

## Chapter 2 – Teaching the Exceptional and the Culturally Different

### GOALS

#### **The Human Capital Theory of Education and Society –**

**Deficiency Orientation** – Prevailing standards for “American culture” and “normal” human development are correct. Focuses on what one believes members of another group lack compared to the abilities and cultural resources one has. Codified in personality and intelligence tests.

**Cultural Deficiency – Orientation of students considered deficient:** Disadvantaged, socially deprived, low socio-economic status, culturally deprived, At-risk –

*All problems are traced back to child's living environment*

**Deficiency Orientation & Achievement Gap:** schools do a better job educating White, middle class, native English speakers and take cultural deficiency for granted

**Culture of Poverty:** theory states that people in poverty are focusing on survival, living in the moment and not planning ahead, high priority placed on entertainment. Attributes those who live in poverty with **psychological deficiencies**, (lack of appropriate role models damages development leads to moral depravity and instability) and **language deficiencies** (can only think concretely and not in abstract).

#### **Problems with Cultural Deficiency Thinking:**

- Ignores opportunity gaps (access to quality education, health care, adequate facilities)
- Links into racist stereotypes
- Feeds into low academic expectations

#### **Physiological and Mental Deficiency –**

**Special Education:** disabilities in school are products of interaction of deficits within the child and the learning environment

- Categories of impairments can be cataloged (i.e. hearing impairment, mr,ld,ed, etc.)
- Assumes normal learning, behaviors and development – takes student deficiencies for granted
- Focus on verbal and read information makes school difficult for students with language, reading, visual, mental, learning, emotional and hearing disabilities
- Due to assumptions about normal development, focus is always on remediation

#### **Sexual Orientation –**

- Homosexuality and bisexuality are considered deficiencies
- Teachers seldom think about sexual orientation in relation to their students

- Students struggling with sexual identity are left adrift adversely affecting achievement

**Difference Orientation** – A standard body of knowledge and values that all American citizens need to acquire. Focus on strengths to build on to help children assimilate into American mainstream. School goal is to teach academic knowledge by building on knowledge and skills that students have. Higher academic expectations than deficiency orientation because the focus is on what students bring to the table. This requires a lot of time and effort to gain knowledge of the background and strengths of the students.

**Cultural Difference** – Cultural difference orientation is cultural continuity. Discontinuities between one set of cultural practices and another can be confusing to the individual who must make the transition between two sets. When a child's home culture is different than the culture of the school, it is aggravating when expected to function within the school's culture without being taught the culture. Effective practice – to ensure as much continuity as possible. Shade distinguishes between two different cognitive styles:

*Analytic* – Competitive, independent, learn through print, one task at a time, step-by-step sequence

*Synergetic* – work cooperatively, integrate personal relationships into learning tasks, stimulated by multiple tasks, and prefer kinesthetic and tactile involvement and discussion.

Educators who are of opposite styles misread/misinterpret the student learners (synergetic learners are talkative, off task, cheaters, etc.). Students achieve best when the teacher and learner are of the same style.

**Deafness as a Language and Cultural Difference** – Often regarded as a deficiency, however this section has the reader shift its focus to being taught as a language-minority group rather than a disabled group. ASL (American Sign Language) and the difference orientation have been battling the deficiency orientation for quite some time. Interest and appreciation has increased for ASL and its integrity and sophistication.

**Mental Difference** – When student performance is far below average, they are said to be mentally deficient. This section discusses how some educators view students in learning disabled classroom as different rather than deficient. When viewing students and their learning needs, often the gifted students are those being discussed when referring to mental differences.

**Gender Difference** – Gender deficiency stems from sexist cultures...in this section of the text it is describe not as bringing less learning, less strengths to the classroom, but different learning, different skills, different strengths. Girls are not genetically inferior to boys. Leadership is another domain that men are better socialized to occupy. Boys learn to dominate in leadership roles and girls tend to let them...culturally driven. Sex controls the more interesting, prestigious, and well-paying work.

#### **Recommended Practices –**

- There is no such thing as a homogeneous class.
- For any given set(s) of standards or expectations, some students will fare better than others.
- What the teacher makes of these differences is the problem.
- The greater the differences and the greater the students vary from teacher's values, the greater the problem.
- This is the need for teachers to build bridges to help the student achieve and assimilate.

#### **Curriculum – 58**

1. Curriculum should be as difficult as possible.
2. Inner-city students (class cut cut-ups, bored and disillusioned students by the dead end that school represented for them) achieve when teachers have high academic expectations.

3. These teachers monitor their students' achievement in order to modify/improve instruction.

I. Bridges to Curriculum

- An effort must be made to relate curriculum to experiences and interests of students.
- Language is the barrier to bridge when English is not the native tongue. (Sheltered English with easy topics and most difficult taught in native language.)
- Bridge by reaching out and using various strategies to fill in important academic gaps. (Ex: teaching girls about careers in science and technology.)

