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ABSTRACT

While examining the broader educational reform movement from a critical perspective, this essay focuses on the national political manifestation of that movement--America 2000. In contrast to more traditional critiques of America 2000, this analysis argues the basic conflict between this reform effort and an "emancipatory definition of substantive democracy." The current infatuation with the market is strongly criticized and the case is made that current reforms, including America 2000, present an agenda that abstracts equity from excellence and social responsibility. What has been valorized in this new language of leadership is an elitist view of schooling based on a celebration of cultural uniformity, the reprivatization of public schools, uncritical support for remaking school curricula in the interest of labor-market imperatives, and a return to the transmission model of learning. In conclusion, prospective and existing educators and cultural workers should be given the opportunity to develop the following elements of a language of critique and possibility: (1) a language of historical perspective; (2) a language of social criticism; (3) a language of remembrance; (4) a language of critical imagination; and (5) a language that challenges the "money-and-missiles sense of reality." (LMI)

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

Henry A. Giroux

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by
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FOREWORD

Professor Henry A. Giroux presented an earlier version of this essay as the keynote address at the 1991 UCEA Convention. While he examines the broader reform movement from a critical perspective, he focuses on the national political manifestation of that movement – America 2000. The result is both disturbing and exciting. In contrast to more traditional critiques of America 2000 which focus on specific shortcomings or underserved constituencies, Professor Giroux's analysis argues the basic conflict between this reform effort and an "emancipatory definition of substantive democracy."

The urgency and significance that I have felt are embedded in debates over the current educational reform movement are brought to the fore as Professor Giroux moves the issues from the educational policy arena to the broader domain of hope for improving the quality of public life. The essay provides a new language with which to address the problems associated with the testing craze, school choice proposals, and a reform driven by the needs of the market place. It raises the stakes of our failure to move the issue of child and youth poverty to the center of educational reform concerns.

The challenge to those of us who work daily on the task of improving educational leadership is described as the performance of a noble public service, "that is, to educate administrators and teachers to undertake social criticism as public and concerned educators who address the most pressing social and political issues of their neighborhood, community, and society." Professor Giroux has performed that service for us. He has elevated the level of critical analysis of current reactionary reform efforts; offered a language of critique; and described the challenges to leadership and the possibilities in responding to that challenge. The audience of UCEA convention attendees was energized to debate and discussion by the original presentation. You will surely respond similarly to this timely and powerful tract.

David L. Clark
Guest Editor

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

Henry A. Giroux

I want to draw upon two recent events that, while appearing slightly removed from the issues of leadership and schooling, provide a constructive starting point for developing a new language to raise fresh questions about what it means to educate students for forms of leadership that expand the visions and vistas which animate democratic public life.[1]

The first is the remarkable changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union within the last two years. We have witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall. Stalinist Communist parties have been overthrown throughout Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union, beset by a nationalist fervor, has reconstituted itself as a democratic federation. We live in an age in which a radical conception of leadership has emerged that is wedded to the construction of a new political subject. This is a political subject that appears to reject the authoritarianism of master narratives; refuses traditions which allow only for reverence of what already is; denies those instrumental and universalized forms of rationality which eliminate the historical and the contingent; refuses to subordinate the discourse of ethics to the politics of verification; and recognizes a substantive citizenship which requires a multiple subject who can speak and act as a responsible citizen in a variety of settings. Such a subject links freedom not merely to individual rights but to a comprehensive theory of human welfare.

The second event to which I am referring was a remarkable series of articles entitled "The Trouble with Politics" that ran in the March 1990 issue of the *New York Times*. Using the occasion of Czechoslovakian President Vaclav Havel's address before a joint session of Congress, the *Times* articles boldly suggested that whatever it is that motivated Polish workers, Czechoslovakian intellectuals, and Chinese students to risk their lives for democracy

no longer inspires American youth or the larger public (Euben, 1991). Stressing the importance of politics and ethics to democracy, the *Times* articles implicitly raise the issue of how crucial the theory and practice of leadership is in keeping alive a conception of democracy as an ideal filled with possibilities richly deserved but never guaranteed; in this case, an ideal that can only be understood as part of a broader and incessant struggle for freedom and human dignity. For Havel, democracy in the full sense of the word is something that one moves steadily toward without ever reaching its end point. As Peter Euben (1991) points out:

> We steadily move toward it while recognizing that there is no finality to the goal that nonetheless guides us, the distance between it and ourselves mandates that we treat every means as an end and every end as a means . . . that we add depth to central terms of our political discourse: democracy, power, freedom, and politics. . . . by taking seriously Lincoln's belief that government is rightly of, by, and for the people. (p.17)

The *Times* articles not only highlight the importance of democracy as a powerful script for human freedom, they also make visible the inability of the American public to grasp the full significance of its own indifference to the need to struggle for the conditions that make democracy a substantive rather than a lifeless activity.

