

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the year 2000, it appears that many of the issues that have haunted American colleges of teacher education during the current century are destined to accompany us into the next. Numerous authors have asserted that in order to create conditions necessary for all students to be successful in schools, teacher educators must “rethink the nature of their programs and practices” (Giroux and McLaren 1987, 4). However, most proposed reform efforts have overlooked the complex relationships among culture, power, knowledge, and ideology that permeate American schools, and in particular teacher education. Instead, they have continued to focus on dominant ideological constructs that reproduce existing social structures and that reinforce boundaries between the powerful and the powerless and the haves and have-nots.

Addressing issues of diversity is a concern for all in the educational community, however the problem is particularly significant for teacher educators. The composition and fabric of American public schools and of those who will educate are rapidly changing. Demographic data indicate that by the year 2000 the population of students will be comprised primarily of children of color (Murray and Fallon 1989), while the teachers who will educate those students will be white, female, and from middle-class backgrounds (Schumann 1990). Teachers will be challenged increasingly to incorporate the diverse biographies, the multiplicity of experiences, and the cultural styles of students. But there is little evidence to suggest that teacher education institutions have initiated comprehensive programs to reform the canon or to aid educators in the quest to engage in alternative pedagogical structures that might better serve the needs of a diverse student population.

In fact, most efforts to reform teacher education have merely attempted to breathe life into archaic systems tainted with ideological constructs that have pretended to be politically neutral. Issues of race, class, and gender have been virtually absent from the design and structure of teacher education reform. In the overview to Weis’s book on race, class, and gender, McCarthy and Apple inform us that “Practice in mainstream discourses has often meant the stipulations of ‘workable’ programs, policies designed for operation within the rules and terms of references of existing institutional structures. Practice in this mainstream sense at best merely allows for incremental modifications necessary

for the maintenance of existing institutional frameworks and power relations” (Weis 1988, 30).

At the forefront of the reform debate is the battle currently being waged over multicultural education. It is a debate laden with ideological tensions out of which have emerged a number of conflicts and concerns. Specifically, there are two levels on which the debate must be addressed. The first concerns the imposition of institutional constructs that reify traditional knowledge regarding teaching and learning relative to issues of diversity. This issue is reflected in the presence or lack of state mandates, teacher certification requirements, institutional guidelines, course design, and policies and practices either formal or informal that explicate the role of issues of diversity and specifically multicultural education in teacher education. On another level are the struggles that ensue as teacher educators attempt to work within existing frameworks to create alternative pedagogies and paradigms, many of which are reliant upon altering attitudes and behaviors of individuals within their own classrooms.

Teacher educators writing for this volume have chosen to interpret this two-front battle by grounding their work in an approach known as multicultural social reconstructionist education (MCSR) (Sleeter and Grant 1994), which is an outgrowth of critical theory. Critical theory rests upon the assumptions that educational institutions “need to analyze how cultural production is organized within asymmetrical relations of power in schools” and “construct political strategies for participating in social struggles designed to fight for schools as democratic spheres” (Giroux 1989, 169). Multicultural social reconstructionism is an extension of social reconstructionist principles of earlier decades. Social reconstructionism emerged during the American depression of the 1920s and was viewed as a way to alter inequitable societal conditions predicated upon the dominant culture’s interests that, it was asserted, were being served and reproduced in schools. Social reconstructionists purported that reconstructing the school culture employing democratic values would enhance principles of social justice and create a more participatory and equitable democratic society (Stanley 1985).