II. Bridges to Instructional Processes – 61

- Modifying Instruction has gained more attention and study than Modifying Curriculum Content.
- Instruction should be adapted to the learning style of the students.
  - a. Native American students learn well with the Whole Language model. This is because, culturally, they prefer communal learning and personal meaning, use of time, and holistic world view.
  - b. African-American students “tune in” more in a classroom that encourages interpersonal interaction, multiple activities, and multiple modality preferences than in quiet classrooms.
  - c. Language-minority students' language skills tend to improve when they are encouraged to talk with peers.
  - d. Mainstreamed students benefit from instruction in learning how to learn – using metacognitive strategies.
  - e. Exceptional and culturally different students ought to experience immediate success by assigning tasks within their capability and rewarding them for successful performance.

**Bridges to Program Structures – 63**

There are four distinct ways to structure programs to teach exceptional or cultural different students.

1. Keep the student in regular classes but make sure that adaptations are provided (such as large print for visually impaired).
2. Keep the student in regular classes for most of the day but also provide special pre-school and/or special before and/or after school programs.
3. Keep the student in regular classes but also involve a pull-out program. (Note: pull-out programs should be temporary; if students become permanently trapped in remedial programs, more academic harm than good may result.)
4. Offer an entirely different educational program for the different or exceptional child. (Examples include severely retarded children or with no English language.)

**Bridges to Parental Involvement - 64**

Public schools are frequently a source of alienation for low-income and minority parents.

- Some parents feel teacher's job is to teach and parents should stay out.
- Some parents were low achievers themselves and feel uncomfortable.

- Some parents are turned off by school personnel.
- Teachers can try to meet parents on the parent's turf rather than in the school and focus on students' strengths rather than weaknesses.
- Have two-way partnerships rather than one-way communication.
- Schools can encourage parents to network.
- Teachers can also collaborate with institutions and organizations in minority communities, such as the church.

### **Chapter 3 – Human Relations**

Definition of Human Relations: trying to reduce prejudice and stereo-types among the races, helping men and women to eliminate their gender hang-ups, and helping all people to feel positive about them.

Goal: create positive feelings among students and reduce stereotyping, thus promoting unity and tolerance in a society composed of different people.

Three components:

1. Examining social groups of which one is a member and the views society has of these groups
2. Examining friendship groups, the meaning of group membership, and group skills
3. Developing attitudes of acceptance and friendship between groups

Sometimes called – intergroup education – that relate directly to the study of prejudice and intergroup hostility.

“Encompasses recognition of the humanness of people” Colangelo

World War II- Brought about relocations that brought different groups of people together

Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy created conflict in Texas schools –

Also during this time the interest was in the atom more than in relationship building

Momentum grew with the desegregation of schools- importance of relationship building became more evident

Passing of PL 94-142 – the human relations approach was viewed as useful in mainstreaming special education students. (1970 – 1980's)

Late 1980's-1990's a resurgence of name calling- The KKK engaged in cross burnings again- coverage of Anita Hills sexual harassment case brought attention to what words are appropriate to say to different groups.

21<sup>st</sup> century immediately after September 11<sup>th</sup> brought about an increase in patriotism in Americans, hostility towards anyone who looked Middle Eastern.

The National Association for Mediation in Education (established 1984). (now known as National Institute for Dispute Resolution (NIDR). Works towards conflict resolution and peer mediation programs

Theories Behind HR

Although the topic Human Relations is a large blanket- we are concentrating on one component- multicultural education:

### **Development of Prejudice within Individuals:**

Gordon Allport (1979) main theorist to write about this topic – Allport drew mainly on cognitive development theory and psychoanalytic theory

Focused on individuals for two reasons: not everybody in any given society is prejudiced, and why prejudice and discrimination are acted out by certain individuals

Cognitive development theory: the mind has a need to relate, organize, and simplify phenomena in order for experiences to make sense.

Age 2 or 3 – recognize physical differences

Pre-school children play with each other without seeming to care about differences- the theory states this is because they have not learned the meanings society attaches to the differences. (pg 84)

Allport describes people in general as operating under the “principle of least effort” which means that the mind will avoid restructuring its categories unless it has to. (pg.85)

Research on stereotyping also finds people to be more accepting of individuals who fit a stereotype than individuals who do not. (pg 86)

Prejudice can be changed (pg 86) by way of the dissonance theory: whenever an individual simultaneously holds two cognitions (ideas, beliefs, opinions) which are psychologically inconsistent. (Watts, 1984)

Allport (1979) psychodynamic theory – the mind has built-in urges and capacities that manifest themselves in feelings and needs. – Allport describes several needs or capacities that are built into the human mind: aggression, affiliation with others, fear of strangers, need for status and need for a positive self-image.