At all levels of national and daily life, the breadth and depth of democratic relations are being rolled back. This is seen in the rising apathy expressed in the refusal of eligible voters to participate in national elections, the systematic transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich, the ongoing attacks by the government and courts on civil rights and the welfare system, and the proliferating incidents of racist harassment and violence on college and public school sites. The eclipse of the discourse of public life can be seen in a growing sentiment that "dismisses morality and human rights as a leftover from bygone days" (Kearney, 1987, p. 51).

The retreat from democracy is also evident in the absence of serious talk about how as a nation we might educate future generations in the language and practice of moral compassion, critical agency, and the utopian horizons of social imagination. The discourse of leadership appears trapped in a vocabulary in which the estimate of a good society is expressed in indices that measure markets, defense systems, and the Gross National Product. Missing in this discourse is a vocabulary for talking about and creating democratic public cultures and communities that are attentive to the problems of homelessness, hunger, censorship, media manipulation, and the rampant individualism and greed that conservative political commentator, Kevin Phillips,[2] claims has become the hallmark of the last decade. I

believe that the contrasts between the struggle for democracy in Eastern Europe and its declining significance in American life posit a major challenge for defining a conception of leadership that would place schools of education in the forefront of this country's attempt to address the urgent need to create prospective administrators and teachers as engaged intellectuals motivated by a vision capable of defending and assisting in the survival of the United States as a vibrant, democratic society.[3]

In what follows, I want to emphasize the significance educational leadership has for addressing the issues and problems schools of education need to consider with respect to the social responsibility of school administrators and teachers and the role that both public schools and higher education have in terms of their wider political and social function. My focus is not on management but on what it means to educate people capable of a vision, people who can rewrite the narrative of educational administration and the story of leadership by developing a public philosophy capable of animating a democratic society. At the outset, I want to emphasize the fundamental importance of recognizing that democracy is not simply a lifeless tradition or disciplinary subject that is passed on from one generation to the next. Neither is democracy an empty set of regulations and procedures that can be subsumed in the language of proficiency, efficiency, and accountability. Nor is it an outmoded moral and political referent that makes governing more difficult in light of the rise of new rights and entitlements demanded by emerging social movements and groups. Put simply, democracy is a discourse that produces particular narratives and identities informed by the principles of freedom, equality, and social justice. It is expressed not in moral platitudes but in concrete struggles and practices which find their expression in classroom social relations, everyday life, and memories of resistance and struggle. When wedded to its most emancipatory possibilities, democracy encourages all citizens to actively construct and share power over those institutions that govern their lives. At the same time the challenge of democracy resides in the recognition that educators, parents, and others must work hard to insure that future generations will view the idea and practice of democracy as a goal worth believing in and struggling for.

Unfortunately, there is enormous evidence indicating that the issues of democracy, leadership, and schooling are increasingly being incorporated as part of a reactionary political agenda. This agenda furthers the fortunes of narrow social interests that are at odds with any emancipatory definition of substantive democracy. The discourse of American democracy has been appropriated and trivialized in bloated calls to force students to say the pledge of allegiance. It has been devalued and dismissed in dangerous

reform proposals that pit a romanticized view of the laws and logic of the market against the discourse of ethics, political agency, and social responsibility. The concept of democracy has come under fire with the rise of a new American nativism that calls for schools to be dispensers of an unproblematic cultural tradition in which the emergence of cultural difference is seen as a sign of fragmentation and a departure from rather than an advance toward democracy.

Current Educational Reforms and the Crisis of American Democracy

The current debate about educating teachers and administrators in this country represents more than a commentary on the state of public and higher education. It is fundamentally a debate about the relevance of democracy, social criticism, and the status of utopian thought in constituting both our dreams and the stories that we devise in order to give meaning to our lives. This debate has taken a serious turn in the last decade and now its terms are being principally set by extremists and anti-utopians. This is evident in many of the current educational reform movements including the Charlottesville Education summit of September 1989 and the recent reform package set forth in *America 2000*. Both of these calls for reform embody a conception of educational leadership that ignores those closest to the schools such as superintendents, principals, teachers, students, and parents, and also argues "by implication, that too many children of poverty now cannot gain access to the benefits of schools' civil rights agendas. . . . that policies set on behalf of equity are increasingly inequitable, and implicitly recommends policies that tolerate separatism" (Lipsitz, 1991, p. 37), if not bordering on outright racist discrimination. These reforms present an agenda for shaping public schooling and higher education in this country which abstracts equity from excellence and social responsibility. Under the guise of attempting to revitalize the language of leadership and reform, these reports signify a dangerous attack on some of the most fundamental aspects of democratic public life and the social, moral, and political obligations of responsible, critical citizens. What has been valorized in this language is an elitist view of schooling based on a celebration of cultural uniformity, the re-privatization of public schools, an uncritical support for remaking school curricula in the interest of labor market imperatives, and a return to the transmission model of teaching.

The growing threat to democracy can also be seen in the attempt on the part of the Reagan and Bush administrations to remove the idea of liberty from that of democracy, and to redefine citizenship not as a part of a practice

of rights and responsibilities towards a wider community, but as a sectarian arena of action dominated by the dictates of a narrow instrumentalism. Within this context, the sense of "the public" has become a negative prefix suggesting otherness, nurturance, community, morality, and aspects of a social space that is superfluous next to the imperatives of the market and its excessive celebration of consumerism and self-interest. Critical citizenship in this view has become an unprofitable, if not subversive category.