Multicultural social reconstructionism exists in sharp contrast to the functionalist approaches that predominate in colleges of teacher education in so much as it extends the boundaries of reform to empower students and teachers to become agents of change. By incorporating interpretive theory and its micro-level analysis of how individuals construct meaning via their social relationships, and by including a macro level of cultural analysis, critical theorists emphasize class structure and the ways in which schools magnify class differences that promote inequality of educational access and perpetuate social class distinctions (Bennett and LeCompte 1990). In addition, critical theorists speculate about the ways in which teachers and students might engage in pedagogy that offers cultural alternatives for the pursuit and preservation of social justice. Unlike dominant ideologies steeped in social transmission theories,

which promote the role of the teacher as objective and indisputable while the role of the student is one of passivity, critical theory sees teachers as “transformative intellectuals [who] take seriously the need to give students an active voice in their learning experiences” (Giroux 1989, 127). This approach challenges each person to engage in a deeper understanding of pedagogy by fostering a dialectical relationship between theory and practice. Further, it encourages teacher educators to go beyond the authoritarian and traditionally didactic limitations of teacher and student relationships in favor of mutually affirming relationships within a context that values diversity and promotes social justice.

McLaren has written that “Critical theorists challenge the often uncontested relationship between school and society, unmasking mainstream pedagogy’s claim that it purveys equal opportunity and provides access to egalitarian democracy and critical thinking. Critical scholars reject the claim that schooling constitutes an apolitical and value neutral process” (1993, 171). Of critical theorists, he says, “They aim at providing teachers with critical categories, or concepts, that will enable them to analyze schools as places that produce and transmit those social practices that reflect the ideological and material imperatives of the dominant culture” (171). Inherent in critical theory is the idea that human agency can mitigate obstacles to social injustice and that schools can become sites for transformation.

BARRIERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MCSR PEDAGOGY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Many of the concepts and much of the ideology advocated by critical theorists and by extension social reconstructionists are problematic in the teacher education arena. Adoption of a critical theoretical perspective infers the disruption of the prevailing discourse regarding what constitutes excellence and equity, and it asserts the reconfiguration of a pedagogy that comprehends the relational nature of power, culture, knowledge, and ideology. In order for issues of diversity to be addressed in any comprehensive manner, colleges of teacher education must assess basic theoretical underpinnings and ideological constructs.

For example, despite the imposition of recommendations and guidelines by accrediting agencies as early as the 1970s such as those set forth by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), many universities still have only isolated courses that have not been integrated throughout their institutions or even within coursework in colleges of education. The NCATE standards seek a commitment to issues of diversity and multicultural education by asserting that: “Multicultural education presumes an acceptance of and commitment to cultural pluralism for all teachers and administrators . . . it is not a body of subject matter to be easily packaged in separate courses and learning experiences that are added to the teacher education program in a *laissez faire* manner” (NCATE Preamble).

However, even when institutions are monitored by accreditation standards suggested by agencies such as NCATE, compliance with multicultural standards is subject to interpretations of individual evaluators and administrators. Thus, great variation from institution to institution and from state to state occurs, and it is important to note that the variation is not due to cultural differences within the various institutions but rather to the subjective interpretations of teams of examiners, many of whom remain unacquainted with issues of diversity in any meaningful way.

In addition, substantive teacher education mandates for multicultural education exist in only a handful of states. While approximately twenty-seven states have advocated some form of multicultural education applicable to teacher education, only Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa have legislation that is fully inclusive of the integration of issues of race, class, gender, ethnicity, lifestyle preference, and disability (Martin 1986).

Uncertainty exists regarding where in the educational arena issues of diversity should be addressed and by whom. While those advocating an MCSR approach support the integration of issues of diversity throughout all areas of the teacher education curriculum, most institutions have met multicultural standards by instituting a single course often taught by untenured faculty or people of color. Professors relegated to teaching such courses are often seen as singular proponents for a particular racial, ethnic, or other group, and they in turn end up preaching to the converted, students who are interested in learning more about the racial, ethnic, gender, or lifestyle groups to which they belong. Other institutions have addressed the dilemma through ethnic or women's studies courses. The consequence of this type of fragmentation is that proponents in women's studies and/or ethnic studies sometimes find themselves fighting for resources with those who advocate a more wholistic multicultural approach. At issue is not whether ethnic and women's studies courses should exist but how such courses should be taught in concert with a fully integrated multicultural curriculum throughout the university.

And an accompanying concern is that all faculty, not just women or faculty of color, need to be a part of the effort to redress problems and issues associated with diversity. Not to do so is to perpetuate the notion that diversity and in essence racism, sexism, homophobia, and poverty are problems to be dealt with by members of microcultural groups (people of color, women, gays and lesbians, and poor people) but not by members of the dominant culture.