Projection is the main process by which frustration becomes directed against a group. Allport defines projection as “the tendency to attribute falsely to other people motives or traits that are our own, or that in some way explain or justify our own. Projection is based on feelings of guilt, fear or anxiety.

Groups become a Scapegoat by projection

Psychodynamically oriented research by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) strongly suggest that certain child rearing styles develop personality types that are prone to be either prejudiced or open.

The second process that can foster prejudices is : identification- children relate to parents beliefs and believe that these beliefs are desirable.

### **Development of Prejudice and Hostility between groups**

Reference Group Theory: Sherif and Sherif (1966)

Reference group theory people derive much of their identity from association with others

### **Self-Concept Theory:**

Purkey and Novak (1984) defined self-concept as “our view of who we are and how we fit into the world”

-Caution to educators not to assume that children from low-status develop poor self-esteem from home- not true

Beane and Lipka (1986) – FOUR common dimensions of young people: member of family, self as a peer, self as a student, and self as a person with attributes

Some thoughts on Theory:

The authors believe that reference group and cognitive development both hold the strongest explanations for the development of prejudice and discrimination.

### **Strategies**

General Principals:

1. Comprehensive- the HR programs should be infused into several subject areas
2. Diverse strategies-
3. Start with the children's real-life experiences
4. Should be able to experience academic and social success in the classroom and should not be contingent on the failure of others.

### **Providing Accurate Cognitive information:**

Ignorance supports prejudice- accurate information can help to reduce prejudice

### **Using group Process**

Use of the group to educate its members-

Group investigation model: work in small groups with varying skills or viewpoints

Jigsaw model- two groupings to complete an assignment

Team Games Model-

Cooperative learning activities-

### **Using Vicarious Experience and Role Playing**

Contact with the experience rather than reading about it.

### **Involving Students in Community Action Projects**

Move the students out of the classroom and place them in contact with members of the target group

### **Teaching Social Skills**

Different applications: 1. primarily for members of dominant groups who behave toward others in a manner that breeds hostility or indifference.

2. Special skills teaching is aimed at violence prevention among elementary and middle school children. "Second Step" is a project designed for students which teaches empathy training and impulse control as well as anger management.

3. Focused on special education or socially unpopular students- taught skills to facilitate their social relationships with regular education students.

Critique:

Popular approach with White elementary teachers. – However not the approach preferred by most people who have studied discrimination in depth-

Why the discrepancy?

The approach itself is limited in its analysis of why discrimination and inequality exist- it is simplistic in conception of culture and identity

Some see it as too soft and ineffective

Strategies such as cooperative learning open up larger questions – but because of what human relations does NOT address, it has not been adopted by most educators interested in fighting sexism, heterosexism or classism

#### Chapter 4 - Single-Group Studies

##### **GOALS**

- **Societal goals-** Promote structural equality for an immediate recognition of identified group
- **School goals-** Promote willingness and knowledge among students to work toward social change that would benefit the identified group
- **Target students** -everyone

##### **PRACTICES**

- **Curriculum** -Teach units or courses about culture of a group, how the group has been victimized, current social issues facing the group-from the perspective of that group
- **Instruction** -Build on students' learning style, especially the learning style of that group
- **Other aspects of classroom** -use decorations reflecting culture and classroom contributions of the group; have representatives of the group involved in class activities, (e.g., appearing as guest speakers)
- **Other school wide concerns** -Employ faculty who are members of the group being studied

**TABLE 4.1**

##### **PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK**

*Myth of the Neutrality of Education*

- Political, social structure
- He who decides on the knowledge has the power

*Identity and the Social Purpose of Schooling*

- Socialization (lifelong process)
- Dominant Groups (See Stages below)
- Oppressed Groups (See Stages below)

<b>Perspectives about Inequality TABLE 4-1</b>		
	<b>Dominant Groups</b>	<b>Oppressed Groups</b>
<b>Nature of Society</b>	Fair, Open	Unfair, Rigged
<b>Nature of “Have-not” Groups</b>	Lack ambition, effort, culture, language, skills, education	Strong, resourceful, work to advance

STAGES OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT Figure 4-3

**DOMINANT GROUP MEMBERS**

- **ENCAPSULATION:** Comfortable with status quo; have never really thought about other groups’ experiences or perspectives; accept society’s stereotypes of groups
- **DISINTEGRATION:** Faced with evidence of discrimination that clashes with previous perspective-feel guilt, anger
- **REINTEGRATION:** One way of resolving discomfort with Disintegration stage; return as nearly as possible to first stage (Encapsulation)
- **PSEUDO-INDEPENDENCE:** Other way of resolving discomfort of Disintegration stage; actively seek information about other group by contacting or hanging around its members; identify more with other group than with one’s own
- **AUTONOMY:** Work actively to end discrimination against oppressed group; have positive identity with own group but are not accepting of group’s superior status

