians, people with disabilities) (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 210).

---

[30]The preoccupation of upper-elementary and middle-school pupils for fairness, be it in actions that affect them directly in school or in conditions in the wider society, suggests that people early on develop an intuitive sense of justice. However well or poorly articulated the "legal" case, "That isn't fair!" is a serious and impassioned accusation from these students.

[31]Implied by the context.

However, attention to the work of political theorists on justice can provide distinct benefits. Since justice is central to the field of political philosophy, one may expect to find thoughtful, systematic treatments of the topic and related issues. In the process, commonsensical notions can be put to the test to see if they withstand proper scrutiny. Assumptions may be made explicit, the structure of an argument may be made more prominent, and implications may be identified and traced from their origins through their consequences. Ultimately one may emerge from such a review with greater insight and understanding that should promote more effective and defensible work in connecting principles of justice to questions of pedagogy.

## Rawls's Theory of Justice

Since the publication of A Theory of Justice in 1971, John Rawls has been the preeminent philosopher of justice in the United States. That is to say that, although other theorists may disagree with the Kantian foundations of his argument or challenge the conclusions he draws--or fails to draw[32]--from those premises, no responsible political philosopher of justice can fail to take Rawls's treatment of the issue into account. The debate that has surrounded A Theory of Justice has been intense, leading Rawls to expand and clarify his positions in a newer work, Political Liberalism (1993). Here Rawls attempts to correct serious internal problems, clear up obscurities, rectify misleading assertions, and supply taken-for-granted, missing pieces of his argument in A Theory of Justice. In the process, he simultaneously responds to the myriad specific criticisms levied by his detractors. As a result, Political Liberalism stands as Rawls's more recent and more mature work and consequently will serve as the basis of the present analysis of multiculturalism.

### Cornerstones of Rawls's Theory

Rawls bases his theory of justice upon two notions that address, on the one hand, fundamental characteristics of persons and, on the other hand, unavoidable traits of the

[32]An example here is Amartya Sen's criticism that Rawls has too narrow a notion of freedom; see Sen, 1990.

societies in which those persons live. Regarding the people, citizens are held to be free and equal persons (Rawls, 1993, p. 19 & passim). By this is meant the following:

> The basic idea is that in virtue of their two moral powers (a capacity for a sense of justice and for a conception of the good) and the powers of reason (of judgment, thought, and inference connected with these powers), persons are free. Their having those powers to the requisite minimum degree to be fully cooperating members of society makes persons equal. (Rawls, 1993, p. 19)

The conception of equality here is a strictly political one, in that it concerns solely the "requisite minimum degree" of competence to participate fully in society. The conception of freedom emerges from equality's assumption that society rests upon a system of voluntary social cooperation. Therefore citizens must have a capacity for a sense of justice, in order to determine the fairness of that system, and a conception of the good, in order to determine ends toward which that cooperation is presupposed.

Regarding the society, Rawls assumes a democratic society,[33] and he acknowledges that the political culture of a democratic society is characterized by a plurality of "reasonable comprehensive religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines" (p. 36). Furthermore, this plurality is the necessary result of free citizens' exercising their two moral powers--particularly the one enabling them to formulate a conception of the good. Two conclusions can be drawn from the fact of this plurality of reasonable comprehensive doctrines: (1) The diversity of ideas of the good is a permanent feature of modern democracy, not just a temporary historical condition, and (2) from the opposite perspective, "a continuing shared understanding on one comprehensive religious, philosophical, or moral doctrine can be maintained only by the oppressive use of state power" (p. 37).[34] Rawls's theory, then, is a theory for modern, pluralistic democracies.

---

[33]This assumption is plausible enough, and Rawls rightly sees no need to defend it.

[34]The futility of trying to preserve a deteriorating, single, societal conception of the good--or to reinstate an already abandoned one--is widely understood to be best evidenced by the wars of religion in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. For a full review, see, e.g., Rawls, 1993, pp. xxii–xxvii, and Winks, Brinton, Christopher, & Wolff, 1988a, pp. 344–346, 351–354, & 360–365. These last passages treat the religious conflicts in the Dutch revolt, the French wars of religion, and the Thirty Years' War, respectively. Despite the toll that religious intolerance took in these events, however, the authors claim that "there emerged from

Given this assumption about society, the Rawlsian theory of justice--quite apart from its predominance in the field--has unmistakable commonalities with the literature on multicultural education. The writings on multiculturalism are rife with references to pluralistic, democratic societies in general or to the specific differences that constitute that pluralism (see, e.g., Banks, 1994, p. 1; Bennett, 1995, pp. ix–x & 100–151; Gollnick & Chinn, 1990, pp. 20–22; Nieto, 1992, p. 272, where she speaks of competing "cultures" instead of "comprehensive doctrines"; and Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 209–212, where they elaborate the differences at the root of oppression and structural social inequality, hence bases of injustice). In light of the patent compatibility between the concerns of multiculturalists and of theorists of justice, one can only find the multiculturalists sorely remiss in neglecting the political analyses of a topic they place at the center of their educational program.

The similarities are not exact, however, for Rawls carefully and explicitly differentiates between a political conception (in this case, of justice, although the distinction could be applied to other areas as well) and a comprehensive one. Indeed, Rawls (1993, p. xv) admits that confusion between the two kinds of conception lay at the heart of many misunderstandings of his original statement of the theory.[35] Although people rarely talk about comprehensive doctrines as such, they are quite familiar with them. By and large, the world makes sense to most people. It does so because over the course of their lives, they have--sometimes consciously, frequently unconsciously--ordered their perceptions, their experiences, and their knowledge in ways that form a largely coherent whole. Furthermore, they find themselves discomfited by new experiences or facts that do not fit neatly into the world view they have built. As a result, they may ignore the discrepant elements, they may deny their existence altogether, or they may mold--some would say distort--them into compatibility with their way of seeing things. Beyond whatever

---

the English Revolution (of Cromwell and the Interregnum, 1649–1660), even more clearly than from the religious wars on the Continent, the concept of religious toleration" (Winks et al., 1988a, p. 416).

[35]This led to a 1985 clarification in the essay "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical."

intellectual satisfaction this cohesive perspective might provide, it allows people to make sense of their existence, to regulate the world around them, and to make life more stable and predictable.

Rawls designates these outlooks "comprehensive doctrines" and inclines to assign them to one of three categories: religious, philosophical, and moral (Rawls, 1993, p. xvi), although, depending on the strictness with which one wishes to employ the labels, the taxonomy could be expanded to include political, economic, or social as well. In any event, these perspectives supply meaning and understanding to a wide range of issues central to human existence. That is precisely what makes them comprehensive doctrines. To the extent that these outlooks are reasonable, they provide unobjectionable, even satisfactory, guidance to an individual, allowing everyone to choose a notion of the good life, either commensurate with or, more commonly, implicit within that doctrine. The danger arises when a society--in practice, generally a politically powerful group therein--establishes one of the comprehensive conceptions of the good life as authoritative for the society at large, thereby prescribing one particular conception of the good life for everyone. This is something a pluralistic democracy dare not do if it desires to avoid the repression which would be needed in order to sustain the chosen vision over its competitors.

For this reason, Rawls insists upon grounding his theory of justice upon a political[36] conception, not a comprehensive one (Rawls, 1993, pp. 11–15). The two types of conception are not without commonalities. Quite the contrary, a political view should be compatible with any number of comprehensive views. However, Rawls (1993, pp. 11–15) sees clear distinctions between the two: First, a political conception concerns only the "basic structure" of society (Rawls, 1993, p. 11), that is, its main political, social, and

---

[36]The word "political" takes on one of three meanings in this discussion. Here, when contrasted with "comprehensive" or "metaphysical," it designates those elements (of justice) that are common to--and logically prior to--more elaborate and specific notions of the good life. When contrasted with "social" or "economic," it refers to those activities by which a group of people establish the principles that allow them to lead a public common life. In other instances, the term may be employed derogatorily to connote the self-interested actions people employ within the political arena (e.g., "That's just politics!"). In the present work, the intended meaning will be stated explicitly whenever it cannot be readily discerned from the context.

economic institutions and how they fit together. Comprehensive views, in comparison, range more widely over these and additional fields of human endeavor. Second, a political conception is a "freestanding" view (Rawls, 1993, pp. 12–13). This means that it is neither equal to nor derived from any single comprehensive view or collection of several such views, although it will be compatible with many comprehensive doctrines and may have elements in common with them.[37] Third, a political conception expresses its content "in terms of certain fundamental ideas seen as implicit in the public political culture of a democratic society" (Rawls, 1993, p. 13), namely, the political institutions, the public traditions of their interpretation, and foundational texts and documents.

The Rawlsian vision of justice that has been grounded here consists of several parts: an assumption that society is democratic and pluralistic;[38] an assumption that citizens in such a society are free and equal--free in that they may exercise their capacities for a sense of justice and for a conception of the good life, and equal in that they all can cooperate in society to a minimum degree; and a warning that whatever conception of justice is ultimately adopted, it may not arise from the wholesale appropriation of an existing comprehensive view's notion of justice. The question remains of how one is to determine a just structure and basic principles. To accomplish this, Rawls employs a representational device called the "original position," a hypothetical assemblage in which the participants determine the circumstances of fair cooperation among free and equal citizens.

The Original Position and Primary Goods

Any existing society that seeks to determine what is just is confronted with a difficult problem: How is it possible for human beings to determine the truly just and remain confident that the resulting conclusion has not been contaminated by the self-interest

---

[37]Rawls credits to an "overlapping consensus" (1993, pp. 15, 39–40) the possibility of formulating an acceptable notion of justice with elements common to multiple comprehensive views, but developed independently, not extracted from them.

[38]Rawls emphasizes the fact of reasonable pluralism, a concern not crucial to the analysis at this point. For a contrast of the "reasonable" with the "unreasonable," see Rawls, 1993, pp. 63–66, with the "true," see Rawls, 1993, pp. 126–129.

of the deliberators? In all but hypothetical or utopian societies, people are interested beings. That is simply to say that they have certain conceptions of the good life, certain goals they wish to pursue in the face of limited resources of time, money, energy, and so on, and certain notions of the means that will best enable them to accomplish their objectives. Consequently, any effort by those same human beings to establish fair bases of social cooperation will run the risk of subversion by self-interest disguised as impartial judgment.[39] Rawls's contrivance of the original position, along with the use of a veil of ignorance, is intended to forestall such a corruption of justice.

The goal of the original position is to remove the influence of self-interest on the setting up of basic principles of justice and a just basic structure of society, both of which must regard citizens as free and equal members of society. Treating those citizens equally means not favoring one or some reasonable conceptions of the good life over others. Yet deliberations about what is just can be undertaken only by interested human beings; there simply is no one else to do the job. Since people cannot divest themselves at will of their beliefs, commitments, and conceptions of the good life, a clean slate--a status devoid of these interests--is neither a historical nor a possible condition. To compensate for this, Rawls posits the original position (pp. 22–28), a device of representation,[40] as the

---

[39]For an extensive treatment of the ways in which progressives and other social reformers have been blind to the infiltration of self-interest into the most seemingly altruistic efforts, see Niebuhr (1944). This difficulty arises not solely because of outright duplicity or even lack of diligence on the part of the negotiators, but often because people come to take their ways of life, with all their accompanying assumptions and expectations, for granted and hence genuinely are unable to recognize the self-interest in their ostensibly objective assessments. The work of Peggy McIntosh provides a good example of the ways in which "white privilege" in a racially fragmented society such as that in the U.S. is viewed as part of the taken-for-granted, unexamined order of things. Her monograph White Privilege and Male Privilege (1988) draws parallels between the tacit privileges men enjoy and those that white people enjoy. That is, while both groups may concede that the "other" (women and people of color, respectively) has been disadvantaged, they are reluctant to acknowledge that this disadvantage implies certain privileges for their own group, let alone to renounce those advantages in the service of justice. In "The Impracticality of Impartiality," Marilyn Friedman (1989) advocates the intentional inclusion of people of varied backgrounds in deliberative processes (such as represented by the original position, for example) in the belief that the conflicts among different notions of a "natural, unbiased order of things" will make the self-interest embedded in supposedly impartial positions more evident.

[40]Confusion arose among readers of A Theory of Justice that Rawls held the original position to be a historical reality (in a social-contract theory of government) or a present possibility. He therefore takes great pains in Political Liberalism to establish the hypothetical nature of the original position (see Rawls, 1993, pp. 24 & 271–273).

arrangement through which the basic structure of a just society is designed. The participants in this procedure are obligated to ensure the most just set of societal circumstances for all members of that society. Accordingly, they are representatives of the widest range of human contingency.

Ignoring one's particular commitments can be accomplished only with the greatest difficulty even under the best of circumstances. For this reason, Rawls supplements the original position with the veil of ignorance. This veil must be lowered, figuratively speaking, for deliberations to proceed. The veil prevents the representatives in the original position from knowing their particular circumstances in life, from knowing anything about themselves that would influence their selection of a comprehensive doctrine (i.e., a conception of the good life): their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, physical condition, sexual orientation, residence, occupation, socioeconomic status, and so on.[41] Because any of the representatives could hypothetically have ended up in any of these circumstances and because the representatives are charged with formulating a just basic structure of society for all its members, they must disregard the identifying features enumerated above and concentrate on the aspects that ensure justice free from self-interest. This consequence can be stated straightforwardly: Just because someone occupies a certain socioeconomic position or has adopted a particular comprehensive doctrine does not mean that that person can reasonably expect other (free and equal) citizens to approve principles of justice that would favor persons in that position or of that belief. A political conception of justice precludes such favoritism; it dare not privilege some social positions or conceptions of the good life over others. This is the objective the veil of ignorance in the original position strives to promote (Rawls, 1993, pp. 24–25).