Further complications have arisen because scholarly approaches to diversity have been eclipsed by neoconservative ideologues. Many have no background in multicultural education or issues of diversity, but do have access to popular media and are capable of influencing virtually thousands of uninformed listeners. These critics have argued against transformative pedagogy in favor of a more simplistic discourse centered around individual agency and the promotion of traditional meritocratic approaches to education. Their coer-

cion of terms such as multicultural education, political correctness and historical revisionism causes confusion and diverts attention from substantive issues of poverty, elitism, homophobia, and institutionalized racist and sexist policies and procedures.

AN ALIENATED TEACHING FORCE

The entry level teaching force is composed primarily of white middle-class students who, for the most part, enter teacher education unaware of the dynamics of racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism upon their lives and the society at large (Bennett and LeCompte 1990; Martin and Koppelman 1991). Most have attended public schools dominated by middle-class white teachers, and this pattern prevails at the university level where faculties in teacher education tend also to be 93% white and 70% male (Grant and Koskela 1986). Whiteness, heterosexuality, being middle class, and the accompanying norms and standards of the dominant culture are viewed as a legitimate foundation for conceptualizing the world and ultimately for constructing pedagogy. Hooks (1989) has recounted the frustration of her encounters with prospective teachers whose backgrounds are isolated and alienated from issues of diversity.

Struggling to educate in the corporate university is a process I have found enormously stressful. Implementing new teaching strategies that aim to subvert the norm, to engage students fully is a really difficult task. Unlike the oppressed or colonized, who may begin to feel as they engage in education for critical consciousness a new found sense of power and identity that frees them from colonization of the mind, that liberates, privileged students are often downright unwilling to admit that their minds have been colonized, that they have been learning to be oppressors, how to dominate or at least how to passively accept the domination of others. (102)

Others have addressed the complexities of altering the dominant discourse. Lather (1991) has noted students' resistance to liberatory curriculum and their willingness to do what she has called "stay dumb." She has written of the inherent dangers and pitfalls in formulating a discourse in which we must remain constantly aware of the multiplicity of experiences and voices that we and our students bring to the classroom. She challenges us to question the extent to which the "pedagogy we construct in the name of liberation [is] intrusive, invasive pressured? (143). And hooks (1989) has further contemplated the difficulties of introducing radical pedagogy to students who have privileged interpretations of life. She comments, "Education for critical consciousness that encourages all students—privileged or non-privileged—who are seeking an entry into class privilege rather than providing a sense of freedom and release invites critique of conventional expectations and desires. They may find such an experience terribly threatening. And even though they may approach the situation with great openness, it may still be terribly painful" (102). Further,

Foucault has noted the “violence of a position that sides against those who are happy in their ignorance, against effective illusions by which humanity protects itself” (1977, 162).

VISIONS AND RE-VISIONS OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

While there has been a proliferation of literature about multicultural education and issues of diversity during the recent decade, little has been written or shared that actually illustrates the struggles and successes of teacher educators in classrooms where transformative, liberatory pedagogy in the form of multicultural social reconstructionism is being employed or practiced. This is a volume full of alternatives and possibilities for transformative pedagogy. It is part of a teacher education saga that explicates some of the grim realities and occasional epiphanies that those of us who advocate an MCSR approach to issues of diversity encounter when we attempt to practice what we teach. These authors hold up for pedagogical scrutiny the dominant discourse embodied in functionalist philosophy and by doing so we problematize privilege, radicalize race, and disrupt and analyze the politics of gender. We have adopted as our collective responsibility the challenge to present alternatives to how we construct and conduct school and specifically to the ways that we educate prospective teachers about issues of diversity.