America 2000 has put forth a plan for educational leadership and reform that is as significant for what it does not address as it is for the goals and programs it proposes. Organized around the imperatives of choice, standardized testing, and the re-privatization of public schools, it displays no sense of urgency in addressing the importance of schooling for improving the quality of democratic public life. Not only does it suffer from a curious form of historical amnesia by refusing to build on the gains of programs that have been quite successful in addressing the needs of children from subordinate groups (programs animated by models of educational leadership expressed in the work of Henry Levin, Deborah Meier, and James Comer),[4] but it also has written out of its script some of the most pressing difficulties facing administrators and teachers in America's schools.

America 2000 ignores such problems as child poverty at a time when 40% of all children are classified as poor; it ignores the pressing problem of unemployment when the unemployment rate among black male teens in March 1991 was 38.4 percent. It ignores issues of health care, teen-age pregnancy, drugs, violence, and racial discrimination at a time when these issues play a central role in defining the quality of life for increasing numbers of students in this country.[5] Instead of addressing how these issues impact upon schools and undermine how children learn, *America 2000* focuses on issues such as testing and choice.[6]

Testing runs the risk of becoming a code word for training educational leaders in the language of management, measurement, and efficiency. Testing has become the new ideological weapon in developing standardized curricula; a weapon that ignores how schools can serve populations of students that differ vastly with respect to cultural diversity, academic and economic resources, and classroom opportunities. The current infatuation with national testing shores up models of leadership wedded to the politics of not-naming, that is, a politics that ruthlessly expunges from its vocabulary how schools function through various sorting, administrative, and pedagogical processes to silence and marginalize teachers and students from developing curricula, locating themselves in their own histories, and speaking as subjects rather than as objects of educational reform.[7] There is no talk in this language of how the curriculum works to secure particular

forms of authority. There is a disturbing silence in this perspective around the issue of who speaks, for whom, and under what conditions. Similarly, within this discourse of quantification and standardization there is little attention given to the issue of the relationship between knowledge and power. Missing are questions regarding: What constitutes really useful knowledge? Whose interests does it serve? What kinds of social relations does it structure and at what price? How does school knowledge enable those who have been generally excluded from schools to speak and act with dignity?

In addition to the current emphasis on testing, school choice has become a fundamental element in the new educational reform movement. Choice is organized and developed according to the imperatives of the market place. The current proposals for choice appeal to the logic of competitiveness, individualism, and achievement. While these attributes might sound plausible as fundamental elements in the logic of educational reform, they are, in fact, used by neo-conservatives to develop a pattern of educational leadership that undermines the responsibility of public service, ruptures the relationship between schools and the community, and diverts educators from the responsibility for improving education for all students in all schools. Choice is reduced to "privatization and the idea that schools would be better off if they were operated in a free market"(Meier, 1991, p. 329). These choice proposals are at odds with providing diversity within schools that serve as neighborhood centers. Choice is not defined as a strategy to broaden the powers of teachers, students, and parents within neighborhood schools. On the contrary, choice is set against democracy, which is viewed as outdated, hopelessly complex, and unsuited to the privileges of class, wealth, and cultural uniformity.[8]

There is a disturbing implication in current reform agendas in the United States that as a society we have demanded *not too little, but too much* of democracy. Implicit in *America 2000*, but more explicitly stated in J. Chubb & T. Moe (1990), *Politics, Markets, and American Schools*, is a dismissal of democracy as a political and moral referent for combining the capacity of individuals to pursue their own goals while simultaneously cultivating civic virtues that promote the public good.[9] What is being refused in these reports is the urgent task of addressing forms of education which provide a democratic curriculum and culture that educates students as both individual subjects and as part of a democratic public culture. Rather than engaging the complex relationship between the twin logic of identity and freedom, on the one hand, and community and public responsibility on the other, the new right attempts to disarticulate democracy and citizenship from the principles of social justice, freedom, and equality. Within this discourse

citizenship is linked to a pedagogical practice that subordinates "all areas of life to the rule of the market and all democratic and intermediate institutions to the rule of the executive" (Mouffe, 1988, p. 29). Not only does such a discourse on leadership and schooling promote the exit of ethics and schooling from politics, but it offers little help in understanding how schools can contribute to the concept of citizenship regulated by the claims of social justice, equality, and community. In fact, the understanding of choice and leadership that informs both *America 2000* and the work of Chubb and Moe is drawn around a limited picture of individual needs and consumer-driven desires which is fundamentally demeaning in its suggestion that "the market express[es] the paradigmatic view of human relations and what human beings could become" (Bellah, 1991, p. 30).