The conditions under which deliberations will proceed have been established, but the point of these negotiations is left unclear. On the most fundamental level, the end

---

[41]These conditions of ignorance obtain only during the deliberations in the original position in order that the basic principles of justice and the basic structure of society not be contaminated by self-interest. This ignorance does not apply to actual lives led in the society.

toward which the participants in the original position are working is the fair terms of social cooperation for free and equal citizens (Rawls, 1993, p. 23). Here the distinction between everyday negotiations and those within the original position must be stressed. The common variety of agreement between persons or groups takes place in a given social context--one in which, to a greater or lesser degree, participants can take inequalities of status, wealth, role, etc., into account, although they may not always be able to overcome them. (On the contrary, the better-placed negotiator prefers that the other parties to the deal not be able to overcome the imbalance.) The parties in the original agreement, however, seek to determine the "background institutions of the basic structure" of society (Rawls, 1993, p. 23) and hence must avoid the inequalities that arise from interactions in any society functioning over the long term:

> The reason the original position must abstract from and not be affected by the contingencies of the social world is that the conditions for a fair agreement on the principles of political justice between free and equal persons must eliminate the bargaining advantages that inevitably arise within the background institutions of any society from cumulative social, historical, and natural tendencies. These contingent advantages and accidental influences from the past should not affect an agreement on the principles that are to regulate the institutions of the basic structure itself from the present into the future. (Rawls, 1993, p. 23)

This summary reveals why Rawls has preferred to characterize his conception of justice with the phrase "justice as fairness" (Rawls, 1993, p. 23).

Parties to the original position concern themselves with the basic structure of social cooperation not only because that structure is fundamental to all other purposes but also because they are forbidden to promote any particular conception of the good life. (The veil of ignorance is designed to prevent this latter type of undertaking.) The concomitant danger, however, is that deliberations on principles of justice will occur at such an abstract level that they ultimately prove to have little relevance to people living in the midst of particular, albeit varied, commitments. Rawls introduces the notion of primary goods (p. 75) in order to mitigate this concern. Primary goods are defined as those items necessary

for the realization of any conception of the good life. Among these primary goods are the following: basic rights and liberties, freedom of movement and occupation, fair equality of opportunity, income and wealth, and the social bases of self-respect (Rawls, 1993, p. 76). To the extent that the basic structure devised in the original position secures these primary goods for the citizenry, it is compatible with the constraints and expectations of political justice.

Rawls's Principles of Justice

The outcome of the deliberations in the original position must meet two requirements. First, it must establish both the basic principles of justice and a just basic structure for society. Second, it must continue to regard citizens as free and equal persons capable of participating in cooperative society on at least a minimal level. These conditions may not appear overly restrictive, but they wrestle with the tension between liberty and equality that has historically plagued liberal societies. Rawls proposes two fundamental principles of justice commensurate with these expectations:

> a. Each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme for all; and in this scheme the equal political liberties, and only those liberties, are to be guaranteed their fair value.
> b. Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: first, they are to be attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society. (Rawls, 1993, pp. 5–6)

The first of these, sometimes known as the "maximum liberty" principle, seeks to guarantee citizens' liberties. The second, known as the "difference" principle, addresses the conditions under which inequalities among citizens are to be allowed. These are to be permitted only when the inequality is to the benefit of the least advantaged (for example, by ensuring better education for everyone by raising teachers' salaries). Controls such as those implied by the difference principle are not instituted merely out of a desire to "level" society, but out of the recognition that

> below a certain level of material and social well-being, and of training and education, people simply cannot take part in society as citizens, much less equal citizens. (Rawls, 1993, p. 166)

No society can regard itself as just if it does not provide for at least a minimal basis of participation in society by all of its members.

## Implications of Rawls's Theory

The effort thus far has centered on establishing the basic elements of Rawls's theory of justice. Little attention has been directed to the connections between the theory and the multiculturalists' advocacy for social justice, especially its implications for education. The two do have points in common, however, and the consequences for multicultural education of taking Rawls's theory seriously could be grave indeed. Kenneth Strike, a philosopher of education, has attempted to bridge this gap between political and educational theory, using at times an explicitly Rawlsian approach, at other times an implicit one (see Strike, 1982). Out of the breadth of Rawls's and Strike's discussions, three issues appear most relevant and of the greatest significance: the centrality of rationality, the question of whether cultural identity is a primary good, and the distinction between public and private goals of schooling.

### The Centrality of Rationality

Common sense suggests that rational and reasonable people would seek justice in their private lives and in the society at large. Yet given the admitted potential shortcomings of common sense, it is advisable to begin with a formal definition of rationality as it relates to persons before delving too quickly into debates about justice itself:

> Rational persons are those whose beliefs are well ordered and are based on available evidence and who are able and willing to alter their beliefs when available evidence warrants. (Strike, 1982, p. 19)

Strike here is concerned with the bases of belief, especially that belief be based on solid evidence and that it be modified as the evidence for or against that belief changes. Rawls also views the rational as pertaining to individuals and their processes of thought:

> The rational...applies to a single, unified agent (either an individual or corporate person) with the powers of judgment and deliberation in seeking ends and interests peculiarly its own[,]...to how these ends and interests are adapted and affirmed,...to how they are given priority[,]...[and] to the choice of means. (Rawls, 1993, p. 50)

If one views judgment as a specific type of belief and deliberation as a weighing of reasons and evidence, the similarity of Rawls's understanding[42] of rationality to Strike's is even more evident. Strike, the educator, situates rationality at the center of the educational enterprise: Schools should teach pupils that they need to have solid reasons for what they believe; that, in essence, beliefs based on less than solid reasons--or on no reason at all--are held irresponsibly; and that as the evidence and understanding that undergird those beliefs change, so must the beliefs themselves. Rawls, the philosopher, regards rationality--or "rational autonomy" (Rawls, 1993, pp. 72–77)--as a prerequisite for individuals' exercising their fundamental moral powers, particularly that of choosing or defining a conception of the good. In both cases, human beings are held to be rational agents.

Rawls, though, insists upon the need to complement rationality with reasonableness, since for Rawls rationality is a trait of the individual acting alone, whereas the reasonable characterizes individuals' interactions with others.[43] To this degree, "the reasonable is public in a way the rational is not" (Rawls, 1993, p. 53).[44] A conception of justice whose fundamental principles are established through the deliberations of individuals in the original position and that views justice largely as a means of establishing fair bases of social cooperation can ill afford to rely upon the individuality and privacy of rationality alone. What matters most in this context is that all parties to the negotiations be able to accept the terms of cooperation, even if those terms are not true or rational in the

---

[42]Rawls's statement is less of a formal definition of rationality than a description of its employment.

[43]Rawls's emphasis upon public discourse resonates strongly with Dewey's assertion that democracy is "the idea of community life itself" (Dewey, 1916/1980, p. 93) and simultaneously confirms Dewey's belief in reasonableness.

[44]For an extensive treatment of the distinction between the reasonable and the rational, see Rawls, 1993, pp. 48–54.

strict sense. Rawls summarizes the complementarity of the reasonable and the rational as follows:

> Merely reasonable agents would have no ends of their own they wanted to advance by fair cooperation; merely rational agents lack a sense of justice and fail to recognize the independent validity of the claims of others. (Rawls, 1993, p. 52)

Since both elements are present in any genuine social setting, a conception of justice must incorporate both and define their relation to each other, as Rawls has done.

Rawls and Strike present persuasive cases for locating rationality and reasonableness squarely within the domain of education for social justice. Given the strength of this case and the primacy of social justice among the goals of multicultural education, one would expect rationality and reasonableness to be central to multicultural education.[45] Granted, the absence of something is more difficult to document than its presence. The presumably missing idea could be found on pages other than those cited as evidence of its absence, or the idea could be more subtle than that normally found in traditional citations. Nevertheless, rationality[46] is not explicitly treated in any of the multicultural monographs under consideration in this study. It is mentioned in a passage cited by Sleeter and Grant (see Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 210), and there is no evidence to suspect that multiculturalists oppose rationality as a goal of (multicultural) education. Yet Rawls's and Strike's arguments argue for something more decisive than a tacit assumption of rationality as a goal of (multicultural) education.

Identity as a Primary Good

Whether or not they use the term explicitly, multicultural educators are concerned with the notion of identity, by which is meant the cultural attachments (of race, gender,

---

[45]This should be the case regardless of whether Rawls and Strike are the actual sources of the ideas as found in the works on multicultural education.

[46]In this and subsequent contexts, and unless clearly indicated otherwise, "rationality" should be understood to mean "rationality and reasonableness."

ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so on)[47] that situate a life in the social world and give meaning and perspective to that life. The frequent references to diversity--understood as a multiplicity of cultural identities--and to cultural pluralism are part and parcel of this commitment. Sleeter and Grant (1994, p. 211) set the promotion of cultural pluralism as a goal of multicultural education;[48] Gollnick and Chinn (1990, p. 31) want to promote cultural diversity and alternative life choices for people; Bennett (1995, p. 301) strives to strengthen cultural consciousness; and Banks (1994, pp. 40–42) devotes several pages to a discussion of racial identity. Nieto (1992) goes so far as to emphasize this concern in the title of her book: Affirming Diversity. The variations in which this interest in identity is expressed in discussions of multicultural education--not just as an interesting issue but ultimately as a formal commitment of these educational programs--demonstrate its assumed significance in the field.

However well this celebration and promotion of diverse cultural identities may resonate with educators' empathic attachments to their pupils, the connection of this dedication to identity to a presumably equally fervent dedication to social justice is ambiguous. After all, principles of justice, according to Rawls, are established by negotiators operating behind a veil of ignorance--a device introduced for the explicit purpose of masking the very cultural understandings and commitments that multiculturalists now wish not only to identify but to expand and to honor. An unsettling contradiction lurks in this stance. The rationale for the veil of ignorance appears unexceptionable: Why would it be reasonable for someone in a particular social position or some adherent of a certain comprehensive doctrine to propose, and to expect others to accept, principles of justice that favor that position or doctrine? (And if the proposed principles of justice don't favor that position or doctrine, there is little cause for raising the issue, for people would

---

[47]Of primary importance here is not whether the stated characteristics constitute identity in any conceptually rigorous way but that multiculturalists generally list these features when they speak of cultural identity.

[48]This is the case even for their social-reconstructionist vision of multicultural education; it is more evident in other forms of multicultural education that they identify--for example, single-group studies (pp. 123–126) and non-social-reconstructionist multicultural education (pp. 167–169).

not consistently propose to disadvantage themselves, and neutral principles by definition mean the position or doctrine plays no relevant role in the matter.)

The most persuasive resolution of this puzzle, at least initially, coincides with that posited by Amy Gutmann. The participants in the original position are charged not only with formulating a set of abstract principles of justice upon which the basic structure of society will be founded but also with specifying a collection of primary goods whose presence or accessibility will offer more concrete guidance in testing the validity of those abstract principles. Gutmann (1992/1994, pp. 4–5) speculates whether a "secure cultural context" is needed "to give meaning and guidance to [people's] choices in life" (p. 5). If so, she suggests, then that context is a primary good and entitled to recognition and promotion by a society that understands itself as adhering to basic principles of justice. Her speculation implies a positive reaction to the proposal, but she fails to offer any analysis of the issue or a persuasive rationale for this position.

For this and additional reasons, therefore, one dare not too hastily expand the category of primary goods to include cultural identity among its members. A brief summary of three objections will sufficiently attest to the problem. First, the emphasis on cultural identity does not accord with the understanding of primary goods that Rawls presents in Political Liberalism. Of the five primary goods listed there (viz., basic rights and liberties, freedom of movement and free choice of occupation, powers and prerogatives of offices and positions of responsibility, income and wealth, and the social bases of self-respect), only "the social bases of self-respect" possesses any prima facie connection to cultural identity. Yet a close reading of Rawls's limited elaborations of this primary good leads one to question its coincidence with identity as promoted by multiculturalists. At two points Rawls addresses the social bases of self-respect as something more than just an element in a basic list of primary goods. In one, he defines it in the negative: Failure of citizens to care about their basic liberties and opportunities (also primary goods) betrays their lack of self-respect (Rawls, 1993, pp. 76–77). A reasonable conclusion, therefore, is

that self-respect leads citizens to regard themselves as free and equal political beings by expressing concern about their basic rights, liberties, and opportunities. This is a political conception of self-respect, not cultural or social in the way that multiculturalists are wont to view it (and even then their positions lack an explicit theoretical basis). Rawls maintains this political view in the second commentary on this primary good:

> Not only are [citizens] normal and fully cooperating members of society, but they further want to be, and to be recognized as, such members. This supports their self-respect as citizens. So does counting certain primary goods, such as the equal basic rights and liberties, the fair value of the political liberties and fair equality of opportunity, as social bases of self-respect. (Rawls, 1993, pp. 81–82)

Equating the multiculturalists' broad view of identity with Rawls's political understanding of the bases of self-respect appears unwarranted.[49]

Second, multiculturalists' fondness for, and even idolization of, cultural identity ignores the noteworthy, troubling, and unfortunately none-too-rare instances in which elements of a group's identity violate basic and cherished principles of justice.[50] A prominent illustration of this incompatibility is, on the one hand, the tension between certain religious or cultural views of women and their place and role in society and, on the other hand, the principle of justice that ensures women equal rights, liberties, and opportunities. Conceding final authority to some idealized and, in the absence of specific cases, often vague notion of culture is to concede too much. Furthermore, this problem arises in a different guise when one must confront the non-essentialist nature of culture and identity, as evidenced by individuals who choose to deviate from or abandon aspects of their presumed cultural heritage. There seems to be no more justification for forcing people within a culture to assume a certain identity than for forcing outsiders to that culture to

---

[49]This political conception of self-respect marks a modification of the position Rawls took in A Theory of Justice, in which he adopted a wider-ranging, more psychological view of self-respect (see Rawls, 1971, pp. 440–446). For reasons he elaborates in the introduction to Political Liberalism, Rawls now takes great pains to distinguish the underlying political conception from comprehensive conceptions of the good (see Rawls, 1993, pp. xiii–xxxiv).