**OPPRESSED GROUP MEMBERS**

- **CONFORMITY:** Identity with dominant group and its version of society; accept negative images of own group
- **DISSONANCE:** Faced with evidence of discrimination that clashes with previous perspective-feel confusion, want to know more
- **RESISTANCE AND IMMERSION:** Actively reject dominant society and its beliefs; thirst for knowledge about own group
- **INTERNALIZATION:** Have strong sense of positive identity with own group; willing to reconnect with dominant group but not with subordinate status
- **COMMITMENT:** Committed to long-term work on antidiscrimination strategies; have positive identity with own group and with members of dominant group who are in states of autonomy

**RESTRUCTURING KNOWLEDGE AND “THE CANON”**

*Centering: Significance of the Starting Place-* For racial and ethnic groups who have roots in a particular place in the world, defining the starting place shapes the rest of its history.

*Social Creation of “Natural” Categories-* Individuals are placed in categories which tend to work against oppressed groups, who are now examining how such categories are socially created and enforced.

*Social Construct of All Social Theories-* By critiquing theories that rationalize the way things are, Single Group Studies uncover vested interests that inform prevailing theories and propose alternative theories that suggest social change.

*The Strength of Oppressed Groups-* Mainstream curricula portray oppressed groups as passive and usually as victims. The theme and activity and endurance is important to mobilize group members to act against their oppression.

*Group Identity in Literature and the Arts-* The dominant society creates images of oppressed groups in various media. These identities usually rationalize the group’s position in society. The poor have been labeled as criminals, welfare recipients, and homeless.

*A Collective Sense-* Social change to improve the conditions of life for an oppressed group usually comes about because the group has collectively pressed for change. Maintaining this sense of collectiveness can be difficult at times.

*Group Liberation-* Oppressed groups that view themselves as having been subjugated wish to regain control over telling of their own stories in order to create the basis for group liberation.

## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES**

*Curriculum-* If you create your own curricula, your ideas may distort how other groups see themselves and their own experience. Most curricula revolve around customs and holidays. Women’s studies units often focus on famous women, without providing neither much suggestion that sexism still exists nor any analysis of sexism. Discussions of stereotyping, myths, and cultural and institutional bias should be included.

*Instructional Strategies-* When a program teaches students who are mainly or only members of the group being studied, how one teaches may become a concern. Through discussions, the teacher attempts to help students build connections between their personal experiences and larger issues.

*Implementation-* When planning a program and designing a curriculum, a teacher must make certain decisions about the relationship of the curriculum to the rest of the school program; and these decisions have implications for planning and teaching. One decision is whether Single-Group Studies will be separate from the regular curriculum or integrated with it in an attempt to provide a more balanced curriculum. A second decision that must be made in implementing a Single-Group Studies program is how many disciplines will be involved and in what relationship to each other.

**Senor Ricardo Gomez and Ms. Kathy Bennett-** Ricardo Gomez was a Vietnam veteran who began his career as a 28 year old history teacher. When observed the principal saw a lesson that did not feature Davy Crockett; rather he saw a lesson that featured Mexican general Santa Anna. The principal suggested that Ricardo would probably prefer teaching in the urban barrio.

*Critique-* The Single-Group Studies approach can be seen as a beginning, because people must first understand themselves before they can hope to understand others. “Another important goal of ethnic studies is help individuals clarify their ethnic identities and function effectively within their own ethnic community. This must occur before individuals can relate positively to others who belong to different racial and ethnic groups”

## **Chapter 5 – Multicultural Education**

### **Goals – (Five Goals of Multicultural Education)**

1. Promoting the strength and value of cultural diversity

2. Promoting human rights and respect for those who are different from oneself
3. Promoting alternative life choices for people
4. Promoting social justice and equal opportunity for all people
5. Promoting equity in the distribution of power among groups

**Ideology and Multicultural Education** – ideology prescribes what ought to be. Theory describes how social systems or human psychology actually works. The ideology of Multicultural Education is one of social change...a change in the very fabric of that society. This ideology has two main components: Cultural Pluralism and Equal Opportunity.

**Cultural Pluralism** – includes the maintenance of diversity, a respect for differences, and the right to participate actively in all aspects of society without having to give up one's unique identity. Many advocates of this approach agree on the need for a (gender-free) society in which poverty, as well as racism, does not exist.

**Equal Opportunity** – the other main pillar of the ideology of Multicultural Education. The whole spectrum of roles, careers, emotions, and behavioral patterns should be equally available to male and female alike, without regard to gender (or race, sexual orientation, etc.). This concept also takes into consideration mainstreaming of special education students. Children should have an equal chance to achieve in school, choose and strive for a personally fulfilling future, and develop self-respect, regardless of home culture or language.