Current Educational Reform and Conceptions of Leadership

The current infatuation with the market can be seen in the support by mainstream educators and politicians of the view that leadership is a practice to be modeled on the style and ideology of leading corporate executives. Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander, selects David Kearns, former chief executive officer of the Xerox Corporation, as the nominee for Deputy Secretary of Education. Lee Iaccoca is mentioned as a serious candidate to run for the presidency of the United States. Pragmatism and the bottom line erase the memories and accomplishments of leaders such as Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Robert Kennedy, and Vaclav Havel who speak to a higher standard of leadership. In the meantime, *America 2000* calls upon prominent business leaders to support the establishment of 535 new model schools and to finance the development of these prototypes for other systems to emulate. A central thrust for the current reform movement has been to forge a new alliance between the corporate sector and schools. In this case, the business of leadership narrows the relationship between democracy and freedom by leading schools down the path of corporate ethics and marketplace ideology. This becomes more clear as industry is called upon increasingly to intervene in local schools to provide teachers, advisers, curriculum materials, and other fundamental support and policy oriented services.

This view of educational leadership is paradoxical. Not only does it ignore the language of community, solidarity, and the public good, it also draws unproblematically upon a sector of society that has given the American public the savings and loan scandals, the age of corporate buyouts, the proliferation of "junk" bonds, insider trading, and the degree and depth of white collar crime characteristic of the Reagan/Bush era. It has

also produced multinational corporate mergers that eliminate jobs and violate the public trust, and made leadership synonymous with the logic of the bottom line, self-interests, and corporate avarice. What is profoundly disturbing in this celebration of the alleged free market, as Robert Bellah (1985) and his associates have pointed out, is that it often rests on a "stubborn fear of acknowledging structures of interdependence in a technologically complex society dominated by giant corporations and an increasingly powerful state" (p. 23). There is a strong propensity in this view of leadership to abstract leadership from ethical responsibility, to subordinate basic human needs to narrow market measures, and to downplay the importance of creating support systems that name, address, and help students who are caught in the spiraling web of unemployment, poverty, racial discrimination, and institutional abuse.

This is not meant to suggest that questions of leadership and schooling should avoid engaging issues concerning work, economics, and the market place. What is essential here, especially for a reconstructed notion of leadership, is that a balance must be struck between institutions and public cultures that promote and cultivate human nurturance and those that "express the purely quantitative thinking of the market" (Bellah, 1985, p. 90). While students need to learn the necessary skills and knowledge to qualify for decent employment, they also need to be literate in the discourse of economic and social justice.[10] More importantly, the purpose and meaning of schooling should not define schools as simply an adjunct of the corporation. The vision of American education should not be limited to making the United States number one in the international marketplace or to more grandiose dreams of presiding over a new world order. Quite the contrary, the real challenge of leadership is to broaden its definition beyond the ethically truncated parameters of these concerns to the more vital imperatives of educating students to live in a multicultural world, to face the challenge of reconciling difference and community, and to address what it means to have a voice in shaping one's future as part of a broader task of enriching and extending the imperatives of democracy and human rights on both a national and global level. Through such a perspective, leadership takes up the issues of power, culture, and identity within an ethical discourse that points to those practices between the self and others that oblige one "to make an ethical decision, to say: here I stand... here and now I face another who demands of me an ethical response" (Kearney, 1988, p. 361).

Leadership poses the issue of responsibility as a social relationship in which difference and otherness become articulated into practices that offer resistance to forms of domination and oppression. This raises the need for a discourse of leadership which prompts a discriminating response to

others, one which makes students, for example, attentive to their own implication in particular forms of human suffering and to the oppression of others whose voices demand recognition and support. Leadership in this view means being able to imagine otherwise, which "entails, at the socio-political level, an 'acting otherwise'" (Kearney, 1988, p. 457). This requires educators to redefine the language of leadership in ways that commit administrators, teachers, and students to a discerning conception of democratic community in which the relationship between the self and the other is constituted in practices sustained by historical memories, actualities, and further possibilities of a just and humane society.[11]

Ethically, the crisis of leadership is also evident in the refusal of the new educational reform movement to develop a critical moral discourse. Missing from the current mainstream emphasis on educational reform is a language that can illuminate what administrators, teachers, and other cultural workers actually do in terms of the underlying principles and values that structure the stories, visions, and experiences they use to organize and produce particular classroom experiences and social identities. Accountability, in current mainstream discourse, offers no insights into how schools should prepare students to push against the oppressive boundaries of gender, class, race, and age domination. Nor does such a language provide the conditions for students to interrogate the curriculum as a text deeply implicated in issues and struggles concerning self-identity, culture, power, and history. In effect, the crisis of leadership is grounded, in part, in a refusal to address how particular forms of authority are secured and legitimized at the expense of cultural democracy, critical citizenship, and basic human rights. By refusing to examine the values that frame how authority is constructed and to define leadership as a political and pedagogical practice, mainstream educational reformers subordinate the discourse of ethics to the rules of management and efficiency. Accordingly, leadership does not focus on how to educate prospective administrators and teachers to address the problems facing public schools in the United States as a crisis of citizenship and ethics. Instead, the current infatuation with "leadership" by the Bush Administration and its allies presupposes that the solution to the problems of American schooling lie in the related spheres of management and economics rather than in the realms of values and politics.[12]