[50]Despite her willingness to entertain the possibility that a secure cultural context belongs in the category of primary goods, Gutmann does recognize this serious danger inherent in lauding identity indiscriminately (see Gutmann, 1992/1994, p. 5).

accept unjust elements found therein. The multicultural literature is strangely and disturbingly silent on this point, given its urgency in any program that elevates culture and identity to such noble status.

Third, the types of identity at issue in this context are more limited than the touted embrace of diversity by multiculturalists would lead one to expect. The literature is replete with references to identity arising from aspects of life based on race, ethnicity, (lower) class, or gender, regardless of the content, but elements of identity attributed to affinities of (upper) class, religion, or political belief, for example, are rarely granted a comparable legitimacy--at least not without more intense scrutiny than the former set of affiliations receives. An extreme example will dramatize this difference: A poor, Haitian gay man is regarded as possessing not merely a different cultural identity from that of a rich, Episcopalian woman, but a more genuine one. In fact, a survey of major multicultural works reveals that, despite rhetorical insistence, culture and identity per se are not the issue, but rather those cultural traits that have historically formed the basis for discrimination and injustice.

Multiculturalists can hardly be faulted for their sense of duty to the economically disadvantaged and socially disfranchised; however, they can be criticized for not discussing this commitment more explicitly and more thoroughly in their basic works. If injustice is the crux of the matter here, then it should be declared openly and not disguised or even diluted by a canonization of culture, identity, or diversity in the abstract (when, as described above, not all cultures, identities, or differences are equal in multicultural doctrine). Such a clarification--or, in some instances, redirection--of emphasis would offer several benefits: it would remove some of the confusion and resulting compromised effort within the multicultural-educational community; it would avoid the dilemma of sanctifying aspects of culture that Rawls's original position might decree unjust (at the least, it would imply the need for serious reflection on whether there are limits to the kinds of diversity deemed worthy of acceptance and promulgation); it would remove a frequent basis of

criticism from opponents of multicultural education, namely, that multiculturalism is curiously ignorant of and uninterested in "the real cultural richness of the world" (Bernstein, 1994, p. 6; see also Coughlin, 1992); and it would force multiculturalists to dedicate themselves to formulating or adopting a defensible theory of justice.

The Public Goals of Public Schooling

A third implication of Rawls's theory is in many respects the overarching category for which the preceding two implications serve as examples, but all three are serious enough issues to be treated as independent entities. This final question addresses the legitimate curricular jurisdiction of public schools. Anyone familiar with public schools knows that over the years there has been an accretion of the subjects and topics that schools are charged with teaching to pupils. Every new social problem or popular concern finds its way into the curriculum, from AIDS awareness to computer literacy to cultural pride. Nor need one rely solely on impressionistic or anecdotal evidence, for various observers and commentators have documented this phenomenon (see, e.g., Goodlad, 1984, esp. chap. 2; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985, esp. chap. 1; and Sedlak, Wheeler, Pullin, & Cusick, 1986, esp. chap. 3). Unfortunately, the systematic thought that has been devoted to elaborating the proper purposes of public schooling and compatible curricula gets lost in the more crudely political considerations that often prevail in these debates.

Rawls's theory of justice implies certain limitations on the proper domain of the school's curriculum. As public agencies, public schools would ostensibly be precluded from promoting any specific conception of the good life, for that would place the imprimatur of the state on one comprehensive doctrine while withholding it from other, presumably equally reasonable, doctrines. Therefore, public schools need to dedicate themselves to establishing the foundations for a society based on principles of cooperation among free and equal citizens. The schools would be to education much as the original position and the overlapping consensus are to political justice, concentrating on the educational equivalent of primary goods. Strike (1982, esp. pp. 91–101) concurs with this

distinction and makes these consequences for public schools much more explicit than does Rawls. "In educational contexts the public/private distinction must be applied to the propagation of values and beliefs," he asserts (Strike, 1982, p. 94), and he proceeds to delineate just what the public role entails: promoting the conditions for fair competition, promoting goods with significant neighborhood effects, preventing harm to others, promoting universal instrumentalities, and promoting transcultural rational enterprises (pp. 97–98). Neither philosopher sanctions the schools' promotion of particular conceptions of the good, seeing this a function of the private domain instead.

To this point the analysis has concentrated on two central elements of multicultural education--its appropriateness for a pluralistic democratic society and its furtherance of social justice. More specifically, the analysis has mined the literature in political philosophy for insights on democracy and social justice lacking in virtually every major treatise on multicultural education. Not only does the claim seem to be substantiated that multiculturalists' frequent and often fervent references to democracy and social justice amount to little more than ritual incantation, but a proper respect for political theory also reveals serious problematic assumptions within the multicultural position, for example, the multiculturalists' failure to distinguish among forms of liberal democracy (some of which seem rather incompatible with the multiculturalists' goals) and the prominent emphasis on cultural identity (which certainly exceeds and may even compromise the commitment to social justice). The task remains, then, to specify the fundamental components essential to the construction of a democratic and just theory of multicultural education.

# CHAPTER IV:

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The preceding review of political theories about democracy and social justice in conjunction with a survey of the multicultural literature on these topics has accomplished its twofold objective. On the one hand, it has demonstrated the sobering complexity of these political concepts and the impressive richness of the philosophical work that has been carried out in trying to make these notions both intelligible and practicable. On the other hand, it has documented the unfortunate absence of these insights in the vast writings on multicultural education, despite the field's express commitment to these ideals. This void cannot be ascribed to insufficient dedication on the part of multiculturalism's proponents. On the contrary, without exception their works affirm a sincere and passionate belief that educators could advance these noble causes if only they were to become more aware of the ways that schools unwittingly erect obstacles that frustrate, if not outright prevent, the realization of democratic and just ends. However, the literature sorely lacks a comprehensive treatment of the substance and implications of these goals. Instead, one finds references to these ideals that amount to little more than shibboleths.

The conviction that multicultural education should command public support because "it's the right thing to do"[51] exudes an attractive simplicity. People like to believe not only that they can recognize unfairness when confronted with it, but also that they will act to rectify those unjust situations. As persons raised and living in what frequently is dubbed the world's greatest democracy, Americans also believe that they understand the demands of democratic polities and know how to fulfill their civic responsibilities accordingly, even if they sometimes lack the motivation to act on that understanding. Were the functioning of

[51]None of the multiculturalists words this quite so blatantly, although the attitude pervades their work. Nieto comes closest with her assertion that "in the final analysis, multicultural education as defined here is simply good pedagogy" (Nieto, 1992, p. 222).

democratic polities and the demands of justice so straightforward and agreeable, one would be forced to question how the current unsatisfactory arrangements arose.[52] As the previous chapters have shown, the phenomena of democracy and justice admit of complexities and stringencies that exact a heavy price: careful thought, thorough understanding, consistent action, and--perhaps most severe of all--occasional self-sacrifice. This hardly resembles the concerned but largely optimistic picture that multiculturalists tend to paint.

One senses the need to account for this discrepancy. Two explanations are readily available. The first is that the multiculturalists are fully aware of the requirements of democracy and social justice and, concomitantly, of their potentially controversial aspects. Deeming the chances of success rather slight were they candidly to profess their intentions, they dilute the message to make it more palatable to a complacent public.[53] The second is that the multiculturalists are indeed largely unfamiliar with the rigorous treatments of these topics that occupy such a prominent place in political theory. As a result they do not so much neglect these intricacies as proclaim the simple, even naive, understanding they do possess. Both factors likely have played a role in bringing about the present situation. It seems much safer to talk about diversity and cultural identity than to insist upon just institutions and actions.[54] Moreover, multiculturalists are perhaps as prone as the general citizenry to take democracy and fairness at face value. But the preceding discussions about democracy and justice attest to the fallacies in these assumptions, and educators in particular (an occupation which most multiculturalists pursue) should find them troubling.

---

[52]Although this dissatisfaction may not be shared by the public at large, or at least not by certain segments of it, multiculturalists uniformly believe that American society is neither as democratic nor as just as it could and should be.

[53]Some critics of multicultural education and its alternative manifestations (e.g., Bloom, 1987; D'Souza, 1991) adopt this conspiratorial view.

[54]This is not always the case, as, for example, the supporters of New York State's "rainbow curriculum" learned to their chagrin (see Cornbleth & Waugh, 1993).

## Theory to the Rescue?

When confronted with ambiguities, contradictions, and fallacies, scholars routinely look to theory for guidance. Nor is such a reaction necessarily unreasonable. Theory can be understood as an explanation of a practice (Barrow, 1984, p. 16), and since politics--to which field of action both democracy and justice belong--and education are both practices, one can sensibly hope for assistance from its realm. After all, the sophisticated and cogent interpretations of democracy and justice traced earlier are themselves the product of theoretical reflection. This is not to deny that theory also has a dubious reputation, best evinced by the contrast between theory and practice, by the assumption that theory is divorced from practice, and by the propensity of practitioners of various stripes to dismiss involved, initially implausible, or even merely unwanted recommendations with the retort, "Well, that's just theory." Nevertheless, as a means of arriving at an explanation of a practice and possibly at guidelines for that practice, theory--or at least theorizing--should hold some promise for multicultural educators.

This equivocation in the advantages of theory itself (as opposed to the process through which it is formulated) is borne out by the history of curriculum theory[55] in the United States. It is generally agreed that curriculum deals at a minimum with the questions of what should be taught, why it should be taught, and how it should be taught, and that all other pedagogical considerations depend upon the answers to these questions. Nor would many doubt that curriculum theorists, such as John Dewey, Franklin Bobbitt, Harold Rugg, and Jerome Bruner,[56] have exerted no small influence on academic programs during the past century. All this effort, productivity, and influence notwithstanding, there has emerged an essential division of opinion within the field, with neither side particularly

---

[55]There is no reason to believe that any valuable distinction is to be drawn between "curriculum" theory and "educational" theory--in any event, not in the present context--and therefore the two terms will be used interchangeably.

[56]This list is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive, because even a brief treatment of the history of curriculum development in the United States is beyond the scope of this study. Herbert Kliebard (1986) offers a helpful and comprehensive introduction to the topic. It should also be noted that these educators may not have regarded themselves as "curriculum theorists" (see Walker, 1982, p. 62).

sanguine about the status of curriculum theory. The more extreme perspective holds that, as of the late 20th century, there does not yet exist a genuine curriculum theory:

> The field has been active, and it has been extraordinarily productive. Its adherents have worried a lot about the role of theory. But I don't believe we have really produced one. (Vallance, 1982, p. 5)

> Research, categorization, and conceptual work is important, but we have not synthesized it into theories. (McCutcheon, 1982, p. 22)

> One of the surest ways to kill a conversation on the subject of curriculum theory is to ask someone to name one. (Kliebard, 1982, p. 11)

The more moderate view acknowledges that some things may pass for theory in the field, but the lack of a consensus about what a curriculum theory should be means that any claim to having produced a definitive curriculum theory will face certain and usually severe challenges:[57]

> The field, unlike philosophy of education for instance, did not originate as an extension or application of an extant discipline. As a result, curriculum developed no universally-accepted method of working, no consensus regarding the boundaries of its interests. (Pinar & Grumet, 1982, p. 50)

> As I reflected..., [i]t began to dawn on me how pervasive was contention on the subject of curriculum theory. (Walker, 1982, p. 62)

Not surprisingly, what all agree on is that the activity of theorizing is a worthwhile undertaking. Whatever the quality or status of the final products, the process of doing theory contributes to education in valuable ways: it edifies the good (van Manen, 1982); it identifies and describes the set of educational phenomena, searching out relationships among them and among the relationships themselves (Beauchamp, 1982, p. 24); it forces a close look at practice, an analysis of real situations (Vallance, 1982, p. 9); it necessitates a respect for language and the careful use of terms (Barrow, 1984, pp. 19–21); and it challenges the taken-for-grantedness that so often plagues those deeply involved in a

---

[57]Despite the implications of the passage quoted above, Kliebard's discussion of "theories" in his article suggests that he actually belongs to this second camp.

practice, leading to a more contemplative, reflective stance vis-à-vis action (Pinar & Grumet, 1982, p. 54). These benefits are of no small moment. They support the decision in this study to forgo efforts to proffer a full-fledged theory and instead direct attention to the more promising individual outcomes of the enterprise of theorizing.