**Theory and Multicultural Education** – the two main kinds of theories that support the ideology of Multicultural Education are cultural pluralism theories and cultural transmission theories.

**Theories of Cultural Pluralism** – Four Main Theories:

1<sup>st</sup> Theory is *assimilation*. The formula is  $A + B + C = A$ , where A, B, and C represent different social groups and A represents the dominant group. The theory holds that when minority cultural groups come into contact with a majority cultural group, over time the values and lifestyles of the minority groups are replaced by those of the majority group (such as studies of second-immigrants). Sought to promote, for example, one language and one dialect, one version of history, one literary tradition, one view of the relationship between people and nature, and so forth.

2<sup>nd</sup> Theory is *amalgamation*.  $A + B + C = D$ , where D represents an amalgam. A synthesis of these groups into a distinct new group. Although many people have articulated this concept as the ideal of the melting pot, the theory of amalgamation describes very little about inter-group relations. In the United States, ethnic groups are not of the same status; consequently amalgamation has little or no relevance to school policy.

3<sup>rd</sup> Theory is *classical cultural pluralism*.  $A + B + C = A + B + C$  where A, B, and C represent different social groups that maintain their own unique identities. Most American cities and many suburban areas contain distinct ethnic enclaves that do not disappear over time. Some ethnic groups even become stronger. An example of this can be a Jewish family moving to a new state like North Dakota where there are little or no Jews. They join the only local Synagogue and develop new ties with the few other Jewish families in town.

4<sup>th</sup> Theory is *modified cultural pluralism*.  $A + B + C = A1 + B1 + C1$ . This theory holds that different ethnic, religious, and racial groups will assimilate into the dominant group to some extent, but that this assimilation will vary with the group. Many groups will continue to retain cultural characteristics. An Italian in Italy is different than an Italian-American. A black American is different than an African-American.

**Cultural Transmission and Social Learning Theories** – This approach is born of a concern that society as it exists is unfair and detrimental to many people. Multicultural education seeks to have all American children learn knowledge, values, and behavioral patterns that support cultural diversity, flexibility, and choice.

Social theory argues that children learn alternative behavioral patterns by observing adults and then learn when to imitate this behavior through reinforcement. These theories argue that children are strongly molded and shaped by their environments and

that the values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns that young people develop result from the constant press of their social environment.

**Recommended Practices** – Seeks to reform the entire process of schooling for all children. Seeks to integrate people into the existing society and improve society for all. Seeks to develop skills and a strong knowledge base to support multiculturalism.

**Curriculum** – reformed to regularly present diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions and represent diverse cultural groups and both sexes. Examples: When teaching poetry – use poems written by a variety of authors. Sacajawea vs. Sequoia (Discussing Native American heroines from both perspectives (White Americans and Native Americans)) All curriculum materials should be free of race, gender, disability stereotypes and include members of all groups in a positive manner. Teach a complete concept related to diverse groups and not fragments of information. Diverse materials should be used to present diverse viewpoints. Students need to understand there is more than one perspective and should seek out multiple versions. Emphasis should be equally made on contemporary and historic culture as well as social history. Finally – avoid sex segregated enrollment in vocational electives and ensure accessibility to academics for all students.

**Instruction** – guided by certain principles directly connected to the nature and purpose of multicultural curriculum.

*Principle 1 – student is an innately curious individual, capable of learning complex material and performing at a high level of skill.*

*Principle 2 – each student has his/her own unique learning style, teachers need to build on this and foster the student's discovery of their learning style to learn effectively and efficiently.*

*Principle 3 – teachers draw on and make use of conceptual schemes that bring students to school (start where the students are at and use what they already know).*

*Principle 4 – Have high and realistic expectations for all students. Expectations for student success need to be positive and equitable. Students need to have those high expectations as well.*

*Principle 5 – Foster cooperation!*

*Principle 6 – Treat boys and girls equally and in a non sexist manner both consciously and unconsciously.*

*Principle 7 – Develop and foster positive self-concept.*

**Evaluation** – Standardized tests that sort and rank-order students, should not be used because they are not culturally neutral. Achievement tests based on curricula taught with criterion references should be used with the purpose of improving instruction. Tests to determine eligibility for Special Education should be culturally sensitive. Evaluation of achievement should reflect a multicultural curriculum. Students grouped for instruction should serve a varied student population. Expecting and allowing for diversity and providing a variety of ways for evaluating and grouping students, fewer students will be seen as disabled. Evaluation procedures should not be used to penalize students by requiring skills extraneous to what is required. Test in native language and time limits should not be placed on tests if they will prevent slower working students. Assessments of students' English-language proficiency should take into account the different context in which school communication takes place. Four recommendations that teachers should take into consideration when teaching students whose first language is not English:

Students placed in learning environments with opportunities to evaluate and analyze failure and embarrassing incidents related to academic performance.