In this work, we challenge teacher educators to go beyond the mundane and the prescriptive, to deconstruct and reconstruct what already exists and to carve out new territory for teaching and learning. The authors cut deeply into the complex and unexplored relationships among issues of diversity and hierarchical, systemic oppression and the ways in which these issues are inextricably linked to pedagogy. This work probes the confines of traditional approaches to teaching about diversity, and it explores the possibilities for redefining links between theory and practice. It thereby presents an alternative repertoire for teacher education that emphasizes the relationship between ideology and pedagogy.

Our work is “a deliberate attempt to construct specific conditions through which educators and students can think critically about how knowledge is produced and transformed in relation to the construction of social experiences informed by a particular relationship between the self, others and the large world” (Giroux 1992, 99). It expands the realm of radical discourse and advocates an ideological stance that employs multicultural social reconstructionism as a way to empower teachers to become “transformative intellectuals” (Giroux 1989). Therefore, the chapters in this volume attempt to accomplish one of the goals first cited by Sleeter and Grant when they defined multicultural social reconstructionist education and linked it with critical theory which is to create a “language of critique” that moves [teachers] toward a “language of possibility” (Giroux 1992, 167).

As authors, we believe that the emergence of a critical pedagogy of possibilities is embedded in a rigorous analysis of the experiences that arise out of

our own classroom experiences. Weis (1988) has advised that “The question of critical practice is essential. . . . We have few descriptions of exemplary practices in which models of educational action—informed by the critiques of the relationship between education and differential power—actually make a difference” (31). These authors have attempted to answer her call for programs that work, day-to-day examples of how to address effectively “problems of curricular and pedagogical policy and practice *and* also lead beyond themselves to further possibilities of organized cultural, political, and economic action (Weis 1988, 31).

The authors pose counter-hegemonic questions and dilemmas that challenge the positivistic, functionalist positions of our predecessors and that attempt to dismantle fundamental metaphors for what constitutes teaching and learning. In doing so, they disrupt the false sense of security that is engendered in teacher education programs that purport to train students to become effective teachers. Instead, we offer sometimes subtle, often complex suggestions for framing and expanding educational boundaries.

It is not happenstance that these authors represent variations on the MCSR theme. Their shared concerns and similar pedagogical strategies act as further testimony to the validity of their experiences and to the necessity for transformative pedagogy. Their work is shaped by efforts to give voice to questions about emancipatory praxis within the bureaucracies and intricacies of the teacher education arena. Influenced by critical, liberatory pedagogues, the various authors in each of the book’s three sections grapple with questions such as the following. What are the political, systemic struggles in which multicultural educators engage? What role do our histories and personal biographies play in the production of pedagogy? How do our personal belief systems intersect with theory and practice? How might we demystify pedagogical practice that is multicultural and social reconstructionist? What are the relationships among power, culture, knowledge, and ideology? How do they inform pedagogy?

ALTERNATIVE TEMPLATES: BUILDING NEW FOUNDATIONS

The creation of meaningful pedagogy derived from critical theoretical constructs remains a challenge for even the most astute teacher educator. In the first section of the book, the authors set the stage for an investigation of the nature of teaching about issues of diversity by reflecting upon, dismantling, and reconstructing prevailing pedagogical structures. In chapter one, “Teaching Controversial Issues in Higher Education: Pedagogical Techniques and Analytical Framework,” Julie Andrzejewski provides us with insights to address institutional conflict as well as individual resistance from predominantly white, middle-class students in multicultural education courses. The author discusses pedagogy that attempts to reduce defensiveness and establish openness toward developing and creating a framework for understanding issues of oppression. The chapter chronicles her struggles and those of the

institution, the college, and the department in a state that mandates a multicultural/human relations teacher education program.

In “Thinking about Diversity: Paradigms, Meanings, and Representations,” Robert Muffoletto discusses the social construction of knowledge. He uses two major paradigms, functional and interpretive, to explore our understandings of the world, and he guides the reader through an explication of semiotics and post-semiotics relative to those paradigms. Muffoletto then notes that “when considering diversity and multicultural education, the overt and covert messages delivered through various forms of media and technology must be considered and unpacked.” Finally, he assesses the implications of the models for multicultural representations and classroom practice.

