Conflicts and Challenges of Educators', Students' and Families' Education Goals

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The authors explore the ways current curricula continue to frustrate parental and student goals in the classroom, focusing on three separate ethnographic studies of subjects from African American, Appalachian, and Latino backgrounds. The researchers determine that, despite the idiographic nature of their individual studies, many marginalized populations demonstrate overlapping concerns that continue to rest outside the primary foci of educational reform. Results indicate the need for a critical examination of curricular goals and relationship building between educators and families. Revised institutional-level aims should include building on parents' and students' funds of knowledge in an effort create more equitable classroom environments. Locating and dismantling perceived barriers to educational dialogue and opportunity are imperative if our goal is to include diverse cultural viewpoints in the educational process.

"Education is deeply implicated in the politics of culture. The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge" (Apple, 2001).

How can we, as educators, acknowledge the educational goals of individual families while simultaneously reaching educational requirements mandated by local officials? How do curricula determine or limit familial participation in educational aims? It is frequently acknowledged that parental involvement is directly related to student success (Purcell-Gates, 1995; Lawson, 2003). Yet, we also know that perceptions and definitions of parental involvement vary widely. Lawson (2003) addressed a continuum of parental involvement that moves from a school-centric framework, whereby parents solely act to fulfill the school's mission, to a more equitable framework where parents serve as partners in school problem solving and design. His assessment illuminates the idea that any "school reform efforts will be impeded if the meanings and functions of parent involvement are unclear, ambiguous or

competing" (p.78). Further complicating the direction of this discussion, though, are underserved students and families whose own goals often clash or fail to intersect with school sanctioned outcomes.

Despite contemporary efforts to incorporate diverse educational practices in the classroom, curricula continue to devalue cultural differences. As suggested by Michael Apple (2001), "Whether we recognize it or not, curriculum and more general educational issues in the U.S. have always been caught up in the history of class, race, gender, and religious relations" (p. 342), and these issues continue to hamper notions of equality in education. Current curricula, from both the progressive orientation to teaching and the traditional orientation, may not be sufficient without an examination of familial goals. That is, curricula that seek to include multiple voices in the educational process may still alienate the very students educational institutions purport to be helping. Regarding current multicultural pedagogies, McLaren (1995) argues that our educational standards continue to "be based on the cultural capital of the Anglo-middle class" (p. 38). Thus, both the progressive and traditional orientations to teaching may serve to perpetuate and reward specific kinds of cultural practices and knowledge. As such, both students and their families might continue to view themselves in opposition to curricular aims and experience a profound disconnect from the educational process.

The purpose of this article is to examine familial goals in light of educational practices. Through three separate ethnographic studies with parents and students from African-American, Appalachian, and Latino backgrounds, we examine the ways familial goals intersect or clash with classroom/institutional curricula. In particular, we explore the ways cultural capital emerging in home cultures is characterized by parents and students while simultaneously investigating how that same cultural capital is interpreted as being denied or promoted in a classroom setting. We conclude with specific implications and recommendations. The following two questions focus this article: a) How do student and parental educational goals clash and merge with school-sanctioned goals? and b) What are the implications of familial goals on the education of socio-economically marginalized students and cultural minorities?

Revisiting Cultural Clashes

In her recent article, Rolon-Dow (2005) re-visits the importance of foregrounding educational practice in historical and political knowledge. While she argues that educators often "fail to see how racialized practices and beliefs influence institutions and relationships" (p. 78), we assert that an equally important intersection of familial-based values and institution continues to lie dormant in our discussion of critical pedagogy. As suggested in Bourdieu (1984), traditional cultural practices reproduce or

are passed on in formal institutions like public education. Institutions then serve to perpetuate and reward specific kinds of cultural capital by enacting "particular knowledge, linguistic behavior, styles, dispositions, and modes of thought or expression" (Olneck, 2000, p. 320). These means of measuring student achievement are what we mean by the idea of producing cultural capital in the classroom. Consequently, cultural capital is often manufactured by educational values that produce distinctions among individual students. In the case studies provided here, students and families are often labeled as problematic or existing outside the parameters of accepted cultural capital.

Comprehending and addressing disparities in the educational experiences of students from socio-economically marginalized populations is necessary if the overarching project of education is equality. Waters and LeBlanc (2005) succinctly explain that "public education is the key to the operation of a modern state" and that schools work to "create a common understanding of identity in terms of what is imagined as legitimate expressions of nationalism, patriotism and economic activity" (p. 129). Problematic and useful to our analyses here is the idea of "common understanding" and the way it does or does not manifest in parental and student goals. Since "curricular choices are intended to help define those types of citizenship that are perceived as legitimate and those which are not" (p. 129) what role, if any, do marginalized families have in shaping curriculum and what it means to be a citizen?

Most educators and parents see the transformational possibilities inherent in education itself. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) wrote that education is an instrument for liberation or an act of freedom, and that our pursuit of these ideals "cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity" (p. 66). As such, both schools and the communities that help form them must be intimately involved in the process of educating. Relative to the schooling of all children are their parents, but as exhibited by researchers [see Macedo, 2000; Giroux, 1997; Moll & Gonzalez, 2003] parental values or funds of knowledge are frequently made invisible or ignored in mainstream classrooms.