Identify learning skills and levels of students in specific subjects and domains using mother tongue or language in which they were instructed.

Construct learning experiences that are meaningful to children and congruent with their cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Sensitize the school personnel to develop culturally based instructional models effective for minorities

Educators should make sure that tests do not give an advantage to one gender more than another.

**Home/Community-School Relations** – Maintain a strong home-school connection. Parents and community members need to be more than just spectators. Advocates of Multicultural Education approach want to see the community involved in the budgetary process, selection of school personnel and curriculum development...similar to Human Relations and Single-Group Studies approaches, the importance of the school recognizing and affirming the home/community cultures of all its students. There is no one model American...there is no one model home or community...homes are as varied and diverse as the people who make up a multicultural community.

**Staffing** – concerned with school wide as well as classroom practices. 1) Staffing patterns should reflect cultural diversity and nonsexist roles. 2) Staff members hired should have high expectations of all students and not stereotype them. 3) Relations among staff should be collegial and embrace a cooperative spirit. It is important that teachers from various programs and support services be integrated within the mainstream life of the school.

**Extra-Curricular Activities** – Athletic programs must include students of color and women. Positions of leadership should not be dominated by one group. Schools must work actively to avoid segregation and stereotyping. Note: Sports opened up considerably to girls after Title IX passed in 1972. Historically significant – WNBA 1997

**Getting Started** – School-wide plans at James Madison Junior High called for each subject-area department to assess how well content about the contributions and perspectives of men and women of different cultural groups was integrated into its curriculum and to establish a procedure for improvement where needed. Three teachers were sent to a conference on multi-cultural education, and recommendations were made to hire more teachers of color for core subject areas.

**Critique** - Some criticisms include that multi-cultural education waters down curriculum, excludes traditional literary classics in order to include works by authors of color, and that some groups will be encouraged not to participate in the culture of this country and in the intellectual and artistic achievements of the human race. E pluribus unum might become belittle unum. Many educators view race, gender, and other social markers of difference as unitary, often failing to address the nonsynchronous nature of these aspects.

## **Chapter 6 – Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist**

### **Introduction:**

- Equity & justices should be goals for everyone
- Solidarity across differences is needed to bring about justice
- Notion of equity & justice is not only a goal of equal opportunity but equal results for diverse communities
- Enables diverse communities to sustain themselves
- Ensures basic human rights (decent housing, health care, quality education, living wage)
- Rooted in Social Reconstructionism –

A critique of modern culture that notes that while past institutions & their practices may have been great they are now incapable of handling latest social concern – in case of Multicultural social justice that is elimination of oppression of one group of people to another.

## I. Goals

**TABLE 6-1.**  
**Multicultural Social Justice Education**

Societal goal:	Promote social structural equality and cultural pluralism
School goals:	Prepare citizens to work actively toward social structural equality; promote cultural pluralism and alternative life styles; promote equal opportunity in the school
Target students:	Everyone
Practices:	
Curriculum	Organize content around current social issues involving racism, classism, sexism, sexuality, disability; organize concepts around experiences and perspectives of several different American groups; use students' life experiences as starting point for analyzing oppression; teach critical thinking, analysis of alternative viewpoints; teach social action skills, empowerment skills
Instruction	Involve students actively in democratic decision making; build on students' learning styles; adapt to students' skill levels; use cooperative learning
Other aspects of classroom	Decorate room to reflect social action themes, cultural diversity, student interests; avoid testing and grouping procedures that designate some students as failures
Other schoolwide concerns	Involve students in democratic decision making about substantive schoolwide concerns; involve working-class and minority parents actively in the school; involve school in local community action projects; make sure that staffing patterns include diverse racial, gender, and disability groups in nontraditional roles; use decorations, special events, school menus to reflect and include diverse groups; use library materials that portray diverse groups in diverse roles; make sure that extracurricular activities include all student groups and do not reinforce stereotypes; use discipline procedures that do not penalize any one group; make sure building is accessible to everyone

- Deals more directly with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, gender, social class and disability
- Prepares future citizens to reconstruct society to better serve interests of all groups
- Visionary approach, speaks language of possibility (Aronwitz & Giroux, 1985)- offers constructive alternatives
- Advocates believe resources need to be allocated more equally, but there is not one model of what is "normal".
  - Oppressed people themselves should have understanding of their situation & how their particular characteristic (race, gender, etc) affects their cultural impact.
  - Develop their own power & skills to articulate goals and social justice vision
  - Work with all groups constructively towards these goals
- Teaches political literacy to work towards social justice
- **Conscientization** (Freire, 1985): people should learn to question society, see through the accepted "truths" that lead to acceptance of unfairness & inhumanity, and become empowered to envision, define & work toward more humane society.
  - Other names for this approach: emancipatory pedagogy,
    - Critical teaching,
    - Critical multiculturalism
    - Antiracist teaching

- Anti-oppressive education
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Transformative pedagogy
- Social action

➤ Basic goals & assumptions are similar, but different terms advocate for varied focuses (race, gender, etc.)

