Education for Democracy:
It Is Not an Issue of Dare; It Is an Issue of Can

By Philip Kovacs

This article operates under the assumption that social studies teachers must teach for democracy, as democracy is not something that occurs or maintains without citizens who have the capacities and demeanors for democratic renewal and growth. In an effort to argue for a democratic ethos towards schooling in general, and for social studies teachers in particular, this paper problematizes *No Child Left Behind* (*NCLB*) and other forms of neoconservative and/or neoliberal reform efforts that prevent social studies teachers, and the schools housing them, from teaching towards democracy in the first place. I close with suggestions for changing the educational landscape so that social studies teachers have the freedom and support to educate for democracy.

I employ a definition of democracy influenced greatly by John Dewey (1927, 1944) and two of his biographers: Jay Martin (2003) and Paul Westbrook (1993). Democracy understood through these individuals is a form of associated living that fosters the growth of the individual through his or her participation in social affairs. Free, reflective, critical inquiry and the welfare of others undergird interaction, communion, and community building. Unlike authoritarian states, democracy requires its members to participate in the political, social, cultural, and economic institutions affecting their development, as democracies believe in the capacity of ordinary individuals to direct the affairs of their society. Active participation in various institutions—the reshaping and

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reinvention of norms, laws, and communities—prevents homogenizing authoritarianism, allowing for individual and community re-creation and growth.

Importantly, democracy is not static. As individuals engage with, reflect on, and critique the worlds they inhabit, democracy itself evolves. As Zygmunt Bauman (2001, p. 55) has explained the term:

> Democracy expresses itself in a continuous and relentless critique of institutions; democracy is an anarchic, disruptive element inside the political system: essentially, a force for dissent and change. One can best recognize a democratic society by its constant complaints that it is not democratic enough.

A political system that ossifies cannot take into account new realities or exigencies. Therefore, democracy requires complaint and challenge, as it is through complaint and challenge that democracies evolve with social, political, and environmental realities. Refusing democratic growth, believing that democracy has for all times been defined, "is an invitation for revolt and revolution" (Dewey, 1927, p. 34). If a country does not invite and allow individuals to participate in its remaking, and if a country does not create spaces for that very challenge, then the country is authoritarian, theocratic, totalitarian, or fascist; it cannot be called democratic. This organic or evolving understanding of democracy helps avoid the potential for a universalizing employment of the term.

With this caveat in place, there are several central tenets that democracy, and by default democratic schools and democratic teachers, embody. "Democracy," in the words of Mark Olssen (2004, p. 64), "insists on the protection of human rights, recognizes the distinctiveness of sub-cultures, ensures the principles of inclusion and openness, and ensures the universal application of the rule of law…." Furthermore, and important to remember at a time in this country's history when elites within government justify discarding all of the above, "democracy is always a movement of an energized public to make elites responsible—it is at its core and most basic foundation the taking back of one's power in the face of the misuse of elite power" (West, 2004, p. 68). Democracy, always and forever, protects human rights, recognizes sub-cultures, ensures the rule of law, allows for challenges to existing law, and values people power over corporatism, oligarchy, plutocracy, theocracy, fascism, fundamentalism, and authoritarianism.

William B. Stanley (2004, p. 192) has argued that "democracy does not just happen; it must be cultivated and learned." It is the contention of this paper that the cultivation of and the learning for democracy should take place in public schools, especially in those classes tasked with studying the social, as "social studies" should offer opportunities for children to engage with and reflect on the communities they inhabit. In an organic, evolving, and participatory democratic society then, students, parents, teachers, and communities would have a shared voice—shared, not equal—in educational agenda setting. Schools influence the communities that they serve, and in a democracy the individuals being influenced

the most should have the largest say, to the best of their abilities, in how they are being influenced.

Michael Engel (2002, p. 2) reminds us that when "social and educational purposes are dictated by forces beyond popular control the avenues of reinvention and growth are closed off." Said differently, if interest groups, ideologues, and corporations dictate educational policy in ways suitable to their needs alone, schools cease to be public, inhibiting the reinvention and growth of individuals and communities.