Progressive, Critical Pedagogy Not Enough?

Although current reforms like the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) include language which promises to educate the neediest students, current goals appear to be about achieving a population of citizens that can read and write, but only at basic levels (Allington, 2002), further perpetuating the status quo. If our goals, however, are to establish positive relationships between schools and the families they serve, we must consider particular cultures and histories rarely envisioned during

the construction of school curricula. Importantly Bartholome (1996) argued:

> By understanding the historical specificities of marginalized students, teachers and prospective teachers come to realize that an uncritical focus on methods makes invisible the historical role that schools and their personnel have played and continue to play, not only discriminating against many culturally different groups, but also in denying their humanity. By robbing students of their culture, language, history, and values, schools reduce these students to the status of sub-humans who need to be rescued from their savage selves (p. 233).

Other scholars have made similar arguments (Delpit, 1995; Lensmire, 1998). For instance, Delpit has strongly argued for a re-examination of progressive pedagogy as she makes the claim that in some classrooms considered "best practice" classrooms, the curriculum and discourse in no way resemble that of the students' home cultures and language. She further argues that parents of these children want some practices different from those that progressive educators deem best. Delpit quotes a friend about the disconnection between progressive writing instruction and the goals of the African American community. She says:

> "What do they think? Our children have no fluency? If they think that, they ought to read some of the rap songs my students write all the time. They might not be writing their school assignments, but they sure are writing. Our kids *are* fluent. What they need are the skills to get them into college." (1995, p. 16).

Thus, while traditional instruction has been shown to be fundamentally inadequate for the education of students historically marginalized in school, so too is practice considered "progressive." We argue instead for more attention to the goals of families. Behind the students that Bartolome, Delpit, and Lensmire mention are marginalized parents whose educational concerns and goals frequently rest at the perimeter of our discussions concerning curricula. The following three separate ethnographic studies of parents and students from African-American, Appalachian, and Latino backgrounds make visible the complex impact of parental and student expectations on classroom performance.

Methods

All three studies discussed here used qualitative interviews as one wag information about study participants and their environments. Using a combination of structured and open-ended questions, all researchers recorded and transcribed participant interviews. In each study, our separate methods of analysis combined concepts of social-cultural theory

as proposed by Purcell-Gates (1995), Brandt (2001); Merriam (1998); and Gutierrez & Garcia, 1989.

Purcell-Gates' notions of social-cultural theory suggest that "such a lens allows us to see them (study participants) as cultural beings whose identities and perceptions reflect the nested cultural contexts of ethnic heritage, education/literacy level, gender, and socio-economic status (where) we gain insight into the ways they perceive the literate world and the world of school" (p. 179). Approaching our projects from a similar perspective, the studies presented here highlight cases where students and parents reveal information about their perceptions of school, as well as their interpretations of how schools incorporate or dismiss familial goals. Each researcher validated their data collection through developing close relations with parents, students, and teachers. Importantly, each researcher also independently consulted with outside readers in attempts to curtail researcher bias. All studies positioned researchers as participant observers, while Study 2 also positioned researchers as collaborators. (Please see Appendix for more detailed description of methodologies).

Study 1: Urban African American Family

The first study took place in a large urban city in the Midwest with a high level of poverty and a low level of educational attainment. Investigating Thompson's (2002) argument that "deficit theories about language, culture, home environments, and parents of children of color" have created gaps between some groups of parents and educators, this research examined the roles three African American families played while navigating public school education with their children.

Not surprisingly, all three families in this study expressed love for their children and a belief that their children must behave and do well in school. All families shared strong beliefs about their roles and responsibilities in the education of their children. With respect to identifying their child's educational needs, helping with homework, and monitoring overall school progress, each family believed it was their responsibility as parents to meet these educational needs of their children. With respect to school communication, the families shared a belief that the school's role and responsibility was to communicate with parents. The families believed they also had a role in communicating with the school

One example from Study 1 included a young African American mother of 25, Renaee, and her six-year-old son Montez. Renaee's beliefs and goals for educating her son were grounded in her own experiences as a student less than a decade ago. She had felt excluded and ostracized as a student in high school, primarily because she believed some of the teachers disliked the "black students who were pregnant, because basically all the black girls were the pregnant girls." She wanted a better

experience for her son, one that focused on academics, but she also wanted schooling to respect her son's own discourse and behavioral norms.

For example, Renaee had concerns about the academic expectations that she encountered in homework assignments during Montez's first grade year. Renaee wanted Montez to do well in school, but she was unsure about how to help Montez meet the school's academic expectations. One day Renaee revealed her frustration with the researcher by explaining how she couldn't help him with his homework. She said, " He came home with his homework paper that said 'text-to-self' and 'text-to-a-book.' I didn't have no clue what that meant. What's that mean?".