**II. Assumptions and Theory**

**Background:** People believe that if individuals improve (more humane, better skilled, more civil), society follows suit. Reverse is true – individuals seek to fit their niche in society. Social /cultural cues form that niche influence individual’s performance/ others’ view & acceptance of that performance.

**Individuals can be changed, but will return to old ways if world around them is unchanged**

Ex. Thoughts about Run down Low Income Neighborhoods

Middle Class View	Low Income View
Assume house condition is lack of maintenance knowledge	Contending with absentee landlords, high rents
Try to teach skills to maintain	Not worth putting earnings into property that is not theirs
Preach about home values	

**Instead of addressing individuals, should address issues such as landlord policies & access to affordable, low cost housing**

**A. Critical Theories:**

- Defines social behavior as organized on group basis and viewed in terms of collective conflict for power & resources
- Types :
  1. Critical Theory (analysis of social class relations)
  2. Critical Race Theory (analysis of racism, race and power)
  3. Multicultural Feminism
  4. Critical Cultural Studies
  5. Critical Disability Studies
  6. Queer Theory
  7. Postcolonial Studies
- Critical theory began in Germany before WWII – connected Marxist social class analysis with psychological theories of unconscious to understand how oppressive classes are produced & reproduced
- Giroux & McLaren(1980’s) linked critical theory to pedagogy – everyday lived culture as site of social struggle and social transformation
- Critical race theory & education – “Whiteness” is viewed as property – race functions as money – best property gets best schools, curriculum is “intellectual property“ connected to race
- Critical theories offer intellectual tools to explain the how and why oppression happens & how to probe below the superficial
- Examine how groups compete for control over scarce resources (jobs, land, housing, political influence, food/water) and ideas (abortion, environment, etc.):
  - Compete because by nature people are concerned first about own welfare and second about those who are like them
  - The more scarce the resource, the more intense the struggle, the more group membership becomes important
  - America ideology of individual achievement masks reality of importance of group membership (gives individual resources, opportunities, living circumstances and reactions)
- **Institutionalized Oppression** -Dominant groups structure social institutions to operate to keep their advantage

Examples:

- As women seek more influential positions, sex stereotyping is used to keep them in place. At-home mothers are not able to get opportunities for improvement as easily.
- Wealth is gained through investments, but those with little or no money can not invest
- Disabled people are viewed as economic drain and do not have access to jobs because of dominant “normal” group oppression. Those who can not work full time can not be “normal” and must be defective
- Capitalism – class that controls production maintains & extends wealth. Seems fair because some individuals become upwardly mobile & most people consider individuals, not groups, in society

- Large corporations have control over increasing proportion of worlds' resources:
- Institutions that created Contemporary tools of global control:
  - International Money Fund (IMF) & World Bank created in 1944 by UN to promote economic development
  - General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) after WWII to resolve international disputes related to trade policies, tariffs, and import/export quotas
  - Both use processes similar to 1600-1800s colonization – have pressured Third World countries to shift to exporting their goods instead of making goods for internal consumption
  - Economic forecasts have been created to predict wealth generated by taking on modernization projects with loans from World Bank that have high interest payments and strings attached (deregulation, privatization, export of natural resources, social spending cuts)
  - Forecasts purposely overstate profits and understate country's ability to pay back loan
  - If exports drop, country has to borrow more money
  - Result for Third World countries is loss of autonomy, huge debt and increased poverty – loss of land and jobs, drop in living standards
  - Transnational jobs are now bid to countries who can provide cheapest labor
  - World Trade Organization(1994) -GATT revision- power to set rules for unrestricted global trade
  - Rules of WTO supersede national laws and therefore nations cannot restrict corporate demands if one nation challenges another

- **Collective Resistance:**

- overt behavioral opposition (visible to observers) or private/mental opposition (not readily visible) can be used to combat oppression
- Can be consciously directed to social change, but doesn't not have to be (ex. joining a gang as a form of self-help & resistance to dominant social norms)
- Resistance is refusal of people to accept restrictions that social systems attempt to impose on their lives – **explains difficulty of some individuals in school contexts**

- **Important to Educators:**

- Many students are involved in struggle against oppression without knowing social theory – girls viewed as sex objects, teasing disabled students, low income students rejecting teachers' low expectations
- Oppressed communities are often involved in resistance – NAACP, NOW, Indian Rights Organizations, Gay Organizations, etc.
- Use these things as starting point to teaching social issues because they are real life to student
- Teachers must be open-minded to things they are not comfortable with and not refuse to engage in those types of social justice changes ( ex. Queer theory)

**B. Sociological Theory of Culture** – Much of culture is an adaptation to life's circumstances determined by group competition for resources. Some aspects of culture are passed down (language) and others are created on an ongoing, everyday basis in the same way knowledge is constructed. Culture represents a group's attempt to interpret, give meaning to, and function within

shared circumstances. Members of a given group struggle to change their sociopolitical circumstances, which in turn will result in some cultural change.