> If the debate over the future of the schools is conducted entirely within the limits of one theoretical or ideological framework, the quality of that debate degenerates…If only one point of view on the goals and purposes of education predominates, democratic political decision-making ends. (Engel, 2000, p. 10)

Democratic societies must ensure that the quality of debates, whether they concern the reasons for going to war, the reinterpretation of the Constitution, or the purposes of education, never degenerates to authoritarianism, fundamentalism, or economism. In order to keep debate free and critical, democratic societies must help their citizens acquire the skills and dispositions to intelligently engage one another in substantive discussions, discussions which may lead to solutions to their most pressing social problems. Participation in such discussions could and should take place in public schools, schools committed not only to the development of the individual, but to the development of individuals capable of realizing and maintaining an organic, evolving, and participatory democratic social order. If not in schools, if not through democratic teaching and learning, then where and how will future citizens develop the necessary capacities to maintain their states in what Dewey (1927, p. 69) calls "integrity and usefulness"? Towards a democratic education, and a more democratic United States of America, I offer four tenets that social studies teachers, and the schools that house them, must remember if democracy as imagined in this paper is ever to obtain. This list is necessary but not sufficient, as democratic teachers and democratic schools must identify individual nuance and difference in their communities and shape education accordingly.

1. Authority for shaping goals lies in the hands of the people.

2. Education is political.

3. Democratic participation requires a specific type of voice and literacy.

4. Justice, while elusive, is worth striving for; injustice, when discovered, requires action.

Authority for Shaping Goals Lies in the Hands of the People

Understanding that "the ultimate support for democracy at all levels, and

in all contexts…resides in the active participation and willingness of citizens to contest policies" (Olson, 2004, p. 248), democratic schools recognize the right of citizens to shape and contest educational goals and outcomes. Placing children in authoritarian, top-down environments and removing teachers and parents from policy setting, experimentation, reflection, and change teaches children, parents, and teachers that the needs of others are more important than their own. Rather than allowing neoconservative and/or neoliberal interests to dominate educational discourse, progressive scholars in general and social studies teachers in particular must help communities work together to create schools responsive to diverse and evolving needs. Teachers and administrators, and to varying degrees parents and students, should have the freedom, flexibility, and the prescience to develop curricula suitable to time, point, place, and being.

NCLB, with its hierarchical control and disciplinary sanctions, eliminates teacher and administrator autonomy and authority, negating the possibility for recognizing, hearing, and critically engaging with diverse voices; today's public schools are undemocratic by default. Benjamin Barber (1997, p. 29) has argued that "the secret to our strength as a nation" is "our respect for difference." If this is true, then an education that standardizes ultimately weakens this country. In order to respect and nurture difference, Linda Darling-Hammond (1997, p. 45) defines a democratic education as one that "should enable all people to find out and act on who they are, what their passions, gifts, and talents may be, what they care about, and how they want to make a contribution to each other and the world." If the U.S is to remain strong through respect for difference, diversity, deliberation, and innovation, then legislators must support teachers and teaching that nurture and engender difference.

While there may appear to be a danger of extremism in some communities, democratic schools must ultimately abide by the Constitution, which should exist to protect individuals from coercion and oppression. As Amy Guttman (1987, p. 75) explains, "education is not democratic if citizens do not collectively influence the purposes of primary schooling nor if they control the content of classroom teaching so as to repress reasonable challenges to dominant political perspectives." Schools that repress forms of knowledge due to political, market, or religious ideology inhibit discourse and diversity rendering them fundamentalist. Conversely, democratic schools examine various ideologies ensuring that one, including democracy, does not ascend to oppress.