Even those inclined to pursue a theory as a final product should be properly forewarned: The present study represents a scholarly endeavor to understand the defensible connections between certain aspects of political theory and multicultural education. Yet Joseph Schwab, himself a leading contemporary curriculist and disciplinary scholar, insists that

> scholars, as such, are incompetent to translate scholarly material into curriculum. They possess one body of disciplines indispensable to the task [namely, knowledge of subject matter]. They lack four others, equally indispensable [namely, knowledge of pupils, of teachers, of the learning milieu, and of curriculum-making, i.e., of how profitably to bring the other four areas together]. (Schwab, 1978, p. 365)

A final caveat is in order: One must be cognizant of the limits of theory, of what theory can and cannot accomplish. A single theory--especially one that pertains to social affairs and not to the physical world--is unlikely to account for all aspects of a given phenomenon. Nor is a theory, despite its furtherance of understanding and its possible implications for practice, capable of effecting reforms. In short, theory is no agent. Sen's (1990) criticism of Rawls's theory of justice--most notably of Rawls's reliance upon the index of primary goods as a means of securing access to participation in cooperative society and a basic degree of justice--exemplifies this shortcoming. Sen raises the reasonable objection that freedom is determined not merely by possession of a proper quantity of primary goods but by the commensurate ability to use them on behalf of one's interests. He summarizes this criticism in this way:

> Since the conversion of these primary goods and resources into freedom to select a particular life and to achieve may vary from person to person, equality in holdings of primary goods or resources can go hand in hand with serious

> inequalities in actual freedoms enjoyed by different persons. (Sen, 1990, p. 115)

In other words, persons can have adequate supplies of the primary goods (e.g., rights and liberties, wealth, freedom of movement and occupation) , but if they do not have the ability to further their interests (e.g., they are severely disabled), their freedom is as circumscribed as if they lacked the primary goods themselves.

The intention here is not to minimize the real difficulties that Sen raises, for to be unable fully to exercise one's ostensible freedom is to be at no small disadvantage. But two factors suggest that Sen's criticism is misplaced. The first factor seems to be his disregard for the original position, whose sole purpose is to guarantee the "free and equal" condition of citizenship by attempting to endow citizens with an equal footing, unencumbered by knowledge of the special, potentially compromising or disadvantageous, circumstances in which they might find themselves. For example, since none of the parties to the original position can assume that they will not be one of the disabled in actual society, they will be motivated to ensure that the disabled are not systematically disadvantaged in the resulting principles of justice. The second factor pertains more directly to the present point: Rawls's theory, including its assigning such prominence to the primary goods, elaborates on what the principles of justice are and how they are determined. It cannot guarantee that they will be put into practice. If Sen is correct that the original position, combined with a fair distribution of the primary goods, does not guarantee equal freedom to all citizens, then the conclusion is not necessarily that the theory is flawed. The theory would imply in such instances either that justice has not been served--and in this case, Rawls relies on legislative and judicial mechanisms as means of redress (see Rawls, 1993, pp. 338–339)--or that people have chosen versions of the good life that do not require equal outcomes, given equal potentials.[58] But the theory qua theory

---

[58]Sen seems not to allow for this second possibility:

> A person may have the same capability as another person, but nevertheless choose a different bundle of functionings in line with his or her particular goals. Furthermore, two persons with the same actual capabilities and even the same goals may end up with different

can only define and explain the requirements of justice; it cannot guarantee that justice will be served.

The task ahead may therefore be defined as one of theorizing, not constructing a complete theory. It would accordingly hope to accomplish some of the aforementioned objectives of theorizing: to clarify concepts and terms (Barrow, 1984, p. 19), to trace relationships among ideas and phenomena (Beauchamp, 1982, p. 24), to identify some of the central aspects of the phenomenon in question (Vallance, 1982, p. 5), to attenuate the clamor for action and practical guidance so contemplation can claim its place (Pinar & Grumet, 1982, p. 54); and perhaps even, as Max van Manen (1982, p. 48) urges, to edify pedagogic being and orient toward the good. Ensuring the quality of the elements out of which a subsequent theory may be constructed is a task worthy of serious effort.

## Multicultural Education as Democratic Education[59]

That education should be concerned with the preparation of the young for citizenship is a belief that has a long and distinguished history, reaching at least as far back as Aristotle's defense of such education in The Politics. Thomas Jefferson's conviction that a democracy can function properly only with an informed and educated citizenry means that this notion is as old as the American republic itself. Through the years, others have made a similar case: Horace Mann, John Dewey, George Counts, Jesse Newlon, Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, and many, many more. There is no need to rehearse here the arguments in defense of this position. Suffice it to summarize that in a democracy, final political authority resides with the citizens. For the citizens to exercise this authority wisely, they need to be knowledgeable about both the issues under consideration before the polity and the procedures by which political decisions are made. Individual citizens need

---

> outcomes because of differences in strategies that they follow in exercising their freedoms. (Sen, 1990, p. 116)

It is unclear why liberty of action should preclude such different outcomes if the prerequisites for action are just. Such restrictions on means would seemingly limit freedom to an even greater degree than would the presumably unacceptable equality of primary goods without commensurate assurances of capability in employing those goods.

[59]This issue is treated in a different form in the penultimate section of this chapter.

do nothing to earn this authority; it is granted to them by virtue of their birth or naturalization into a democratic system. As agents of the government, public schools (and private schools, to the extent they wish to or are required to fulfill their civic obligations) assume the duty of preparing young citizens to exercise their political authority responsibly. Recognizing that democracy runs the risk of constituting nothing more than a way "to make decisions...by counting heads, no matter what is inside them" (Winks et al., 1988b, pp. 573–574), schools understandably strive to improve the caliber of those political decisions.

In this regard, then, there is nothing inappropriate about multiculturalism's concern for democratic education. Confusion arises, however, when one wishes to identify the form of democracy for which pupils are being prepared. As has already been documented, all works in multicultural education assert that their pedagogical objectives are set within the context of American pluralistic democracy. They all also claim to offer instructional content that promotes a fuller realization of the democratic principles of the nation--for example, by "practicing critical thought and social decision making" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 219), by "foster[ing] a 'free marketplace of ideas' and encourag[ing] dissent" (Bennett, 1995, p. 302) and by welcoming discussions that focus on social justice (Nieto, 1992, p. 218).

But these general references to context and content could be understood as promoting any of the previously defined models of democracy. "Practicing critical thought and decision making," while not exclusively the province of any single model, is certainly quite compatible with developmental democracy's belief that democratic involvement edifies the citizen in more respects than just the political. "Fostering a free marketplace of ideas" sounds very much like equilibrium democracy, in which on election day voters elect the candidate that most fully embodies the political ideas they would like to buy. "Welcoming discussions that focus on social justice" stimulates the development of the deliberative abilities that lie at the core of most popular conceptions of participatory democracy. And all three strategies could constitute means by which citizens come to

recognize their interests and seek to secure them against incursions by those with contrary political goals, as protective democracy prescribes.

Still, some may charge that this portrayal of multiculturalism's ambiguous understanding of democratic education is somewhat disingenuous. For when one removes oneself from the particular and individual expressions with which multiculturalists describe democratic education and instead attempts to encompass their overall intention, the entirety of their meaning, one can hardly reconcile these understandings of democracy with the calculating and mechanistic versions that the protective and equilibrium models represent. The developmental and participatory models are much more compatible with the gist of their arguments. Which of these two they would prefer is more difficult to state definitively. Yet given the currency of the participatory (or deliberative) model in contemporary political debate (cf. Macpherson, 1977; Barber, 1984; Held, 1987; & Gutmann, 1987), the multicultural emphasis on social <u>action</u> beyond personal development, and the general--but not determinant--historical progression that Macpherson sketched, one doubts that any of these proponents would take exception to being relegated to the group advocating deliberative democracy.

The attributes of participatory democracy are laudable indeed. The main virtues of the model as set forth earlier may be summarized here: It encourages <u>all</u> citizens to exercise the political authority they hold; it counteracts the political apathy that market models evoke; and it aspires to restore a distinctively moral component to political activity. Lest one become too enamored of this vision, though, it would be advisable to consider a serious limitation:

> The enduring appeal of the Aristotelian vision of participatory aristocracy is in its account of the practice of citizenship and the importance of public activity in the daily lives of the citizens. It is not claimed that the distribution of citizenship was democratic, since the vast majority of persons so governed were excluded from all public activity or enslaved, but that the privileged enjoyed a perfect form of democratic activity. Disenfranchised Americans have not demanded this sort of citizenship. They have asked for something quite different, that citizenship be equally

> distributed, so that their standing might also be recognized and their interests be defended and promoted. The call for a classical participatory democracy may, therefore, be far from democratic, because it does not correspond to the aspirations of most Americans now and has never done so in the past. (Shklar, 1991, p. 30, emphasis added)

It is not appropriate to enter here into a debate on the merits of participatory democracy. It is appropriate to raise the possibility that apologists for this model may be expecting more than the American public either chooses or is able to give in their role as citizens. To educate pupils for a form of democracy that, if Shklar is correct, has such little chance of realization is both to squander precious educational resources of time, energy, and motivation and to be faced with the prospect of continuing frustration at the meager fruit one's educational efforts repeatedly bear.

Perhaps what is needed is not a removal of presumed ambiguity from the multicultural advocacy of democracy through the selection of a specific model (in all probability, that of deliberative democracy) but rather the adoption of what Rawls might term a "political"[60] approach to democratic education. Recall that Rawls contrasts the "political" with the "metaphysical" or the "comprehensive." The term refers to those elements of justice that may be compatible with more fully elaborated versions but that are not derived from those versions. The political view of justice, in this sense, is a freestanding view, attending to fundamental components and principles that do not rely on any particular, more extensive, view for their meaning or justification. Analogously, a political conception of democratic education would not presuppose one of Macpherson's--or anyone else's--models of democracy as the form toward which citizenship education aims. It would instead require the specification of the essential components of democratic political involvement, regardless of the exact form the political system might ultimately assume.

---

[60]Some may wish to dub this the "generic" method of democratic education, but the term seems ill-suited to the present purpose.

Identifying and justifying the elements that would constitute this method of democratic education is no task for the fainthearted, and it is one that extends beyond the scope of the present study. The conception undoubtedly would include many of the features so cherished by the multiculturalists (e.g., the ability to examine the merits of a proposal, to identify one's interests, to think critically).[61] But merely enumerating relevant competencies would not suffice. Certainly some knowledge and understanding of rights, liberties, and the structure and functioning of the political system would be necessary as well.[62] Especially importantly, pupils must become familiar with the idea that "democracy" is not self-evident, that various forms of political organization can legitimately be deemed democratic and that each has its assumptions, strengths, and shortcomings. To this end, Newlon's recommendation is quite contemporary, in spite of its age:

> It is evident that if democracy is to be conserved and fully realized, the American people must understand the meaning of democracy, both in its historical development and in its social bearings and implications for the world of today. (Newlon, 1939, p. 94, emphasis added)

Whether or not the pupils learn Macpherson's categories or those of some other political theorist, they must gain some sense of the alternatives in political organization available to democratic societies, not only alternatives in public policies.[63] This is essential even for

---

[61]These examples--and they are meant to be only suggestive--illustrate the potential dangers associated with a political approach to democratic education. One is that this may initially appear to be nothing more than a "skills-based" approach to democratic education (and be, by some, summarily disparaged or rejected). The term "skill" is quite misleading, however, because it is unclear that all, or even most, of these things are skills in any meaningful sense of the word (cf. Barrow & Milburn, 1986, pp. 203–205). Attitudes, dispositions, understandings, and commitments of various sorts are equally apt to number among the components of a political method. A second danger inheres in the tendency for such talk about democracy to be trite, simplistic, or superficial, as these examples show. For this very reason, a thorough, thoughtful, and defensible case must be made on behalf of the complete approach once its details have been elaborated.

[62]This does not imply that the practice of taking a semester--or in some cases an entire year--to plod through the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, the state and local governments, and so on, as transpires in so many civics and government classes today, meets the objectives of a political conception of democratic education.