The Possibilities in Educational Leadership for a New Educational Reform

The conservative philosophy which permeates mainstream educational reforms is not only suggestive of how to imagine the future, it is also

indicative of those "dreams" and "stories" that threaten forms of education integral to the development of critical citizens who are capable of exercising civic courage and the moral leadership necessary to promote and advance the language of democracy. It is, furthermore, a signpost indicating one of the major challenges schools of education will have to face. In what follows, I want to address that challenge in somewhat general terms through the construction of what I call the language of demystification and possibility.[13]

Schools of education have an historic opportunity to reclaim the language of substantive democracy, critical citizenship, and social responsibility. Instead of weaving dreams limited to the ever-accelerating demand for tougher tests, accountability schemes, and leadership models forged in terms of a sterile technicism, such programs can become part of a collective effort to build and revitalize a democratic culture which is open rather than fixed, disputed rather than given, and supportive rather than intolerant of cultural difference. Leadership programs forged in the twin logic of individual freedom and social justice can educate existing and future teachers and administrators to work collectively by refusing the role of the disconnected expert and specialist, and by adopting in its place the role of the engaged and transformative intellectual.

This is not to suggest that administrators, teachers, and students who inhabit schools of education become wedded to an abstract ideal that removes them from everyday life and turns them into prophets of perfection and certainty. On the contrary, it represents a call for schools of education to perform a noble public service; that is, to educate administrators and teachers to undertake social criticism as public and concerned educators who address the most pressing social and political issues of their neighborhood, community, and society. Rather than celebrating the abstract legacies of expertise and professionalism, leadership, in this case, reconstitutes and rewrites itself through educators who make organic connections with the historical traditions that offer themselves and their students a voice, history, and sense of belonging.

Schools of education need to inspire their students by example to find ways to get involved, to make a difference, and to "lay bare the ways in which meaning is produced and mobilized for the maintenance of relations of domination" (West, 1991, p. 22). This vision of teachers and administrators as engaged intellectuals is not one that simply argues for tolerance. Rather, it is a model of leadership and pedagogical practice marked by forms of political agency and moral courage that expands the meaning of pedagogy to all sites where knowledge and social identities are produced. Such an approach recognizes education as a process that is not synonymous

with the more narrow definition of schooling. Education as a pedagogical practice embraces all social and cultural spheres engaged in the production of texts, images, knowledge, values, and identities. In this broader context of education, the practice of leadership serves as a referent for analyzing the relevancies that unite administrators and teachers with other cultural workers who share a similar sense of vocation in combining intellectual work with social responsibility as part of the task of "deepening those political [and cultural practices] that go in the direction of a 'radical democracy'" (Laclau, 1988, p. 23).[14] This is a form of leadership that links schools to the wider society, one that positions administrators, teachers, students, and others as border intellectuals who constantly move between and across disciplinary, cultural, and social spheres to broaden the possibility for dialogue, public conversation, and collective struggle. Peter McLaren calls this "an arch of social dreaming" (1991, p. 170).

One starting point for educators to develop an emancipatory theory of leadership is the creation of a public language that is theoretically rigorous, publicly accessible, ethically grounded, and which speaks to a sense of utopian purpose. This language would refuse to reconcile schooling with forms of tracking, testing and accountability that promote inequality by unconsciously ignoring cultural attributes of disadvantaged racial and class minorities. The vocabulary of educational leadership needs a language that actively acknowledges and challenges those forms of pedagogical silencing which prevent us from becoming aware of and offended by the structures of oppression at work in both institutional and everyday life. Administrators and teachers in schools of education and leadership programs need a new language capable of asking new questions and generating more critical spaces open to the process of negotiation, translation, and experimentation. At the very least, educators need a language that is interdisciplinary, that moves skillfully between theory, practice, and politics. This is a language that makes the issues of culture, power, and ethics primary to understanding how schools construct knowledge, identities, and ways of life that promote nurturing and empowering relations. We need a language in our leadership programs that defends schools as democratic public spheres reponsible for providing an indispensable public service to the nation; a language that is capable of awakening the moral, political and civic responsibilities of our youth. Public schools need to be justified as places in which students are educated in the principles and practices of democracy, not in a version of democracy cleansed of vision, possibility, or struggle.

Educating for democracy cannot be reduced, as some educators, politicians, and groups have argued, to forcing students to say the pledge of allegiance at the beginning of every school day or to speak and think only

in the language of dominant English. The most important task facing educators is not about collecting data or managing competencies, but constructing a pedagogical and political vision which recognizes that the problems with American schools lie in the realm of values, ethics, and vision. Put another way, educating for democracy begins not with test scores but with the questions: What kinds of citizens do we hope to produce through public education? What kind of society do we want to create? This involves educating students to live in a critical democracy and suggests a view of empowerment in which learning becomes the basis for challenging social practices that produce symbolic and real violence, that make some students voiceless and thus powerless, and that also implicate teachers in forms of bigotry, colonialism, and racism. Students need to learn that the relationship between knowledge and power can be emancipatory, that their histories and experiences matter, and that what they say and do can count as part of a wider struggle to change the world around them.