There are over 299 million Americans. While they undoubtedly share many traits and values, American communities reveal a great deal of diversity, diversity that schools and teachers must nurture and respect. Atlanta, Georgia's growing Latino population might have needs different from students living in Chinatown, New York (Pang & Jones, 2004). Minority students might need different types of education than children born into the dominant culture (Banks, 2000); boys might need different types of education than girls (Gurian & Stevens, 2005); poor students might

need different types of education than wealthier students (Rothstein, 2004); students struggling with sexual identity, might need different types of education than students comfortable with who and where they are (Callahan, 2001); and all students might benefit from education which responds to the unique ways they interface with their worlds (Gardner, 2005). Despite abundant research arguing against a homogenizing approach to schooling, neoconservative and neoliberal reformers force schools and teachers to adhere to norms established by corporate and federal leaders (Kovacs, 2007a; Kovacs 2007b). As a result, the teachers, students, and parents learn that their needs are secondary to the standards set by federal legislators, respodning to the demands of corporate America (Emery & Ohanian, 2004).

In addition to housing a multicultural population, the United States is geographically diverse, and unique, temporal, local events occur within its borders that impact citizens differently. Katrina serves as a recent example. The children displaced by the disaster arguably have more on their minds than school books, and addressing their needs requires more than filling their heads with X, Y, and Z content. The shock of suffering through the storm and the difficulties inherent in living in one of the poorest parts of the country help explain why Katrina evacuees are doing so poorly on their annual tests. On the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, for example, "Only 58 percent of evacuees in third grade passed the reading portion, compared with 89 percent of all students. In fifth grade, 46 percent of evacuees passed the reading portion, versus 80 percent among all students" (Breed, 2006, para. 15) It is my contention that a more democratic system of education would have taken the plight of these children, 38,000 in Texas alone, into account before forcing them to take reading tests. Holding these children back, as Texas authorities plan to do, is not only undemocratic, it is unconscionable, as this "mean accountability" will do nothing for the stress and emotional fatigue undeniably affecting these children.

In democratic schools student experience should be central to a student's education. Who is this student? Where has she been? Where does she want to go? What skills and capacities will help her get there? Responding to such questions before standardizing a student's curriculum allows for what Henry Giroux (2005, p. 197) calls a "pedagogy of possibility," a pedagogy where "student experience provides the basis for analyzing the social forms that reconstruct the subjective character of the stories, memories, and meanings that are in place when students come to schools." Such a pedagogy, one responsive to the subjective nature of student experience, cannot take place in schools which reduce student development to the development necessary for a neat fit into a hyper-productive United States of America. The words of Ralph Waldo Emerson are apropos here, for Emerson believed that education must "respect the child." "It is not for you to choose what he shall know, what he shall do," explained Emerson (2004, p. 236), who warned educators that through too much "tampering and thwarting and too much governing, [the child] may be hindered from his end and kept out of his own." NCLB, with its restrictions and prescriptions, its tampering and thwarting, hinders children by enforcing a limited,

prescribed curriculum. A social studies teacher aware of the negative effects of standardization and homogenization might be able to liberate children from both, provided she or he receives an education that encourages political activism and engagement. Such an education would prepare social studies teachers to take an active, indeed central, role in charting the course of U.S. schools and classrooms.

Education Is Political

Democracies cannot exist without people participating in them. If students are to become citizens who participate in and protect their democracies, then schools, and social studies teachers in particular, must educate them with that end in mind. "Education not only speaks to the public," notes Benjamin Barber (2004, p. 5),

> …it is the means by which a public is forged. It is how individuals are transformed into responsible participants in the communities of the classroom, the neighborhood, the town, the nation and (in schools that recognize the new interdependence of our times) the world to which they belong.

If schools are to become spaces where "individuals are transformed into responsible participants," then schools must be transformed from regulatory test-prep centers into something they have never been, as public schools have never been spaces whose focus was on democracy, despite protestations to the contrary from the far Right (Kliebard, 1986; Brosio, 1994; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Given the freedom to help nurture and develop responsible participants, social studies teachers might move from having their students memorize the Constitution to understanding it as a living document, one created to protect citizens from oppressive minorities.