[63]Any thoughtful observer of recent elections in the United States will know that the unfavorable reputation protective and equilibrium democracies have received at the hands of the developmentalist and participatory advocates has not eliminated the former's influence in American politics. How else could a "get out the (black, labor, women's, fill-in-the-blank) vote" campaign be better interpreted than as a reflection of the belief that these groups have interests in common that would not be protected if the members did not exercise their franchise? (Interestingly, this confirms Judith Shklar's insistence that protection of this sort occurs not through individual votes, but through voting as a bloc. See Shklar, 1991,

those dedicated to the deliberative model. As a leading advocate of this model of democracy, Amy Gutmann (1987) unequivocally sets "conscious social reproduction"[64] as a central goal of education:

> Although we are not collectively committed to any particular set of educational aims, we are committed to arriving at an agreement on our educational aims....The substance of this core commitment is conscious social reproduction. As citizens, we aspire to a set of educational practices and authorities of which the following can be said: these are the practices and authorities to which we, acting collectively as a society, have consciously agreed. (p. 39)

Enabling pupils eventually to build the type of society they desire--that is, to reproduce society consciously, not simply to bow to the weight of tradition--means introducing them to reasonable alternatives available in the construction of that society. (The deliberative aspect of the model pertains to the procedures used for selecting intelligently among the alternatives and for persuading others of the superiority of that choice.) This, then, constitutes the crux of citizenship education in a democratic republic, for even were a non-deliberative model instituted, to be truly democratic, the possibility of changing the form of government must be maintained. To that end, pupils must be taught "to reason, collectively and critically, about politics" (Gutmann, 1987, p. 106).

## Multicultural Education as Education for Social Justice

Multicultural education's concern for political affairs is not exhausted by its treatment of democracy. Its commitment to social justice appears equally strong. Every one of the representatives of multicultural education included in this study sets the achievement of justice as a goal, and all but one do so explicitly (see Banks, 1994, p. 1; Bennett, 1995, p. 301; Gollnick & Chinn, 1990, p. 31; Nieto, 1992, pp. 216–218; &

---

p. 55.) And campaign staffs nowadays make no pretense of the fact that they poll the public to determine what is politically marketable, thereby gaining a better sense of how to "sell" their candidates. All of this is to say that none of these historical forms can be rejected out-of-hand as a model for contemporary democracy, and a responsible program of civic education would inform pupils of this fact.

[64]Gutmann stresses the conscious part of the term. This distinguishes her view from those that accuse the schools of reproducing social inequalities (see, e.g., Karabel & Halsey, 1977). In view of Gutmann's complete theory (not just the features cited here, but including the principles of nonrepression and nondiscrimination, among others), it is impossible to conclude that Gutmann sanctions the preservation of social and class inequalities.

Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 210).[65] But the defensibility of this stance rapidly comes into question. As noted above, multiculturalists do tacitly endorse the deliberative model of democracy. Consequently, the possibility that deliberations would result in outcomes that are less than just must be acknowledged. After all, according to this model, of primary importance are the means by which decisions are made, not the content of those decisions. At this point, the tension between procedural mechanisms and substantive outcomes emerges. Multicultural educators have no qualms about assuming that the deliberations central to their vision of democracy will necessarily result in a devotion to social justice. Is such faith warranted?

The Connections Between Democracy and Justice

Actually, a strong case can be made that advancing the cause of democracy will also promote social justice. Or perhaps better stated, there is good reason to suppose that a commitment to justice inheres within modern conceptions of democracy. Three arguments support this conclusion, which for convenience's sake may be labeled the historical, the social, and the philosophical.[66]

The historical argument. Maurizio Viroli (1992) looks to the rise of the modern nation-state[67] from the crumbling ecclesiastical domination of the medieval era for an appreciation of the implications of "politics." To those inured by the more cynical view of contemporary politics, his findings are nothing short of astonishing:

> When the word politics reappeared in 13th-century Europe, its meaning was universally taken to be, as in Brunetto Latini's famous definition, "the art of ruling a republic or a kingdom in times of peace and war according to reason and justice." Politics also meant the art of shaping and

---

[65]The lone exception here is Baker (1983), who advocates a human-relations model of multicultural education. However, a concern for justice is implicit within her interpretation of the model (see Baker, 1983, pp. 7–9).

[66]These designations are indeed offered only for easy reference, since all are clearly political and social, the second and third, at least, have blatant philosophical elements, the first is in important respects linguistic, and so on.

[67]Granted, in Italy this nation-state was longer in forming than in much of the rest of Europe, but the political principles upon which those entities are based were evident in the Italian republics of the Renaissance.

> preserving just political constitutions, as Dante said in the Monarchia. (Viroli, 1992, p. 29)

This identification of politics with justice prevailed in all references to republican governments, even in the face of the emergence of the raison d'etat (the reason of state), which became a conventional notion by the 16th century. Contrary to modern associations between politics and reasons of state, the two originally had no connection:

> Whereas the language of politics flourished in the age of the free republics, that of reason of state was the ideology of principalities and tyrannies. (Viroli, 1992, p. 30)

Therefore, the notion of politics in general--and a fortiori, the notion of democratic politics--historically presupposes the existence of a just state (or of one striving to become just).

The social argument. Even someone only superficially familiar with modern political theory has an acquaintance with the social-contract theory of John Locke. In short, it regards the relationship between the political structure and the citizenry as an agreement in which the citizens establish a government for the explicit purpose of guaranteeing their rights and liberties. This arrangement was contracted on behalf of all the citizens, although in Locke's day the number of people who could claim the honor of this status was much more restricted than now. Any government that failed to adhere to its part of the agreement--that is, any government that failed to protect the life, liberty, and property of its citizens, equally and justly--became thereby illegitimate and the proper target of reform or revolt. For Locke it was inconceivable that citizens would agree to a political system that treated them unjustly.[68] Hence, the very existence of a government is predicated upon the assumption that it will conduct its affairs in a just manner.

The philosophical argument. John Rawls subscribes to a Kantian view of the fundamental trait of human beings: that they are moral entities. Upon this conviction rest human claims to being regarded as free and equal persons. People are free to define the

---

[68]As indicated, the concept of "citizen" has broadened in the years since Locke formulated his theory, but the essential point remains: All citizens are to be treated equally, or at least not to be treated differently for arbitrary reasons or for reasons that violate fundamental rights and liberties.

good (i.e., moral conduct) and to act in accord with its dictates. People are equal in that they all possess this capacity for moral discrimination. For Rawls, people are also equal to the extent that

> they do have, at least to the essential minimum degree, the moral, intellectual, and physical capacities that enable them to be fully cooperating members of society over a complete life. (Rawls, 1993, p. 183)

By assigning final political authority to their citizens, democratic governments capitalize on this view of persons as moral beings. They therefore are obligated to act in just ways, that is, in ways that respect and sustain this basic freedom and equality. To do otherwise disqualifies a government from the company of democratic political systems.

Elevating the Reasonable and Just Above the Right and True

At this point, one might advisedly return to Gutmann's exposition of the educational requirements of deliberative democracy. Of particular importance are the conditions on debate that she introduces in order to facilitate the fair or just discussion of political issues. For Gutmann, deliberation per se is insufficient to promote justice, let alone to guarantee it. But discussions governed by the principles of nonrepression (i.e., the principle that no potentially reasonable conception of the good life may be excluded from consideration a priori) and nondiscrimination (i.e., the principle that no potentially reasonable participant to the discussion may be excluded a priori[69]) are much better positioned to see that justice is supported by instructional methods. Accustoming pupils to just procedures of deliberation in school marks a commendable, major step in preparing them to attend to matters of justice in their actions as adult citizens.[70]

This is no guarantee, however, and Gutmann recognizes as much. It is not logically necessary that just deliberations--free and open deliberations characterized by

---

[69]The "a priori" qualifications are significant, for Gutmann allows that ideas that are proven reprehensible as the result of thoughtful consideration and persons who prove themselves unable or unwilling to engage in reasoned debate may on those grounds eventually be rejected. But they must initially be allowed a hearing, until their merits are shown wanting.

[70]Obviously, it is assumed that the techniques for teaching these procedures will be both appropriate and effective. No one recommends any pedagogical strategy under the assumption that it will be incorrectly or ineffectively employed.

nonrepression and nondiscrimination--eventuate in just social policies. Gutmann concedes that errors are possible under such a system:

> If democracies are to govern themselves, they must remain free to make mistakes in educating their children, as long as those mistakes do not discriminate against some children or prevent others from governing themselves freely in the future. The promise of the principles of nonrepression and nondiscrimination is just this: to support a strong democracy without sanctioning majority tyranny or sacrificing self-government in the future. (Gutmann, 1987, pp. 96–97)

By extrapolating the principles of nonrepression and nondiscrimination from the classroom to the arena of public policy in this manner, Gutmann seeks to guarantee a minimal level of justice in society. Rawls employs the original position, the veil of ignorance, and the primary goods toward the same end--to ensure at least a modicum of justice, incorporated in the ability of all citizens to participate in a cooperative society on a minimal level. Like Gutmann, Rawls understands that this will not herald the perfectly just society; he institutes the legislative and judicial levels of governance to address the remaining inadequacies (Rawls, 1993, pp. 338–339). Also like Gutmann, he ranks the reasonable above the true (Rawls, 1993, pp. 94, 127–129). In "accepting nondiscriminatory and nonrepressive policies as legitimate even when they are wrong" (Gutmann, 1987, p. 288), society may be establishing the best assurance of fundamental justice possible in a flawed world.

These arguments demonstrate that the multiculturalists' joint concern with democracy and justice is not necessarily the result of whim, idiosyncratic preference, or superficial compatibility between the two notions. It has a solid theoretical grounding, albeit one which no proponent of multicultural education explicates. Furthermore, this grounding is one that applies both to the educational domain and to the society at large. Multiculturalists repeatedly assert the need for this association of justice with democracy, but mere assertion, no matter how vehement, is consistently less persuasive than cogent argumentation.

The absence of this type of defense of their position weakens their efforts in two ways. It leaves them open to criticism as serious intellectuals (cf. Bernstein, 1994), for one reasonably expects not only that scholars have solid, intellectual grounds for their positions, but also that they are able to articulate them to a wider audience. And it frustrates their work politically, for the following reason: Education for democratic participation is a relatively uncontroversial feature of American public schooling, both in its abstraction as a goal of schooling and in the concreteness of the instructional materials and strategies implemented in the schools.[71] Multicultural education, in contrast, has been the focus of controversy almost since its inception as a distinct educational movement. One can only speculate at the reduction of tension and the improved success that might ensue from a placement of the multicultural program squarely, candidly, and incontrovertibly within the jurisdiction of citizenship education.

Additional Encumbrances to the Advancement of the Multicultural Program

Several other hindrances continue to burden the efforts of the multiculturalists in converting opponents and recruiting potential allies to their cause. All deal with the multiculturalists' preoccupation with cultural identity. This is not to say, again, that there is anything logically inconsistent with a program of so-called multiculturalism attending to aspects of culture and cultural identity. Nevertheless, the preceding argument makes a strong case that "multiculturalism" is something of a misnomer in this regard, given that its primary objectives, as asserted by its proponents themselves, pertain to the expansion of democracy and social justice. Granted, many of the impetuses for this concern result from society's discrimination against certain societal groups because of their cultural differences or presumed cultural inferiority. Yet the multiculturalist emphasis on identity has had serious repercussions for their desire to achieve justice. Three will be treated briefly here.

---

[71] Whether it remains that way in light of the recommendations later in this chapter is a separate issue. However, it is conceivable that a stronger civic education grounded in principles of democracy and social justice could be made politically palatable as well.

Cultural Identity as a Distraction

The first of these problems follows upon the argument elaborated above which connects justice intimately with democratic political systems. In many ways, it is a generalization implied by that discussion. Simply put, overconcern with cultural identity distracts from the core issues of democracy and social justice. Baker's work (1983), for example, goes on at length about culture, cultural identity, cultural understanding, etc., but by including the issue of justice only implicitly, Baker allows readers to miss the point too easily--namely, that were discrimination and disadvantage not based upon these cultural distinctions, culture would fail to be the pressing matter she makes it out to be. (This also explains why certain cultural differences--to wit, those found among persons of northern European descent--are not relevant to the multicultural program.) No one can reasonably deny that culture and cultural identity are important in a general sense, but they all too often divert attention from the more politically and socially consequent dimension of justice.

Cultural Identity as a Violation of the Public-Private Distinction

The second of these problems recalls the earlier analysis of the distinction between public and private goals of schooling. Rawls stipulates only basic, general goals for public schooling, in conjunction with his insistence that a political conception of justice not intentionally preference any of the myriad, alternative, reasonable comprehensive doctrines people might choose to guide their lives (see Rawls, 1993, p. 199). In applying Rawls's perspective on justice to educational policy, Strike (1982) asserts in this regard that "in educational contexts the public/private distinction must be applied to the propagation of values and beliefs" (p. 94). Because many values and beliefs are intertwined with people's comprehensive doctrines--including values and beliefs associated with particular ethnic and religious traditions--"schools cannot become intimately involved with particular ethnic or religious traditions" (Strike, 1982, p. 115). Combining the two philosophers' views on implications for education, one is left with an essentially political (in the peculiarly Rawlsian sense) definition of the proper domain of public schools:

> The central public function of schools is the fair distribution of political and economic competency by developing the individual's rational capacities through an emphasis on basic skills and basic disciplines. (Strike, 1982, p. 101)

Anything more than this is to favor one conception of the good society over another. Respect for moral autonomy, though, requires that this choice be unbiased by public agencies and left to the private sphere.