### **III. Recommended Practices**

#### **Practicing Democracy –**

- Learning to articulate one's interests, openly debate issues w/ peers, to organize and work collectively with others, to acquire power, to exercise power, etc.
- Students learn to direct their learning and do so responsibly, rather than be directed to do so by someone else.
- Teachers should “guide” and direct so students can grow, develop sense of responsibility in the way they make decisions.
- Empowering students is the most effective and most ethical way of dealing with discipline.
- Involve parents in deciding on the goals and educational practices of the school. Parents and community are viewed both as partners and valuable resources.

#### **Analyzing the Circumstances of One's Own Life –**

- Practical consciousness (one's commonsense understanding of one's own life) coexists with theoretical consciousness (dominant social ideologies, explanations that one learns from how the world works that purport that the world is fair and just). They don't always mesh and we learn to believe a mixture of them.
- Schooling helps students analyze their own lives in order to develop their practical consciousness about real injustices in society and to develop constructive responses.

**Developing Social Action Skills** – defined as the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to help bring about political, social, and economic changes. Advocates for this approach view the school as a laboratory or training ground for preparing a socially active citizenry.

#### **Coalescing**

One of the main differences between Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist and the Single-Group Studies approach is that the former approach promotes coalescing across race, social class, and gender lines. Race, social class, and gender lines often should not be treated as separate issues. These issues all involve common concerns of oppression. People are all members of a gender, social class, and a racial group, and separating the issues is often somewhat artificial. Advocates call for coalescing because this process makes for a more powerful group.

#### **Commonalities with Previous Approaches**

Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist embraces the recommended practices of the Multicultural Education approach because it advocates that the school and the classroom reflect and celebrate diversity. These approaches represent conceptual rather than fragmented approaches of instruction which includes materials, visual displays, films, guest speakers, and content taught orally. These approaches mobilize young people to work actively for social justice.

### **IV. Putting It into Action**

Teachers work together to combine activities that go across the curriculum that promote Multicultural Education and Social Reconstructionist theories and practices. Students work together and exercise Social and Civic Capacity.

## V. Critique

In a review of the literature on multicultural education, it is said that there are fewer works on the approach of multicultural education than any other. Advocates come to this approach from a variety of camps:

- Multicultural Education
- Black Studies
- Women's studies
- Asian-American studies
- Bilingual education
- Disaffected neo-Marxists
- Social reconstructionists

As a result of all of these different groups, the literature developing the approach is scattered. Also, advocates of the education do not recognize or dialogue with each other. Coalition building is not easy; it is also not automatic among advocates of the education that is multicultural and the advocates of the education that is multicultural and the social Reconstructionist approach. The educator who wants to learn about the approach may become frustrated attempting to do so; this is because there is little material giving teachers specific guidance in what to do. The philosophy of social Reconstructionism has been critiqued, but the approach itself has rarely seem the subject of thoughtful critique.

### **Four general problems with the approach:**

One problem is with the role of the school in building a "new social order". Schools do a good job of reproducing the existing society. Expecting them to do otherwise may be unrealistic.

A second problem involves the contradiction between having students think for themselves and persuading them to think like the teacher. This issue is one that Reconstructionist educators face, and most recognize a tension here.

A third problem is the implementation more than in the approach itself. It is quite possible for an educator to sensitize students to social issues, and then leave the students hanging. For example, if students recognize the problems inherent in capitalism, they will not necessarily see what can be done short of tearing down our whole economic structure.

A fourth problem is how to build the coalitions that this approach advocates. This is because little has been written or studied about how coalitions among diverse groups can be built.

**Criticisms**, the main objections raised by advocates of Teaching the Exceptional and the Culturally Different are that this approach seeks too much change and diverts students who live at or below the poverty line and students of color from what they really need. Many educators see this approach exaggerates problems such as racism. Human relations educators fear that this approach will aggravate conflict and tension among people. Too much discussion of past and present injustices will fuel the fires of hate and distrust and that social action projects will promote confrontation.

Multicultural Education advocates generally embrace the intent of this approach but view its feasibility with skepticism. Advocates of Multicultural Education view that this approach is too limited and usually not assertive enough. Many business-as-usual educators, the Multicultural Education approach is radical.