Arguably, rote memorization and a standardized, stick-driven approach to learning has led to a lack of student appreciation for the oldest ideals of this country, as problematic as some postmodernists, poststructuralists, and postcolonialists may find them. Consider, for example, a recent study by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. "The project surveyed more than 100,000 high school students, nearly 8,000 teachers and more than 500 administrators and principals," with the goal of determining student knowledge of and appreciation for the First Amendment (Yalof & Dautrich, 2004, Introduction). Given that the First Amendment is one of the bedrocks of U.S. democracy, their report is not encouraging: 49% of students believed that the government should regulate newspapers; 35% of students believed that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees; an additional 21% did not know enough about the First Amendment to state an opinion (Yalof & Dautrich, 2004, pp. 3-5). A key finding, however, was that students who participate in school media activities such as newspapers or video production not only know more about the First Amendment, they are more likely to believe that it is important.

Troubling for democracy as explored in this article is that 21% of schools surveyed reported offering "no student media whatsoever" (Yalof & Dautrich, 2004, p. 13). It is not lack of want that prevents schools and students from participating

in such activities; according to the report, "most administrators say they would like to see their school expand existing student media, but lack of financial resources is the main obstacle (Yalof & Dautrich, 2004, p. 10). Over the past five years, as humanities courses have been replaced by math and reading and schools have focused their budgets on test preparation, funding for media related programs has become less of a priority than achievement narrowly defined.

Individuals concerned by the fact that one-third of American high school students believe the First Amendment goes too far in its protections might ask why these students think this way. Where, outside of schools, do students learn about First Amendment rights? If schools have focused more on basic skills than on engaging with and interrogating the political bedrocks of U.S. society, should anyone be surprised that American students think this way? Can social studies teachers teach towards democracy if their students cannot participate in programs that help them explore the concept?

Ultimately, schools with a myopic focus on accountability and test scores fail in the preparation of democratic citizens due to how they spend their time and resources: policing, disciplining, and punishing. In order to avoid the authoritarianism and fundamentalism such curricula lead to, Kurt Salamun (2004, p. 171) argues that there are three "political intentions" that must guide education in democratic societies. These intentions include:

> …teaching as many people as possible to appreciate and to justify basic values of political democracies, such as pluralism, tolerance, individual freedom, social justice, respect for human rights, and especially freedom of speech and the press; influencing as many people as possible to resist antidemocratic tendencies in policy making; and enabling as many people as possible to criticize thought patterns and worldviews that are spread by the enemies of a democratic, open society.

These three intentions require an appreciation for diversity and a critical consciousness that might make some individuals uncomfortable. How much freedom should students have to speak? If children are taught to sit obediently, never questioning the teacher, will they grow into citizens capable of and willing to challenge "worldviews that are spread by the enemies of a democratic, open society?" If students don't learn to resist antidemocratic tendencies in America's schools (surveillance, authoritarianism, and market-fundamentalism), will they suddenly become adults capable of identifying what Freire (2003) refers to as "anti-dialogical" behavior, behavior that suppresses democracy via conquest, manipulation, internal-division, and cultural imperialism?

Democratic Participation Requires a Specific Type of Voice and Literacy

If democracies require citizens who participate in the institutions that shape their lives, citizens must acquire a specific type of voice, and a specific type of

literacy, to do so. A state cannot be maintained in "integrity and usefulness" if the citizens of the state do not have the ability to level complaints. Doing so necessitates a type of voice comfortable with expressing needs and challenging status quo givens. Rejecting corporate-regulated voice, democratic schools empower students by valuing and exploring who students are, where students have been, and what students have to say. As students grow and develop in varied and unique cultures, they also develop varied and unique voices. Public schools must respect cultural, racial, gender, sexual, and class differences, and the voices expressing them; otherwise, they teach children that neither their lived experiences nor their cultural heritages matter. This is cloning at best and ethnic cleansing at worst, and such a lesson is ultimately oppressive and miseducative.