A crucial role for identity in public schooling. Strike does admit of one point of entry for cultural concerns into public schooling, but not in the manner preferred by multiculturalists. This is as a test of whether principles of justice, in the form of equal educational opportunity, have been served by the educational system. The test works in the following manner, for the following reasons: No persuasive evidence has yet been advanced for the proposition that any social group[72] is inherently inferior to any other--regarding intelligence, ability, talent, or any of the other characteristics which education addresses. Variation is to be expected within groups, because individuals do differ in these traits, but individuals do not differ systematically enough that consistent differences among social groups would be discernible. In light of this, pupils graduating from a just educational system would differ from one another in their learning, achievement, proficiency, etc., but they would not differ in ways that correlate with their social groups. Therefore, to the extent that clear distinctions in educational achievement can be distinguished among members of distinct social groups, the educational system has not functioned justly.[73] In this respect, schools may take cognizance of pupils' cultural identities and backgrounds, but only to the degree necessary to supply guidance in achieving genuine equality of educational opportunity. Since different conceptions of the good life place different values on the full complement of cultural characteristics, to base an

---

[72]In this context, the term "social group" refers to the standard sociological designations involving race, ethnicity, class, gender, and so on.

[73]In an unjust society, the schools may not be the cause of the unjust outcomes, for pupils may be educationally disadvantaged along social lines before they arrive in school. In such cases, schools have not fully compensated for the preexisting disadvantages, although they may have remedied them to some degree.

educational program on the preservation or extension of cultural identities would be to violate the public functions of public schooling.

A challenge to a too-strict public-private distinction. One penetrating challenge to Rawls's and Strike's rather strict delineation between the public and the private spheres deserves mention, although it cannot be resolved here. Joel Feinberg (1980) has postulated that children have a right to an open future. That is, in respect of their personal, moral, and political autonomy, they have a right to an upbringing that does not exclude reasonable conceptions of the good life from their life-choices as adults.[74] The strictly "political" version of educational responsibility, to which Rawls and Strike subscribe, would be inadequate to this task. Promoting a child's open future would entail including various cultural perspectives and visions of the good life in the curriculum (or at least not excluding ones already there[75]). It must be noted that this line of argument does not necessarily constitute an expansion of rights beyond those acknowledged by Rawls. A belief in the moral and personal autonomy of individuals is fully compatible with a belief in their right to an open future. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine how one could deny the latter without compromising the former. But a full investigation of the apparent dilemma must wait for another place and time.

Cultural Identity as a Potential Violation of Justice

A third problem with the multicultural preoccupation with cultural identity must be addressed in two parts, for the second derives from the first. The sad reality is that for all their talk about culture, cultural identity, cultural respect, and cultural difference, multiculturalists themselves appear unfamiliar with other cultures. They certainly do not possess the anthropologist's familiarity with any of the cultures that they so fervently

---

[74]This may be called the weak version of the argument. The strong version of the argument would assert that not only must reasonable conceptions of the good life not be excluded from children's future options, but also that social institutions--especially the school and the family--must strive to introduce children to as broad a range of these alternatives as possible, thereby "opening" their futures more widely than would occur by default.

[75]Since curricula do not generate spontaneously but are created by educators and others, it is unclear that this is a viable distinction. However, to the extent that some curricula do already exist and can be regarded as given, this qualification is compatible with the weak version of the argument.

advocate respecting--a point that anthropologists are quick to point out in their criticisms of the multicultural movement (see, e.g., Coughlin, 1992). Too rarely do multiculturalists move beyond heartfelt but vague acclamations of "African" or "Asian" or "Native American" culture, seemingly unaware that the tremendous varieties of cultural expression within each of the groups makes these terms woefully devoid of any real meaning. This vacuity is evident even to persons outside academia:

> Multiculturalists reiterate a few obsessively sincere phrases about the holistic spirit of Native American cultures or about how things are done in what they call the Asian culture or in the African-American culture. The Asian culture, it happens, is something I know a bit about, having spent five years at Harvard striving for a Ph.D. in a joint program called History and East Asian Languages and, after that, living either as a student (for one year) or a journalist (for six years) in China and Southeast Asia. At least I know enough to know that there is no such thing as the "Asian culture." There are dozens of cultures that exist in that vast geographical domain called Asia. When the multiculturalists speak, tremulous with respect, of the "Asian culture," it is out of goodness of heart, but not much actual knowledge. (Bernstein, 1994, p. 6)

Multiculturalists could avoid embarrassing criticisms of this type (and Bernstein relates numerous similar instances) by shifting focus to the issue that seems to be their real concern--redressing the injustices that certain social groups have suffered, and continue to suffer, at the hands of the educational system.

The second part of this problem arises from multiculturalists' unfamiliarity with the cultures they defend. As mentioned earlier, blanket praises for culture writ large removes any basis for discriminating between just and unjust aspects of cultures--for every known culture has elements of each. Gutmann recognizes that attention to the content of cultures can pose serious difficulties:

> How can respect for a culture of ethnic or racial superiority be reconciled with the commitment to treating all people as equals? If a liberal democracy need not or should not respect such "supremacist" cultures, even if those cultures are highly valued by many among the disadvantaged, what precisely are the moral limits on the legitimate demand for political recognition of particular cultures? (Gutmann, 1992/1994, p. 5)

Multiculturalists do not address this issue, perhaps because they overlook its existence. But these and similar shortcomings of multicultural education do little to enhance the credibility of proponents of those programs. That multiculturalists could end up condoning injustice in the name of respecting cultures--which respect was originally intended as a means of combating injustice--is an irony that multiculturalists should not want to tolerate.

Enumeration of these problems paints a pessimistic but not unfair picture of the current state of multicultural education. Whereas multiculturalists can hardly be faulted for their sincere conviction that schools can correct some of the injustices of the past, and while they have offered good documentation of the disadvantages that pupils in certain social groups experience in schools and in society at large, a critical outside observer cannot help concluding that the field is terribly muddled. Multiculturalists provide no convincing reason to believe that they understand democracy and justice as anything more than slogans--slogans that ostensibly have complex meaning and profound theoretical implications.[76] They seem unaware that consequential contradictions pervade a simultaneous indiscriminate lauding of culture and an intense promoting of social justice. Instead, they give the observer adequate reason to believe that multicultural education is a political program garbed in academic clothing. To aggravate matters, it is a political platform whose success is in potential jeopardy because of its advocates' ignorance of what is fundamentally at issue in their program, as has been contended throughout this study.

The educational upshot of this entire discussion on justice differs from that of the earlier discussion of democracy. A Rawlsian political solution seemed advisable in that case, for the choice of specific political form is something that must be left up to democratic polities to decide. The emphasis on the public-private distinction in education would lead one to surmise that a similarly political solution would be warranted here, since, according to the theory, schools dare not promote a particular conception of the good life. Such a principle is satisfactory as far as it goes, but Feinberg's suggestion that the child's right to

---

[76]They do, however, note the political and social implications of those slogans.

an open future might properly belong to the category of basic rights and liberties means that a Rawlsian political solution--at least in Strike's version of it--might not be adequate to the task. A fairly definitive resolution must wait for the clarification of and response to the issues Feinberg raises. In the meantime, a "negative" approach to educating for justice might be advisable.

The term "negative" in this case simply means that what should not be done is more straightforward than what should be done. Gutmann's insistence upon the principles of nonrepression and nondiscrimination could be understood in this vein: fair discussion can proceed only if reasonable conceptions of the good life are not disqualified ahead of time and only if reasonable participants are not prevented from joining the enterprise. (The principles do not prescribe specific visions of the good life for consideration, nor do they propose a list of particular persons that must be included.) From Rawls's and Strike's theories come two additional restrictions: Schools may not encourage pupils to adopt wholesale any comprehensive doctrine, and they may not promote the acceptance of identifiably[77] unjust aspects of cultures examined in the curriculum.[78] A political approach to democratic education and a negative approach to education for social justice may appear to be meager results from an extensive survey of these issues. However, such is the present state of a field whose analytical and theoretical reflections have not matched the intensity of its passionate rhetoric. At a minimum, both of these general conclusions are fully compatible with the moral autonomy of persons with vastly differing backgrounds in a pluralistic, democratic society--no mediocre accomplishment for an incipient educational theory.

---

[77]There is legitimate disagreement about some of the aspects of cultures that should be deemed unjust, but there are also those aspects that unquestionably violate fundamental human dignity and basic rights and liberties. No theory of justice worthy of the name dare sanction this second group.

[78]It is unlikely that justice would permit even the toleration of these unjust aspects of culture, at least to the extent that they are practiced within the United States. The theory does not extend its scope to nonpluralistic, undemocratic societies.

## Moving from the Abstract to the Concrete

The discussion to this point in the study has concentrated almost exclusively on the main purpose of the project: to investigate the contributions that political theory and philosophy could contribute to an understanding of multicultural education. However, a further, brief treatment of some of the practical consequences of these insights might be helpful as well--even though this must be understood as an illustrative venture, for the theoretical conclusions drawn here underdetermine practice. That is to say that the kind of theoretical analysis this study was designed to provide cannot offer a final, conclusive answer to the question of exactly what multicultural educators must and must not do. Instead, these examples can serve most usefully to illustrate the elements that come into play for educators seeking to bring multicultural education into greater consonance with ideas from political philosophy. Two questions will serve to demonstrate. The first deals with the connection between multicultural education and civic education; the second looks at the ways in which attention to principles of justice can strengthen typical multicultural lessons.

### Multicultural Education as Civic Education?

The extensive attention that has been devoted in these pages to democratic theory and a theory of justice--central notions in political philosophy--may persuade one that good multicultural education is synonymous with civic education. In fact, not only might this study be understood as implying this conclusion, but Sleeter and Grant's definition of the goals of "education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 209) also suggests as much. These authors summarize the two main goals of this approach at the outset of their book: to call attention to issues of social justice and to empower young people to make social changes; and to reform the entire educational process by focusing more explicitly on social critique and democratic citizen participation (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. vii). Later, their extensive explanation of the model focuses on these issues as well, as the following central assertions attest:

> To advocates of this approach to multicultural education, the social issue of concern is the elimination of oppression of one group of people by another. (p. 209)
>
> Education That Is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist deals more directly than the other approaches with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, social class, gender, and disability....The approach prepares future citizens to reconstruct society so that it better serves the interests of all groups of people and especially those who are of color, poor, female, gay and/or disabled. (pp. 209–210)
>
> This approach works toward a vision of social justice by teaching political literacy. (p. 210)
>
> The assumption is that if we change peoples'[sic] world significantly, then their attitudes, beliefs, and behavior will change accordingly....Advocates of this approach argue that individuals need to learn to organize and work collectively in order to bring about social changes that are larger than individuals. (p. 213)

Recommended practices include practicing democracy (pp. 223–225); analyzing the circumstances of one's own life (pp. 225–227), which "help[s] students analyze their own lives in order to develop their practical consciousness about real injustices in society and to develop constructive responses" (p. 225); developing social action skills (pp. 227–229); and coalescing across race, social class, and gender lines (pp. 229–230). Sleeter and Grant omit any explicit concern for "cultural understanding" or "cultural identity" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 209–241). "Promot[ing]...cultural pluralism" is listed as a societal goal and "promoting cultural pluralism and alternative lifestyles" are listed as school goals in the one-page synopsis of the model that Sleeter and Grant offer (p. 211). The treatment of those topics, though, is concentrated in a paragraph explaining commonalities between "Education That Is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist" and "Multicultural Education," the fourth model they present (see Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 231 & 167–207). The leading proponents of this approach to multicultural education, it seems, place civic concerns at the crux of their definition of the model.

To equate social-reconstructionist multicultural education with civic education, however, is to fall prey to a confusion in terms. Regardless of the rubric under which it

has been conducted (e.g., "civics," "government," "problems of democracy"), civic education in the United States has historically not only not wrestled with the questions of justice, democracy, and equal opportunity that concern Sleeter and Grant, it has regularly striven to avoid those issues (Newlon, 1939, pp. 88–93; Pratte, 1988, pp. 3–6). Multicultural educators are understandably reluctant to place their trust in existing curricula that seek "to prevent the study of controversial social issues in the school" (Newlon, 1939, p. 88) or that teach pupils "the rights and duties of citizenship as a mere academic matter and keep politics and morality at arm's length" (Pratte, 1988, p. 3).[79] There can be little doubt that civic education as it is commonly conducted is incompatible with the goals of multicultural education.

In contrast, a strong case could be made that a reconceptualized civic education would meet the central goals of a social-reconstructionist multicultural education. Crucial to this position, though, are the components of such a revision. They would include some topics already mentioned. One is the form democracy should take. This need not be limited to the four historical models that Macpherson describes, although they may be a good place to start.[80] Including this topic ensures that the form of democracy already in place in society not be taken for granted, that it be investigated to determine its assumptions about participation, citizenship, goals (e.g., democracy as a means of personal development versus democracy as a means of "purchasing" a government offered for sale by political parties), and so on. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (1996, p. 32) affirm this approach by explaining, for example, why a purely procedural conception of democracy (e.g., rule by majority vote) is incapable of addressing the fundamental issue of the adequacy of that procedure. The composite features of any extant democracy are

---

[79]That essentially the same conditions in civic education are noted by observers half a century apart supports the argument that these are central features of the curriculum and not simply isolated aberrations.