Administrators, teachers, and other cultural workers need a language that makes them self-conscious of the historically contingent nature of their own theories, methods, and models of inquiry. As educators, we need to recognize the partiality of our own views in order to render them more suspect and open ended; we need to create the conditions and safe spaces that offer teachers and students the opportunity to be border crossers, learn new languages, refigure the boundaries of interdisciplinary discourse, and consistently work to make the familiar strange and the given problematic.[15]

The border crossing metaphor is important here because it speaks to the need for reconstructing the language of leadership and reinventing the curricula and pedagogical practices which characterize our programs, schools, and disciplines. This is a question of both what people know and how they come to know in a particular way within the contexts and constraints of specific social and cultural practices. This suggests some additional considerations.

Administrators and teachers need to work under conditions that allow them to function as intellectuals and not as technicians or clerks. If we are to take intellectuality seriously as part of a theory and practice of leadership, it means giving educators joint power to shape the conditions under which they work, to produce a curriculum that is suited to the interests of the students they actually teach. It means providing administrators, teachers, and other cultural workers with the time, space, and power necessary during the school day to enable them to work collectively in shaping policy and to work with parents and social service agencies in ways that strengthen school-community ties. Teaching must be linked with empowerment and not merely with technical competence. Teaching is not about carrying out

other people's ideas and rules without question. Teaching requires working within conditions in which power is linked to possibility, collective struggle to democratic reforms, and knowledge to the vast terrain of cultural and social differences that map out the arena of everyday life.

Schools need to close the gap between what they teach and the real world. The curriculum must analyze and deconstruct popular knowledges produced through television and culture industries and be organized around texts and images that relate directly to the communities, cultures, and traditions that give students an historical sense of identity and place. The content of the curriculum needs to affirm and critically enrich the meaning, language, and knowledge that different students actually use to negotiate and inform their lives. While there is no simple route to incorporating the student experience or popular culture into the curriculum, especially in light of the real fear by students of having these spheres colonized by the schools, it is imperative that these issues be addressed in ways that are as self-critical of the school as they are supportive and critical of the voices and histories that students bring with them to the school.

Public schools need curricula that link the language of the neighborhood, city, and state with the languages of other traditions; a postmodern curriculum in which storytelling evokes memories shared and histories made through difference, struggle, and hope. This is not meant to suggest that the experiences that students bring to schools be merely affirmed. On the contrary, one begins with such experiences but does not treat them as undisputed nor limit what is taught to those experiences. Experience needs to be viewed from a position of empowerment rather than from a position of weakness. Knowledge needs to be made meaningful in order to be made critical and transformative. The curriculum needs to be tailored to the voices that students already have so that they can extend those voices into other galaxies, which may be less familiar, but are equally important as terrains of knowledge and possibility.[16]

If administrators and teachers are to take an active role in raising questions about what they teach, how they are to teach, and the larger goals for which they are striving, they must take a more critical role in reconstructing educational leadership that is consistent with what it means to make cultural diversity and social justice central to pedagogy and democratic life. Hence, educators need to provide new theories that raise issues about how educational leaders can develop an educational project, as Jean-Paul Sartre (1963) points out, grounded in a vision of leadership and freedom that embodies both a language of critique and possibility, one that represents both a "flight and a leap ahead, at once refusal and a realization" (p. 92). Teachers need to understand more critically what they know and how they

come to know in a way that enables them to venture into communities of difference so that they can reconceptualize the role of the school as both a human service center and a neighborhood resource. This means, as Maxine Greene (1988) has been claiming for years, that educational leaders must offer existing and prospective administrators, teachers, and students multiple languages and diverse literacies so that they are able to communicate across borders of cultural difference, histories, and experiences. The concept of educational leadership is rooted in multicultural literacy in which social equality and cultural differences co-exist with the principles and practices that inform substantive participatory democracy (Fraser, 1989).

A Language of Critique and Possibility

I want to conclude by emphasizing that prospective and existing educators in conjunction with cultural workers be given the opportunity to develop the following elements of a language of critique and possibility.

First, they would be exposed to a language of historical perspective. By perspective I mean the awareness that the way things are is not the way they have always been or must necessarily be in the future. To have perspective is to link historical inquiry to the imperatives of moral and political agency; it is to locate ourselves and our visions inside the language of history and possibility.

Second. educational administrators, teachers, and students should be immersed in the language of social criticism, rendered here as a deliberate notion of unveiling, negating, and problematizing. This means developing the ability and skills to think in oppositional terms, to deconstruct the assumptions and interests that limit and legitimate the very questions we ask as educational leaders. It means understanding the limits of our own language as well as the implications of the social practices we construct on the basis of the language we use to exercise authority and power. It means developing a language that can question public forms, address social injustices, and break the tyranny of the present.