Schooling becomes oppressive when teachers legitimate one set of values and marginalize others. This oppressive behavior ultimately creates a miseducative environment, causing some students to reject schooling completely, such as when students develop "counteracademic attitudes" and behaviors because school does not relate to who, where, and when they are (Ogbu, 1988). These behaviors result in low grades, student-teacher conflict, suspensions, and dropouts, thus reducing the child's chances of becoming an engaged, contributing, and free (relatively) member of society. When teachers deligitimate student voice, or ignore it altogether, they forward authoritarianism and fundamentalism, as both –isms reject the belief that an individual's voice matters.

A social studies teacher with the freedom and support to teach towards democratic engagement and renewal would help students explore and develop their voices through engendering a specific type of literacy. Memorizing the dates of wars or the Bill of Rights, identifying important court cases, and knowing how a bill becomes a law represent a very basic notion of literacy (and an important one at that), but being able to memorize these facts does not necessarily give a student the ability to read, critique, and resist the summons of marketers, elites, or their still-developing peers. If students are going to mature into citizens who continuously develop and raise their intelligent, critical, and compassionate voices, they need a type of literacy above and beyond factual comprehension. Unlike authoritarian and fundamentalist regimes, democracy requires a "critical literacy," a literacy which (1) disrupts the commonplace, and (2) interrogates multiple viewpoints (Lewison, Flint, & Sluys, 2002).

Disrupting the commonplace asks students to look at texts and their worlds through multiple lenses, understanding that ideas, peoples, histories, medias, and events shape us in particular ways. Students experience the world through a variety of media and formats. They read newspapers, listen to music, talk with neighbors and friends, watch television and movies, and log-on to various websites. Some of these encounters require attention to what is being said, how it is being said, who is saying it and why, lest students develop into citizens who appropriate ideas and ideologies that are not necessarily beneficial or healthy. If scholars desire citizens

who identify potential threats to democracy, then democratic schooling needs to provide social studies teachers and their students with the tools, time, and freedom to read their "commonplace" worlds for those very threats.

Interrogating multiple viewpoints requires that students understand and consider diverse interpretations and expressions of history and experience. In order to do so, social studies teachers must help their children engage in "critical inquiry." Such inquiry includes:

> knowing how to ask questions and what kinds of questions need to be asked in a given circumstance; knowing how to evaluate the legitimacy and accuracy of an argument and the data that accompany it, [the ability] to view issues from a variety of perspectives, and [the capacity] to evaluate the implications of a given text, read between the lines, and recognize and understand the unstated, the omitted, the subtext. (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, & Goodlad, 2004, p. 8)

Such skills can neither be generated nor evaluated through Scantron™ tests, as the above skills require examining, accepting, rejecting, recalling, producing, and voicing parts and pieces of multiple arguments.

Reducing education to neat, fill-in-the-circle tests undermines critical literacy, explains Svi Shapiro (2005, p. 289), by negating "those learning possibilities that emphasize the development of a critical intelligence, the stimulation of our imagination, [and] the quest to make meaning out of experience." Stimulating intelligence, using imagination, and making meaning require students to cultivate, taking again from Shapiro (2005, p. 289), "attitudes that question so-called correct answers or knowledge and to seek, instead, what is unfamiliar, even irreverent or subversive." Arguably, it is the unfamiliar, the irreverent, and the subversive that generates democratic renewal and revival as subaltern groups raise their voices and act for democratic change. In addition to stifling critical literacy by ignoring the unfamiliar, standardized, fill-in-the-blank tests cannot measure critical literacy, as critical literacy never ends. When students arrive at answers to tough questions, they should also be looking at the beginnings of tough new questions, questions social studies teachers should have the freedom and support to ask.