[80]Ware (1992) claims that no persuasive case can be made that liberal democracy has more than one form, but his purpose--questioning American claims to exceptionalism--leads him to use a structural basis (e.g., parliamentary versus presidential) and origins (e.g., native-grown versus imposed) for his typology, making it an inadequate response to Macpherson's distinctions, which center on democratic goals and mechanisms. (Ware concludes that despite the seeming differences his typologies address, all liberal democracies are fundamentally alike.)

neither predetermined nor limited to a single form. Informed and competent citizens need to be aware of the basic alternatives of democracy available to their society.

A second element of a properly multicultural civic education is a study of the meaning and demands of justice. Multiculturalists' insistence upon equal educational opportunity (Bennett, 1986, pp. 52–53; Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 211), social structural equality (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 211), and social justice writ large (Nieto, 1992, pp. 216–218) cannot be understood without a grounding in the basic meaning, principles, and procedures of justice. The work of John Rawls is an appropriate place from which to begin this effort. Understanding justice as the condition which prevails when citizens' basic rights are acknowledged and protected provides a logical connection to civic education in a constitutional democracy, in addition to those already presented.

These proposals are undoubtedly compatible with the goals of multicultural education as set forth by Sleeter and Grant, for example, but the question remains of what exactly is multicultural about this program. "Promoting cultural pluralism and alternative lifestyles" (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, p. 211) may be desirable in itself, but to the extent that it means instilling in pupils a decent respect for the myriad cultures represented in a pluralistic society, it is already required by the principles of democratic government. Democratic theory posits the political equality of each citizen to every other citizen.[81] It guarantees equal political rights, including the right to participate in public affairs. In so doing, it presupposes the very kind of respect multiculturalists desire to advance. (This may explain the objective's absence from Sleeter and Grant's core treatment of social-reconstructionist multicultural education.) One is forced to review the possibility that a civic education that emphasizes analysis of democracy itself, that encourages civic participation, and that insists upon attending to the demands of justice may indeed fully represent the goals of this perspective.

---

[81]This is why, in the heady, early days of the French Revolution, the standard term of address in France was "Citizen."

Even Amy Gutmann, who is not commonly regarded as a multicultural educator on the order of Sleeter and Grant, Nieto, Banks, and others cited in this study, implies that "multiculturalism" adds an essential component missing from simple "civic education":

> Just as a civic education, unmodified by multiculturalism, represses cultural differences, multiculturalism, uninformed by civic values, discriminates among citizens on the basis of their group identities. Schools can meet this challenge of multiculturalism by allying common civic values with uncommon cultural appreciations. (Gutmann, 1996, p. 91)

But the "multicultural" element at issue here remains uncertain, despite Gutmann's specific mention of repression and cultural appreciation. Nonrepression is not a new topic for Gutmann; on the contrary, along with nondiscrimination, it constitutes a cornerstone of her conception of genuinely democratic education (see Gutmann, 1987, pp. 44–47 & passim). Yet there is nothing peculiarly multicultural about nonrepression.[82] It is and historically has been competently addressed by basic notions of freedom of conscience and fundamental civil liberties such as the rights to free speech and a free press--in short, rights a just society is committed to protecting. In fact, Gutmann herself was able to treat this topic extensively in Democratic Education without any explicit reference to multiculturalism. And the difficulties associated with indiscriminate "cultural appreciation" have already been mentioned (see also Strike, 1997).

In this light, the rhetoric of multiculturalism merely clothes a solid program of civic education.[83] To be sure, multiculturalists' recognition that American society has frequently

---

[82]Multiculturalism could be redefined in such a way that would place nonrepression (i.e., consideration of alternative viewpoints) at its core. However, this would mark a significant shift from the currently predominant understanding of the term.

[83]Gutmann herself seems to return to this conclusion when considering proper respect for citizens of other countries (as opposed to compatriots, respect for whom as fellow citizens is presupposed by democratic theory):

> Multicultural societies whose citizens care about people who live beyond their borders support the kind of patriotism that eschews parochialism and injustice. The aim of developing a sense of shared humanity as individuals in all citizens regardless of our particular citizenship,[sic] does not take us beyond democratic education. Quite the contrary, this educational aim follows from the most basic democratic commitment to treating all people as equals. (Gutmann, 1996, p. 101, emphasis added)

failed to put its democratic creed into practice for all citizens impels their emphasis on cultural pluralism. But the attention to pluralism is not simply for pluralism's sake; it is rooted in fundamental principles of democracy. Giving prominence to this fact can strengthen the theoretical basis of multicultural education as it simultaneously diffuses some of the more serious criticisms of the model--namely, that social-reconstructionist multicultural education is unrealistic, given the limited ability of the school to effect social change; that it forces pupils to adopt their teachers' political viewpoints; or that it is too radical (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 234–238). Multicultural education as civic education locates the movement squarely within the long history of public schools' efforts to teach responsible citizenship. This is no small recommendation for these programs. However, if multiculturalists in the social-reconstructionist camp believe that multicultural education properly defined goes beyond civic education as outlined here (and as implied by their own writings, e.g., in Sleeter & Grant, 1994), they need to articulate more precisely the nature of that additional contribution.

Principled Versus Intuitive Justice in the Curriculum

A second illustration of the consequences the theoretical conclusions of this study might have for educational practice derives from the explicit inclusion of justice as a topic of study. Attention to issues of justice need not be limited to courses formally designated as civic education; they may arise in various forms in almost any school subject. Indeed, because civics or one of its alternative manifestations is generally found only in high-school curricula, if the topic of justice is to be addressed at the elementary or middle-school level, it must occur in the context of other subjects--most commonly social studies, but also language arts. This approach to multicultural education commands the support of increasing numbers of teachers, many of whom are eager to publicize their teaching strategies, successes, and reflections (see, e.g., the articles in Bigelow, Christensen, Karp, Miner, & Peterson, 1994). Yet while virtually all of these programs are well intentioned

---

There is no obvious reason why this "democratic commitment to treating all people as equals" is any less relevant to political affairs within pluralistic democratic societies.

and introduce questions of social justice more effectively than does traditional instruction, they are more inclined to employ intuitive rather than principled notions of justice.

Bob Peterson (1994) provides some representative examples of this type of lesson. He tells of an occasion on which his fifth-grade pupils were to present skits that would illustrate instances of discrimination and how the pupils might respond. Three boys decided to act out an encounter between a gay couple and a landlord who refused to rent to them. Peterson mentions only the subject of the skit; he offers no description of the content of the drama. However, he does enumerate the aspects of this event that gratified him as a teacher hoping to promote in his pupils a concern for social justice. One, these boys selected this aspect of discrimination without any prodding from the teacher or from other pupils--or, for that matter, from current events, since it was established that these three boys had not heard of a march on Washington for gay rights that had occurred a week earlier. He mentions as well that discrimination against gays and lesbians had never been raised as an example in earlier class discussions of discrimination. Two, although the skit was greeted with "an initial chorus of laughs and jeers" (Peterson, 1994, p. 38), the pupils quickly settled into an attentive posture to follow the story the skit was intended to tell. Three, the ensuing discussion went beyond the common (for fifth-graders, anyway) admonition not to use personal insults to a broader discussion of the injustices gays and lesbians face.

Other lessons in Peterson's classroom dealt with topics such as homelessness, the life-circumstances of slaves, and stereotypical representations of Native Americans. In each instance, the pupils appear genuinely to have been moved, even outraged, by the injustices that the respective group suffered. The lessons succeeded at "build[ing] on students' seemingly innate sympathy for the down-trodden" (Peterson, 1994, p. 30). He approvingly tells of the pupil who, if president, would invite into the White House the homeless camped out in Lafayette Park during winter, and he reprints a pupil's poem in which the pupil would aid the homeless "and let them pay me back with their love"

(Peterson, 1994, p. 33). Pupils' innate sympathies do indeed seem to serve the cause of justice in Peterson's examples. But one could readily imagine these same pupils as, say, high-school sophomores, who in the intervening years have come to adopt the more conservative, social-Darwinistic attitudes of perhaps their parents, acquaintances, or popular politicians. At this age, their sympathies might lie with the taxpayers whose hard-earned money is wasted on people who don't want to work and against those who are homeless only because they want to be.[84] The plausibility of this alternative scenario raises two caveats: (1) Sympathetic attachments are quite variable; and (2) isolated, poorly coordinated, or sporadic lessons of this type are likely to have limited effectiveness in changing pupils' attitudes over the longer term and outside the school setting. Allowing justice to rely on personal sympathies (or personal antagonisms) clearly has serious pitfalls.

Grounding civics lessons in Rawls's formal understanding of justice and its bases could offer an important counterbalance to these intuitive responses, providing a more principled understanding of justice. Certainly pupils at the fifth-grade level could appreciate the importance of fundamental political rights, the recognition of persons as moral and political equals in a democracy, and the need to base conclusions about social policy on something more solid than emotional reaction. In fact, Jerome Bruner's position that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development" (Bruner, 1960, p. 33) implies that pupils in the early elementary grades could appreciate these ideas also. The question, then, is not only of "developmental appropriateness" but of grounding deliberations on social justice on the political rights and liberties guaranteed to citizens of a democracy. In the main example offered above, pupils could discuss what legitimate legal basis could be cited for denying the gay couple access to decent housing. The landlord's personal aversion to the couple is clearly insufficient. And pupils could gain much from a discussion about whether the landlord's action could be

---

[84]These kinds of accusations were particularly common during the administration of Ronald Reagan, although they have not disappeared since 1988. On a related note, it seems odd that no such countervailing voices were raised even in the fifth-grade class; at least none are mentioned in Peterson's article.

defended as an instance of his freedom of religion (an argument often advanced by opponents of equal rights for gays and lesbians). Pupils could readily consider how often such claims might merely be a ruse. Or, given that not all religions--nor even all variants of Christianity, for example--condemn homosexuality, they could debate whether allowing such discrimination constitutes favoring one sectarian position over another. In this manner, pupils get a sense of the complexity of issues of social justice at the same time that they learn more about principled policy-making in a democracy.

This discussion is not intended to minimize the difficulty of changing people's consciousness in favor of social justice, especially when such positions challenge their own dearly held beliefs or exact a monetary price (cf., e.g., Ryan, 1976). Catherine Cornbleth and Dexter Waugh write of the need for a "transformative" approach to multicultural education (1995, pp. 38–41)--an approach that doesn't merely add a few examples to the curriculum or offer an occasional alternative perspective, but one that strives to force the traditional dominant perspective into interaction with the perspectives of subordinated groups. Accomplishing this requires a degree of empathy and understanding that much of multicultural education rightly and laudably wishes to encourage. But a justice based upon emotion is an unstable and at heart a false justice.[85] Multicultural educators need to advance their cause by complementing empathy and understanding with a principled conception of justice.

## Looking Backward--and Ahead

This study set for itself the task of investigating some fundamental issues in the theory of multicultural education:

- How does multicultural education, especially its social-reconstructionist camp, understand its commitment to democracy and social justice?

---

[85]Consider W. H. Auden's prediction in "For the Time Being": "Justice will be replaced by Pity as the cardinal human virtue, and all fear of retribution will cease" (Auden, 1944/1968, p. 189). Robert Hughes (1993) begins his book Culture of Complaint, a critique of contemporary American culture, with the lament that in this case Auden achieved what most poets only dream of: a prediction that has come true.

- What insights to the benefit of multicultural education might political philosophy be able to shed on the concepts of democracy and social justice?
- What contribution might the answers to these questions make to the formulation of a credible theory of multicultural education?

The preceding chapters and sections of this chapter have laid out a respectably thorough response to these questions, so there is no point in recapitulating them here. Instead, some pertinent issues that extend beyond the core of these matters deserve attention--namely, work that remains to be done, the anticipated reception of the study, and the benefits of this analysis. Each will be addressed briefly.

Further Work on These Issues

Three topics in particular warrant further investigation to resolve some uncertainties in the present study. (1) This report has adamantly opposed the inclusion of most of the traditional multicultural concerns with cultural identity in programs of multicultural education. This stance is neither arbitrary nor idiosyncratic but rather follows from the conviction that these kinds of commitments force upon pupils definite conceptions of the good life. Doing this marks an infringement of the principles of political liberalism upon which this research has been based. Yet there are alternative political philosophies, such as communitarianism (see, e.g., MacIntyre, 1981; Sandel, 1982; Taylor, 1992/1994; & Walzer, 1983), that take a much different view of the proper role of cultural identity in political life, and they are worthy of investigation, as both a test of and possible complement to the positions asserted here. (2) The long and tragic history of slavery in the United States has led some (e.g., Surowiecki, 1996; Appiah & Gutmann, 1996) to question whether race constitutes a special category in the American search for justice. Given the entrenched prejudice and racism against African-Americans, it is plausible that standard principles of justice will not exert enough force to overcome this wretched legacy. Whether race does indeed deserve this special attention is an issue worthy of further study. (3) The possibility has already been raised that a contradiction exists between the liberal

posture of neutrality on comprehensive doctrines and the potential designation of the child's right to an open future as a basic right deserving protection and furtherance. Additional study into this dilemma would be helpful as well.