Third, educational leaders need to be skilled in the language of remembrance. Remembrance rejects knowledge as merely an inheritance, and transmission as its only form of practice. Remembrance sees knowledge as a social and historical construction that is always the object of struggle. It is not preoccupied with the ordinary but with that which is distinctive and extraordinary. It is concerned not with societies that are quiet, which reduce learning to reverence, procedure and whispers, but with forms of public life that are noisy, that are engaged in dialogue and vociferous speech. In this

view, truth is not solely contained in practice, it is also part of the world of recollections, historical memory, and the tales and stories of those who have established a well-known legacy of democratic struggle and who have too often been silenced, excluded or marginalized.

Fourth, educational leaders need a language of critical imagination, one that both insists and enables them to consider the structure, movement, and opportunities in the contemporary order of things and how we might act to prevent the barbaric and to develop those aspects of public life that point to its best and as yet unrealized possibilities. This is a language of democratic possibilities which asserts that schools play a vital role in developing the political and moral consciousness of its citizens. This language is grounded in educational leadership that does not begin with the question of raising test scores, but with a moral and political vision of what it means to educate students to govern, lead a humane life, and address the social welfare of those less fortunate than themselves. This is leadership that dreams in order to change the world rather than manage it.

Finally, educational leaders need to wage a ceaseless campaign to challenge what Daniel Yankelovich (1985) has called "the money and missiles sense of reality." This philosophy, Yankelovich explains,

> assumes that what really counts in this world are military power and economic realities, and all the rest is sentimental stuff. It has overly constricted the domain of what is real and transformed the large political and moral dilemmas of our time into narrow technical questions that fit the experts' own specialized expertise. This process of technicalizing political issues renders them inaccessible to public understanding and judgment because the public exists in the very domain that is excluded. To narrow issues artificially is to exclude the bulk of citizenry from the policy-shaping process. (p. 11)

The money and missiles sense of reality must be challenged through a different vision of public life; a vision which demands a reallocation of resources away from the killing machines of the defense industry to programs that insure that every child in this country has the opportunity for gaining access to a free and equal education; a vision that sees public schooling in this country as an essential institution for reconstructing and furthering the imperatives of a democratic and just culture.

Footnotes

[1]For two commentaries on the related nature of the decline of democracy in the United States and the rise of democratic struggles in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, see Euben, J. P. (1991). Democracy in America: Bringing it all back home. In B. Murchland (Ed.), *Higher education and the*

practice of democratic politics (pp. 14-22). Dayton: Kettering Foundation; and Giroux, H. A. (1991). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education.* New York: Routledge, (chapter 3).

[2]For a revealing analysis of some of these issues, see Phillips, K. (1991). *The politics of the rich and the poor.* New York: Harper Perennial. For an analysis of how these issues relate to education, see Shapiro, S. (1990). *Between capitalism and democracy.* New York: Bergin and Garvey; Giroux, H.A. (1988). *Schooling and the struggle for public life.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota; Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom.* New York: Teachers College Press; Mc Laren, P. (1989). *Life in schools.* New York: Longman, Inc.

[3]Throughout this paper, I use the term democracy and democratic society. Both terms, in this case, are linked to citizenship understood as a form of self-management constituted in all major economic, social, and cultural spheres of society. Democracy in this context takes up the issue of transferring power from elites and executive authorities, who control the economic and cultural apparatuses of society, to those producers who wield power at the local level. At stake here is making democracy concrete through the organization and exercise of horizontal power in which knowledge must be widely shared through education and other technologies of culture. At issue also is recognizing that democracy is not merely about the formality of voting but more substantively about access to the technological and cultural resources necessary to be informed, make decisions, and exercise control over the material and ideological forces that govern peoples' lives. I believe that democracy and citizenship must occupy the center of an emancipatory project designed to educate students to the expanding claims of needs, rights, and obligations that are increasingly being promoted by new social groups and movements such as feminists, black and ethnic movements, ecology activists, gay and lesbian groups, and vulnerable minorities such as children and the aged. Democratic education in this instance would address the question of membership in a community – who does and does not belong; it would provide opportunities for students to not only learn the right but also the responsibilities needed to sustain a democratic public life. As such, it would not be enough to call for a closer link between the school curriculum and community. What is also needed is the opportunity for students to perform a public service that allows them to take up the issue and practice of social reform as part of a broader attempt to identify and ameliorate, through collective struggle, forms of inequality and human suffering. These issues are taken up in Fraser, N. (1989). *Unruly*

practices: Power, discourse and gender in contemporary social theory. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.; Hall, S., & Held, D. (1989). Citizens and citizenship. In S. Hall & J. Martin (Eds.). *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s* (pp. 173-188). London: Verso.; Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Schooling and the struggle for public life.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

[4]For programs that work, see Levin, H. M. (1988). *Accelerated schools for at-risk students* (CPRE Research Report Series RR-010). New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Policy Research in Education, Rutgers University.; Levin, H. M. (1990). At-risk students in a yuppie age. *Educational Policy, 4*(4), pp. 283-295; Schorr, D. (1987). *Within our reach: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage.* New York: Doubleday; Meier, D. (June, 1987). Central Park East: An alternative story. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 753-757; Comer, J. (1980). *School power.* New York: Free Press.