Next, Kathleen Farber, in “Teaching About Diversity through Reflectivity: Sites of Uncertainty, Risk, and Possibility,” explicates a model for reflective pedagogy that actively engages students in the reconstruction of their own experience through problem posing. Using reflectivity grounded in Dewey’s notion of democratic education, she discusses ways that students’ and teachers’ personal knowledge can be valued and validated via critical reflection. In addition, she examines the risks involved in the use of a reflective model to address issues of diversity, and she underscores that prospective educators must be able to reflect upon the ways in which the transmission of culture affects the production of knowledge and the relationships of power between teachers and students.

Chapter four, “Deconstructing Myth, Reconstructing Reality: Transcending the Crisis in Teacher Education,” suggests that teacher education must be reconfigured at both the institutional and the individual levels in order to create an understanding of the dynamics of the complex intersection of notions of power, ideology, culture, and knowledge. In this chapter, I provide examples of how students can become engaged in an analysis of the structural dynamics of the classroom and of the ways in which prospective educators can examine, integrate, and critically analyze their own experiences and construct opportunities for the realization of democratic ideals and liberatory pedagogy. Examples of classroom activities arising out of student inquiry and cognitive struggles exemplify strategies that teacher educators might incorporate into their own repertoire.

“What’s All This White Male Bashing?” is a chapter by Carl Allsup that examines teaching about issues of diversity within the framework of institutions that embrace hegemonic leadership and endorse dominant cultural values thereby marginalizing opposition to those values. Allsup quotes bell hooks noting his own efforts to reconceptualize sites of resistance which have operated to define and maintain a dominant center. The author notes the obstacles and limitations of disengagement from the centered, dominant discourse, and its accompanying ideological constructs, and the distortions that one encounters when educators attempt to reconceptualize issues of diversity for a more inclusive vision.

IMPACT AND IMPLICATION OF BIOGRAPHY

As noted earlier, at the heart of many problems associated with teaching about issues of race, class, and gender is the inability of a predominantly white, female, and middle-class teacher-education population to identify with issues of oppression. This inability often leads to misunderstandings and misconceptions about how to translate effectively what they learn about issues of diversity into alternative pedagogical strategies. The section of the book entitled "Impact and Implications of Biography" is characterized by accounts of ways in which educators can integrate their own biographies and those of their students in order to gain insights into the creation of more equitable and meaningful pedagogy.

In "Multicultural Teacher Education for a Culturally Diverse Teaching Force," Carmen Montecinos expresses the concern that "teacher education research has thus far failed to advance a discourse that is committed to the education of a culturally diverse teaching force. She examines and summarizes the ways in which a core of empirical studies on multicultural education describe the ethnic backgrounds of participants. Montecinos then explores some of the implications inherent in the development of multicultural teacher education programs that fail to understand the significance of such identity. She challenges us to develop alternative paradigms and notes areas of research that need to be addressed in order to accomplish her vision of a culturally diverse teaching force.

In her chapter entitled "Teaching Whites about Racism," Christine Sleeter describes a process that she has used with white preservice students to help them recognize the limits of what they know about social stratification so that they can begin to reconstruct their perceptions. After analyzing the social construction of identity, she discloses a variety of class activities designed to expose students to alternative paradigms for understanding issues of diversity. In so doing, she combats the notion that ownership of issues of diversity is vested within marginalized groups.

"Creating Classroom Environments for Change" is a chapter in which Keith Osajima discusses how his students are taught to think reflectively and analytically about the nature and impact of racism in the United States. Osajima centers his discussion around a course he teaches that is governed by three primary questions: 1) How have educational institutions served as vehicles both to oppress and to liberate people of color in this country? 2) How have white and minority students been miseducated about the nature and history of racism in the United States? and 3) What strategies and actions can students adopt to address how racism affects their lives?

"What's in It for Me: Persuading Nonminority Teacher Education Students to Become Advocates for Multicultural Education" is an account of how Kent Koppelman and Robert Richardson address value structures and moral dilem-

mas that students experience in a mandated teacher education course on diversity. The chapter transports the reader through a series of concrete examples of the authors' struggles in their own lives and teaching. In the context of these examples, they discuss the imposition of popular culture, the impact of language, and other cultural artifacts to investigate notions of power and oppression in society.