Projecting the Reception of These Findings

Estimating the response that a work of this type will receive is an awfully speculative venture. This study comes to some pointedly critical conclusions about the current state of multicultural education, but the criticisms have been directed exclusively toward positions and programs, not toward persons. In light of the vitriol frequently cast back and forth over these issues, it is understandable that the defenders of multicultural education might take personal exception to the concerns listed here and question the motives behind the research. One might hope, however, that these issues are genuinely regarded as the academic, theoretical matters they are intended to be, in which case multicultural educators should welcome an argument that situates their dedication to democracy and social justice squarely within the established tradition of American education. To the extent, though, that these matters are viewed as a guise for ideological posturing, attempts to ground theory in a firmer foundation are irrelevant.[86] In this case, the study will likely be disregarded or rejected.

The Benefits of the Study

Although an attempt was made clearly to identify the benefits of the various components of the study as they were presented, it may be appropriate to summarize them here. The benefits derive solely from the new analysis offered by the research, not from the criticism leveled against current forms of multicultural education. They are recounted in an order to demonstrate the logical progression of the conclusions:

---

[86]Jeffrey Goldfarb (1991, esp. pp. 132–151) explains why ideological critique--the practice of regarding all claims to knowledge as a cover for acquiring political power--deconstructs. If ideological critique is correct, no one can claim any epistemic authority, for to do so would, by the theory, be simply another ploy for power. Only when ideas are held to have intrinsic merit can a basis be set for judging the validity of competing claims to knowledge.

- The multicultural commitment to democratic education continues a long and respectable tradition of preparing pupils to assume their roles as responsible citizens in a democratic republic.

- The multicultural commitment to social justice derives directly from the commitment to democracy, for what have earlier been labeled historical, social, and philosophical reasons.

- Multicultural educators must be cautious about overemphasizing the role of culture and cultural identity, both to maintain the academic integrity of their programs (given the unfortunate state of cultural knowledge among many educators) and to respect the moral autonomy of their pupils in public schools. As a response, multicultural educators should redirect and redouble their efforts on behalf of educating for democratic involvement and social justice.

- Multiculturalists now have some crucial pieces from political theory which they may use to construct a stronger theory of multicultural education.

Should these conclusions prove durable in the face of the further study called for above and of the critical examination to which they are likely to be put, one might ideally hope that they will, as the title of this project suggests, form the basis of an educational program that is truly democratic and just.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

# BIBLIOGRAPHY


Appiah, K. A., & Gutmann, A. (1996). Color conscious: The political morality of race. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Auden, W. H. (1968). For the time being. In Collected longer poems (pp. 131–197). London: Faber & Faber. (Original work published 1944)

Baker, G. C. (1983). Planning and organizing for multicultural instruction. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Baker, G. C. (1994). Planning and organizing for multicultural instruction. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Banks, J. A. (1991). Teaching strategies for ethnic studies. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Banks, J. A. (1994). An introduction to multicultural education. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Banks, J. A. (Ed.). (1995a). Handbook of research on multicultural education. New York: Macmillan.

Banks, J. A. (1995b). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), Handbook of research on multicultural education (pp. 3–24). New York: Macmillan.

Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (1995). Introduction. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), Handbook of research on multicultural education (pp. xi–xiv). New York: Macmillan.

Barber, B. R. (1984). Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Barker, E. (1951). Principles of social and political theory. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Barrow, R. (1984). Giving teaching back to teachers: A critical introduction to curriculum theory. Sussex, UK: Wheatsheaf.

Barrow, R., & Milburn, G. (1986). A critical dictionary of educational concepts: An appraisal of selected ideas and issues in educational theory and practice. New York: St. Martin's.

Beauchamp, G. A. (1982). Curriculum theory: Meaning, development, and use. Theory Into Practice, 21, 23–27.

Bennett, C. I. (1986). Comprehensive multicultural education: Theory and practice. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bennett, C. I. (1995). Comprehensive multicultural education: Theory and practice. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bentham, J. (1931). The theory of legislation. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner. (Original work published 1830)

Bentham, J. (1948). An introduction to the principles of moral and legislation. New York: Hafner. (Original work published 1789)

Bernstein, R. (1994). Dictatorship of virtue: Multiculturalism and the battle for America's future. New York: Knopf.

Bigelow, B., Christensen, L., Karp, S., Miner, B., & Peterson, B. (Eds.). (1994). Rethinking our classrooms: Teaching for equity and justice. Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools.

Bloom, A. D. (1987). The closing of the American mind: How higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Bredo, E., & Feinberg, W. (1982). The critical approach to social and educational research. In E. Bredo & W. Feinberg (Eds.), Knowledge and values in social and educational research (pp. 271–291). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). The process of education. New York: Vintage.

Carr, W., & Kemmis, S. (1986). Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research. London: Falmer.

Cornbleth, C., & Waugh, D. (1993). The great speckled bird: Education policy-in-the-making. Educational Researcher, 22(7), 31–37.

Cornbleth, C., & Waugh, D. (1995). The great speckled bird: Multicultural politics and education policymaking. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Coughlin, E. K. (1992). Anthropologists ask how they wound up in the wings of multiculturalism debate. Chronicle of Higher Education, 39(17), A8.

Counts, G. (1932). Dare the school build a new social order? New York: John Day.

de Castell, S., & Freeman, H. (1978). Education as a socio-practical field: The theory/practice question reformulated. Journal of Philosophy of Education, 12, 13–28.

Dewey, J. (1927). The public and its problems. New York: H. Holt.

Dewey, J. (1980). Democracy and education. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), John Dewey: The middle works, 1899-1924, Volume 9: 1916 (pp. 1–370). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1916)

D'Souza, D. (1991). Illiberal education: The politics of race and sex on campus. New York: Free Press.

Fay, B. (1987). Critical social science: Liberation and its limits. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Feinberg, J. (1980). The child's right to an open future. In W. Aiken & H. LaFollette (Eds.), Whose child? Children's rights, parental authority, and state power (pp. 124–153). Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield.

Friedman, M. (1989). The impracticality of impartiality. Journal of Philosophy, 86, 645–656.

Gay, G. (1995). Curriculum theory and multicultural education. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), Handbook of research on multicultural education (pp. 25–43). New York: Macmillan.

Gibson, M. A. (1984). Approaches to multicultural education in the United States: Some concepts and assumptions. Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 15, 94–119. (Original work published 1976)

Goldfarb, J. C. (1991). The cynical society: The culture of politics and the politics of culture in American life. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gollnick, D. M., & Chinn, P. C. (1990). Multicultural education in a pluralistic society. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Gollnick, D. M., & Chinn, P. C. (1994). Multicultural education in a pluralistic society. New York: Merrill.

Goodlad, J. I. (1984). A place called school: Prospects for the future. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Grant, C. A., & Sleeter, C. E. (1989). Turning on learning: Five approaches for multicultural teaching plans for race, class, gender, and disability. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Gutmann, A. (1987). Democratic education. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gutmann, A. (1994). Introduction. In C. Taylor, Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition (ed., A. Gutmann, pp. 3–24). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1992)

Gutmann, A. (1996). Challenges of multiculturalism in democratic education. In A. Neiman (Ed.), Philosophy of education 1995 (pp. 86–105). Urbana: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Philosophy of Education Society.

Gutmann, A., & Thompson, D. (1996). Democracy and disagreement. Cambridge, MA: Belknap.

Harris, M. (1975). Culture, people, nature: An introduction to general anthropology. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell.

Held, D. (1987). Models of democracy. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Hubert, T. M. (1996). Every vote counts. (Letter to the editor.) The Lansing State Journal, 142(188), 14A.

Hughes, R. (1993). Culture of complaint: The fraying of America. New York: Oxford University Press.

Karabel, J., & Halsey, A. H. (Eds.). (1977). Power and ideology in education. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kerr, D. H. (1981). The structure of quality in teaching. In J. F. Soltis (Ed.), Philosophy and education: Eightieth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part I (pp. 61–93). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kliebard, H. M. (1982). Curriculum theory as metaphor. Theory Into Practice, 21, 11–17.

Kliebard, H. M. (1986). The struggle for the American curriculum 1893-1958. Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Kluger, R. (1975). Simple justice: The history of Brown v. Board of Education and black America's struggle for equality. New York: Knopf.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1996). Multicultural issues in the classroom: Race, class, and gender. In R. W. Evans & D. W. Saxe (Eds.), Handbook on teaching social issues (NCSS Bulletin 93, pp. 101–110). Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies.

Larkin, J. M., & Sleeter, C. E. (1995). Introduction. In J. M. Larkin & C. E. Sleeter (Eds.), Developing multicultural teacher education curricula (pp. vii–xi). Albany: State University of New York Press.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1981). After virtue: A study in moral theory. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Macpherson, C. B. (1977). The life and times of liberal democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Martin, J. R. (1981). Needed: A new paradigm for liberal education. In J. F. Soltis (Ed.), Philosophy and education: Eightieth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part I (pp. 37–59). Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education.

McCutcheon, G. (1982). What in the world is curriculum theory? Theory Into Practice, 21, 18-22.

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. (Working Paper No. 189). Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women.

Mill, J. (1937). An essay on government. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1820)

Mill, J. S. (1962). Considerations on representative government. Chicago: Henry Regnery. (Original work published 1861)

Newlon, J. H. (1939). Education for democracy in our time. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Niebuhr, R. (1944). The children of light and the children of darkness: A vindication of democracy and a critique of its traditional defence. New York: C. Scribner's Sons.

Nieto, S. (1992). Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education. New York: Longman.

Oakeshott, M. (1989). Learning and teaching. In T. Fuller (Ed.), The voice of liberal learning: Michael Oakeshott on education (pp. 43–62). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (Original work published 1965)

Peterson, B. (1994). Teaching for social justice: One teacher's journey. In B. Bigelow, L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner, & B. Peterson (Eds.), Rethinking our classrooms: Teaching for equity and justice (pp. 30–33, 35–38). Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools.

Pinar, W. F., & Grumet, M. R. (1982). Socratic caesura and the theory-practice relationship. Theory Into Practice, 21, 50–54.

Powell, A. G., Farrar, E., & Cohen, D. K. (1985). The shopping mall high school: Winners and losers in the educational marketplace. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Pratte, R. (1988). The civic imperative: Examining the need for civic education. New York: Teachers College Press.

Purpel, D. E. (1989). The moral and spiritual crisis in education: A curriculum for justice and compassion in education. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey.

Rawls, J. (1971). A theory of justice. Cambridge, MA: Belknap.

Rawls, J. (1985). Justice as fairness: Political not metaphysical. Philosophy and Public Affairs, 14, 223–251.

Rawls, J. (1993). Political liberalism. New York: Columbia University Press.

Regal, P. J. (1990). The anatomy of judgment. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ryan, W. (1976). Blaming the victim. New York: Vintage.

Sandel, M. J. (1982). Liberalism and the limits of justice. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schumpeter, J. A. (1987). Capitalism, socialism and democracy. London: Unwin. (Original work published 1943)

Schwab, J. J. (1978). The practical: Translation into curriculum. In I. Westbury & N. J. Wilkof (Eds.), Science, curriculum, and liberal education: Selected essays (pp. 365–383). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sedlak, M. W., Wheeler, C. W., Pullin, D. C., & Cusick, P. A. (1986). Selling students short: Classroom bargains and academic reform in the American high school. New York: Teachers College Press.

Sen, A. (1990). Justice: Means versus freedoms. Philosophy and Public Affairs, 19, 111–121.

Shklar, J. N. (1991). American citizenship: The quest for inclusion. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sleeter, C. E. (Ed.). (1991). Empowerment through multicultural education. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Sleeter, C. E., & Grant, C. A. (1994). Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender. New York: Merrill.

Smith, B. O., Stanley, W. O., & Shores, J. H. (1950). Fundamentals of curriculum development. Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World.

Smith, M. B. E. (1975). The value of participation. In J. R. Pennock & J. W. Chapman (Eds.), Participation in politics (Nomos, Vol. XVI, pp. 126–135). New York: Lieber-Atherton.

Strike, K. A. (1982). Educational policy and the just society. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Strike, K. A. (1997). Taylor, equality, and the metaphysics of persons. In F. Margonis (Ed.), Philosophy of education 1996 (pp. 197–202). Urbana: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Philosophy of Education Society.

Surowiecki, J. (1996). Genovese's march: The radical reconstruction of a Southern historian. Lingua Franca, 7(1), 36–52.

Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In C. Taylor, Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition (ed., A. Gutmann, pp. 25–73). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1992)

Vallance, E. (1982). The practical uses of curriculum theory. Theory Into Practice, 21, 4–10.

van Manen, M. (1982). Edifying theory: Serving the good. Theory Into Practice, 21, 44–49.

Viroli, M. (1992). Politics as civil philosophy. In W. R. Shea & A. Spadafora (Eds.), From the twilight of probability: Ethics and politics (pp. 29–42). Canton, MA: Science History.

Walker, D. (1982). Curriculum theory is many things to many people. Theory Into Practice, 21, 62–65.

Walzer, M. (1983). Spheres of justice: A defense of pluralism and equality. New York: Basic.

Ware, A. (1992). Liberal democracy: One form or many? In D. Held (Ed.), Prospects for democracy [Special issue]. Political Studies, 40, 130–145.

Winks, R. W., Brinton, C., Christopher, J. B., & Wolff, R. L. (1988a). A history of civilization. Volume 1: Prehistory to 1715. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Winks, R. W., Brinton, C., Christopher, J. B., & Wolff, R. L. (1988b). A history of civilization. Volume 2: 1648 to the present. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.