[5]For an analysis of existing conditions of poverty, see *Child poverty in America* (1991). Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.; *Beyond rhetoric: A new American agenda for children and families: Final report* (1991). Washington, DC: National Commission on Children.; Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools.* New York: Crown Publishers.

[6]For a discussion of the narrow and exclusionary character of the current reform movement and the assumptions that circumscribe the reform proposals, see Astuto, T. A., & Clark, D. L. (in press). Challenging the limits of school restructuring and reform. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *1992 NSSE Yearbook.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

[7]For an excellent analysis of how the politics of not naming works in public schools, see Fine, M. (1991). *Framing dropouts: Notes on the politics of an urban public school.* Albany, NY: SUNY Press, (chapter 2).

[8]Choice does not have to be defined in terms that reduce it to either the issue of vouchers or the imperatives of the market. For some interesting comments on the history, meaning, and struggle over the use of choice as part of the language of democratic empowerment, see Nathan, J. (June 1987). Results and future prospects of state efforts to increase choice among schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 746-752; Raywid, M. A. (June 1987). Public choice, yes; vouchers, no! *Phi Delta Kappan*, 762-769; Meier, D. (March 4, 1991). Choice can save public education. *The Nation*, 253, 266-271.

[9]Needless to say, Chubb and Moe's *Politics, Markets, and American Schools* is the subject of heated debate, which in some cases creates strange bedfellows from among the radicals and neo-conservatives. See, for example: Gintis, H., Cox, B., Green, A., & Hickox, M. (1991). Politics, markets, and America's schools. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 12*(3), 381-396; for an outstanding analysis of the elitist and conservative assumptions that inform Chubb and Moe's book, see Fowler, F. C. (in press). The shocking ideological integrity of Chubb and Moe. *Journal of Education.*

[10]This issue is taken up in Simon, R. I., Dippo, D., & Schenke, A. (1991). *Learning work: A critical pedagogy of work education.* New York: Bergin and Garvey.

[11]The issue of emancipatory leadership has been taken up by others, though this discourse is marginal to the larger field of educational administration. For example, see Foster, W. (1986). *Paradigms and promises: New approaches to educational administration.* Buffalo, NY: Prometheus; Quantz, R. A., Cambron-McCabe, N., & Dantley, M. (1991). Preparing school administrators for democratic authority: A critical approach to graduate education. *The Urban Review, 21*(1), 3-19; Maxcy, S. J. (1991). *Educational leadership: A critical pragmatic perspective.* New York: Bergin and Garvey.

[12]The reduction of democracy to issues of management and social engineering can be seen clearly in both the business community and academic community. Edward Bernays, the alleged founder of the science of public relations described the "engineering of consent" as the "essence of democracy." Bernays clearly understood that the people who have the resources and power also have the means to reduce democracy to a marketing campaign. Given that Bernays made this comment in the 1920s, he may be one of the original theoreticians of the postmodern age where the image replaces reality and the politics of representation replaces the politics of everyday life. Of course, the potential of democracy has also been expressed as part of a politics of containment in which real democratic participation was derided as an excess of democracy. For example, see Crozier, M. , Huntington, S. P., & Watanuke, J. (1975). *The crisis of democracy.* New York: New York University Press. For an interesting analysis of these issues, see Chomsky, N. (1989). *Necessary illusions: Thought control in democratic societies.* Boston: South End Press; Chomsky, N. (1991). *Media control: The spectacular achievements of propaganda.* Westfield, NJ: Open Magazine.

[13]I take the word demystification from Cornel West. He argues that "Demystification is a theoretical activity that attempts to give explanations that account for the role and function of specific social practices. . . . demystification gives theory a prominent role and the intellectual a political task. . . .[in highlighting] how modes of interpretation 'serve to sustain social relations which are asymmetrical with regard to the organization of power.'" In West, C. (1991). Decentering Europe. *Critical Inquiry, 33*(1), 22-23.

[14]See also a special issue of *New Formations*, (Summer 1991), number 14 which is entirely devoted to the theme "On Democracy." See also, Dahl, R. A. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

[15]This issue is brilliantly developed in the works of many postcolonial theorists who provide an invaluable source of insight for educational theorists. On the politics of location see Clifford, J. (1988). *The predicament of culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, (especially chapter 4 on ethnographic surrealism). Also see, Young, R. (1990). *White mythologies: Writing history and the West*. New York: Routledge; Aronowitz, S., & Giroux, H. A. (1991). *Postmodern education: Politics, culture, and social criticism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; McLaren, P. (Ed.) (1991). *Postmodernism, postcolonialism, and pedagogy*. Victoria, Australia: James Nicholas Publishers.

[16]Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Schooling and the struggle for public life*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; On the issue of everyday life, popular culture, and schooling, see Giroux, H. A., Simon, R. I. et al. (1989). *Popular culture, schooling, and everyday life*. New York: Bergin and Garvey.

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