MULTIPLE REALITIES: MULTIPLE ENACTMENTS

The final segment of the book discloses some of the complexities of transferring liberatory, multicultural social reconstructionist theory into practice. In chapter ten, "Reflecting on Cultural Diversity through Early Field Experiences: Pitfalls, Hesitations, and Promise," William Armaline reflects on cultural diversity in early field experiences that involve a critical sociological analysis of schooling as portrayed in an entry level course with an accompanying field experience. He discusses an evolving pedagogy designed to interrogate students' perceptions, expectations, constructions, and ideological positions with respect to how they learn, what is important to know, and how we teach. Armaline discusses a research study in which preservice teachers employed reflective thinking and journal writing to inform this practice.

Elizabeth Quintero and Ana Huerta-Macias in "To Participate . . . To Speak Out: A Story from San Elizario, Texas" highlight pedagogical practices that interrupt and work against patriarchal systems. Their case studies of parents participating in a three-year family literacy project extend the concept of social reconstructionist education to familial and community education. The personal experiences of the women in a family literacy project for limited English-speaking families are used as a "point of departure to explore some of the more difficult questions regarding critical transformation" (180). Through the eyes of the participants, the reader is exposed to the complexities of transformative pedagogy, the social context of literacy classes, the family situations, and the community context in a small border town in Texas. What emerges are numerous implications for restructuring schools, redefining curricular issues, and rethinking development programs for teachers.

Lourdes Diaz-Soto and Tina Richardson relate two interactive and reflective methodological approaches, and the accompanying learning experiences of the facilitators and participants, in their chapter "Theoretical Perspectives and Multicultural Applications." The first set of experiences they recount occur in a required multicultural education course for graduate students whose voices depict their experiences in the course. The second set of experiences occur in a multicultural education course in counseling and psychology. The authors explain how they enable these students to identify key concepts and address new awareness regarding issues of diversity and the potential impact of those issues on the cultural contexts created in the counseling and mental health professions.

In chapter thirteen, we are exposed to the ways in which physical education acts as a site for socially, politically, and culturally constructed spheres of oppression. In "Beyond Bats and Balls: Teaching about Knowledge, Culture, Power and Ideology in Physical Education," Robyn Lock uses her own experiences as an athlete and teacher-educator to address the ideological boundaries of traditional pedagogy for physical education and to examine the possibilities for teaching transformatively. Her work is informed by a research project in which she demonstrates the application of critical theory to a physical education component in teacher education. Lock's discussion encourages us to create alternative lenses for viewing the traditional and the taken-for-granted courses that all children encounter in public education.

Evelyn McCain-Reid's pilot study in the chapter "Seeds of Change: A Pilot Study of Senior Preservice Teachers' Responses to Issues of Human Diversity in One University Course" sheds light on the impact of two models of instruction on students' learning in a multicultural education course—the Societal/Curriculum School Curriculum Model and the Multicultural Education Infusion Method. McCain-Reid frames her discussion within the context of a ten-week senior level social cultural foundations course, and she employs student voices in her discussion and investigation. This chapter causes us to reflect upon the dynamics inherent in classrooms where educators of color are faced with the limited perspectives of students from white middle-class backgrounds who are steeped in dominant ideological constructs.

The final chapter, "The Coalition for Education That Is Multicultural: A Network of Advocates for Educational Equity," describes and analyzes a coalition between educators in a teacher education program and teachers in a public school district. The long-range goals of the project were to increase knowledge of preservice and in-service teachers and administrators relative to multicultural education; to promote the development and implementation of multicultural curricula; and to provide placement sites for student teachers with teachers who are conversant with multicultural strategies. Marilynne Boyle-Baise offers the reader insights about the commitment and participation of members of the coalition that can serve to deepen and broaden our understanding of the complexities of the network of relationships to be considered as we create culturally congruent classrooms for the future.

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