NCLB undermines this sort of questioning, replacing the critical and eternal with the standard and the fixed. As *NCLB* forces schools to align teaching and testing to corporate sanctioned curricula, the types of teaching and the sorts of courses that engender a critical literacy (i.e., history, the arts, and the social sciences) are being discarded to make room for math, science, and a specific type of reading (Von Zastrow, 2004; Center on Education Policy, 2006). At the end of the school day, this reduces the number of students who have developed the voice, literacy, and awareness necessary for participating in democratic deliberation. "In deliberation," explains Mark Olssen, "an understanding of the need for exceptions, the recognition of differences, or the need for modifications can be brought to light and assessed" (2004, p. 261). This sort of deliberation—the recognition of individual

differences and the need for modifications—leads to a more just democratic social order, an order that cannot obtain as long as schools (whether they be publicly or privately controlled) require students to appropriate a voice and literacy reduced to neoconservative and/or neoliberal demands. While deliberation is undoubtedly important, democracy requires more than talk. Kenneth Saltman (2000, p. 1) extends Olssen's point, calling for a type of schooling that not only creates citizens capable of deliberation, but citizens "with the potential for social transformation."

Justice, While Elusive, is Worth Striving for; Injustice, When Discovered, Requires Action

"Students need to understand that social conflict and struggle are a constant part of American history, and that history is, in fact, made through struggle" (Sehr, 1997, p. 93). As our country has aged, women, ethnic minorities, the working class, and (more recently) lesbians and gays, have slowly and laboriously made significant gains towards equal treatment under the law; clearly, more work remains to be done. Their struggles would not have led to any form of justice without the loud voices and public activity of individuals and groups committed to their various causes. If democracy requires individuals capable of reshaping the world in more just and equitable ways, then social studies teachers should encourage students to explore their realities, identify injustice, and act to alter or end oppressive and unjust conditions.

Today's schools create environments that accomplish the opposite. On March 27, 2006 over 36,000 students from 25 Los Angeles County school districts walked out of class in protest over proposed changes to U.S. immigration laws (Student Protests, 2006). They were not alone, as students in Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas also left classes in similar, peaceful protests. Many school officials were not pleased with the behavior and wanted to send children a strong message about their actions. According to Terry Abbott, spokesman for the Houston school district, Houston students might be suspended for three days or expelled. There would also be "severe academic consequences" for those who left class (Radcliff, 2006).

Arguably those students were participating in a process fundamental to the creation of this country, a lesson as important as any academic exercise they might have missed. The United States of America is a nation founded through protest. Had there been no Tea Party, no Stamp Act protest, no refusal to quarter British troops, it is arguable that there would be no United States of America. If women had stayed in the proverbial kitchen and not gathered and marched banner in hand, it is not likely they would have earned the right to vote when they did, later than almost every other developed country. Had there been no protests in the mid 1960s, there would have been no Civil Right's movement, and without large protests, it is likely that the war in Vietnam would have dragged on for much longer than it actually did. If students are to become active members of a participatory democratic social order, punishing them for engaging in one of the hallmarks of such an order is counter productive.

Can students learn to challenge injustice if they are housed in authoritarian institutions? And, importantly, if students don't learn to challenge injustice when they are young, are they likely to become adults who do so? If schools punish students for walking in solidarity with the hungry, the poor, and the sick, what lessons do schools send? I would argue that students, parents, teachers, and communities learn that test scores are more important than basic human rights. If, according to Bauman (2001, p. 55), democracy "is an anarchic, disruptive element inside the political system; essentially, a force for dissent and change," then social studies teachers daring to prepare their children for democracy should help future citizens become that force.

From Dare to Can

This article imagines an education that engenders the necessary capacities for citizens to maintain the state in integrity and usefulness. In an effort to make this paper's lofty ideal educational reality, I conclude with a call for progressive scholars to engage multiple publics in order to form broad coalitions capable of riding public schools of neoconservative and neoliberal influence. This request operates (1) from the understanding that neoconservatives and neoliberals have seized control of schools through the political process (Kovacs, 2007a; Kovacs, 2007b) and (2) the conviction that political control can be wrestled away, given the combined effort of multiple publics who believe democracy offers more than corporatism, crass consumerism, economism, militarism, and other forms of fundamentalism. If social studies teachers are to have spaces where they *can* teach towards democracy, progressive scholars must (1) amplify progressive ideals and (2) develop and maintain a progressive infrastructure capable of supporting the ideals explored throughout this article.

Neoconservatives and neoliberals loudly and aggressively market standardization and "choice," often times tailoring the message and the messengers in order to resonate more deeply with the recipients (Connason, 2003; Brock, 2004; Kovacs, 2007a; Kovacs, 2007b). While progressive reformers do not yet enjoy the same access to the mainstream media as does the far Right, this can be changed by entering multiple public spheres with the same intensity that we bring to journaling and conferencing. To that end, progressive educational reformers need to develop and publicly disseminate information that actively counters neoconservative and neoliberal propaganda while at the same time informing multiple publics, privates, and governmental organizations about what Apple (2005, p. 102) calls "the positive effects of more socially and educationally critical alternatives," alternatives which I have begun to explore in this paper. When Diane Ravitch publishes a piece in the *New York Times*, progressives must immediately counter. When a conservative candidate for office cites neoconservative intellectuals such as Jay P. Greene, progressive scholars must point out the half-truths and misconceptions such intel-

lectuals forward. When ABC airs a program entitled "Stupid in America," progressive scholars must point out the distortions and lies undergirding the "reporting." Perhaps more importantly, progressive scholars must be visible and vocal in the mainstream media before their counterparts on the Right so that they may begin laying out more democratic visions rather than constantly playing defense.

While offering alternatives and visions are important steps, they must be offered in ways accessible to multiple publics, as progressive scholars, present company included, have the tendency to offer alternatives embedded in syntax that prohibits individuals from understanding and utilizing their scholarship. I am not asking scholars to dumb down their work. I am, however, asking them to consider (1) how their work impacts multiple publics and (2) how to get their work to those publics. The final result of a paper on democracy would not be its important appearance in a journal; it would be the translation and distribution of that paper to publics, privates, and governmental organizations, something neoconservatives and neoliberals have understood for years. The failure of scholars to make a larger and public case for why social studies must *dare* to teach for democracy has, arguably, aided those who would replace social studies with more math and science. In an effort to amplify progressive ideals, thus ending neoconservative and neoliberal dominance of public, private, and governmental educational agenda setting, progressive scholars must connect the halls of academia to outside organizations, developing an infrastructure capable of challenging the far Right.

Infrastructure comprises "the organizations and functions that support a movement which is based on underlying ideologies or principles. Infrastructure organizations are able to advance positions that are consistent with the ideology [schooling for democracy] for a range of public issues" (Johnson & Salle, 2004, p. 44). Progressive scholars housed in universities nationwide could create an infrastructure similar to the Right's, using university space and networks to support information gathering and distribution. This network of public school proponents would then engage in a number of activities called for in Johnson and Salle's (2004) "Responding to the Attack on Public Education and Teachers Unions." These activities include: articulating underlying ideologies (a democratic education); conducting research (on attitudes, media, democratic awareness, etc.); creating strategies and coordinating activities (such as coordinated letters to editors, public appearances, and public gatherings); developing model legislation; advising legislators, jurists, politicians, school boards, and other advocacy organizations; preparing papers, communications, and programs (at a variety of cognitive levels) for a number of media channels; recruiting and training new members; and identifying sources of funding for the overall project.

Progressive scholars must also cultivate allies and cooperate with others who share common interests. While teachers, teacher unions, parents, students, and local PTA's are obvious allies, progressive scholars might also work to build coalitions with groups who do not have anything to do, ostensibly, with public education.

Johnson and Salle argue that groups attacked by the Right—unions, environmentalists, trial lawyers, feminists, scientists, the elderly, international organizations, human rights groups, etc.—have multiple incentives to work cooperatively to counter neoconservative and neoliberal educational agendas. Progressive scholars who wish to realize a democratic public education could be identifying, accessing, and utilizing resources (human, time, and financial) to bring together diverse groups of people. Obtaining support from the above groups will facilitate pro-democratic school movements across a number of race, class, and cultural divides so that social studies teachers *can* teach towards democracy. *Teacher Education Quarterly* might then place a call for papers that celebrate democratic schools in general and the practices of democratic social studies teachers in particular.

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