This popular literacy strategy, which asks students to make connections from the text they are reading to their experiences and other texts, is grounded in educational theory that would be categorized as progressive. Yet, the book in which this strategy was first introduced (Zimmerman & O'Keene, 1997) was written by white educators whose culture clearly differs greatly from many non-mainstream students (e.g., trips to art museums, classical music, and travel are described) as well as from many students from cultural minority groups such as those in the studies we describe here. Even though Renaee was more than willing to help Montez, she was unfamiliar with the language used by the teacher to explain the homework assignment and the academic expectations for the assignment. In a best-case scenario, Renaee exhibited a vested interest in her child's educational well-being, but a combination of the teacher's use of discipline-specific terminology and the parent's lack of knowledge of teachers' discourse greatly hampered parental involvement.

Similarly, parental knowledge of behavioral expectations in the classroom may conflict with those of the actual classroom environment. In the following excerpt we see another example of disconnect between school and parental expectations. Renaee tells the researcher:

> He fell asleep in the classroom yesterday and somebody woke him up. And he got in trouble because somebody woke him up and he hollered. You know when how, you're sleeping, it don't matter where you are. If somebody is bothering you, you're like, leave me alone! You're sleeping, you're forgetting where you at. You're sleeping. So somebody tried to wake him up and he got in trouble. (September , 2002)

Although Renaee expressed desire for Montez to behave in school, her own definitions for appropriate and inappropriate behavior were at odds with those expressed in a school setting. She thought that Montez responded in a normal, predictable manner. She did not want Montez to be "in trouble" at school, but she was surprised that he got in trouble in the first place. Montez's behavior may not have reflected the kind of

behavior Renaee felt deserving of disciplinary measures, and on one level this is understandable. In an era where students are involved in more incidents of violence, falling asleep in class and yelling when jolted awake may seem like a minor offense. What appears to be lacking in this scenario is a clearly defined set of behavioral expectations within the classroom for both parents and students to follow. If viewed from Renaee's position, disciplinary measures for this incident may seem like a penalizing measure that doesn't fit the perceived infraction. Such incidents could create greater feelings of unease between parents and their children's school, and thus place parents and teachers in oppositional, polarized positions. While this may seem like an exaggerated point we argue the importance of thinking through the underlying complications of the race relations involved in this scenario.

African-American students are frequently positioned as part of an achievement gap. According to Sonia Nieto (2004), minority students "continue to achieve below grade level, drop out in much greater numbers, and go to college in much lower proportion than their middle-class and European American peers" (p. 41). Therefore, what kind of narrative does it perpetuate to not only send African-American students home with homework that may not translate for their parents or to punish them for behavior deemed inappropriate by teachers? That is, where are the parents in this dialogue and how much awareness is there on the part of teachers concerning parental expectations? Are African-American parents' issues with school practices merely invisible to educators and administrators? Can parents serve as a mirror for teachers to help them further develop inclusive classroom practices? Implications and recommendations that address these questions follow the descriptions of these studies.

Study 2: Appalachian Families' Goals

In this study, the goal was to track Appalachian children's development both in and out of school within the context of a state-wide reform that valued responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1994), which can be defined as progressive practices that directly respond to students' needs. Researchers selected for participation teachers considered excellent examples of "best practices" and who exhibited positive attitudes towards parents. In collaboration with classroom teachers, researchers documented the academic achievement of 30 children both in and outside of school in efforts to understand the relationship of the state's reform and students' cultural understandings. Teachers and researchers (both now referred to as "researchers") interviewed families regularly during visits to the homes of the targeted children. Researchers worked to build trust and rapport, aware of the inevitable initial awkwardness and strained conversations. Eventually, when the families

and researchers became more comfortable, interviews were tape-recorded. During the visits, researchers viewed the parents as experts on their children, seeking to learn from them. Interviews covered information about the children, then about parents and guardians: their backgrounds, demographics, beliefs and practices about schooling, and goals they had for their children. Researchers documented the families' "funds of knowledge" (Moll & Gonzalez, 2003) in efforts to more consciously connect curriculum to the lives of students. (For details on method and analysis of this study, see McIntyre, Kyle, & Rightmyer, 2005).

In some of the classrooms, the teachers were highly successful at building curriculum around the funds of knowledge of their students. These were reflective teachers who were critical of their own practices. The potential for reaching marginalized groups using this theoretical pedagogical model was exhibited at times in each of the classrooms, but nagging questions remained. Are the goals of the researchers aligned with those of the families? Are schools, even those employing a critical pedagogy, meeting families' goals, or are they perpetuating "particular knowledge, linguistic behavior, styles, dispositions, and modes of thought of expression" (Olneck, 2000, p. 320)? Indeed, with nearly all the teachers, the families' goals seemed to be, at times, at odds with their own goals.

In many cases parents expressed a desire for their children to succeed academically so they could get ahead in the world, but they also desired for their children to retain familial values. These familial or community values were sometimes portrayed by parents as at odds with more academic values. For example, in an interview with the parents of Becky, the father expressed some resentment toward the norms dictated by mainstream society:

"Well, I just think that they (rich people) have all the computers and books and everything, and when they have some time to spend with the kids, they say [uses sarcastic tone], 'hey, lets work on the computer or go to the library' and all. We're not like that; we get on the tractor or go four wheeling" (McIntyre, Sutherland, Ghiacic, & Kyle, 2003).

In this particular instance, Becky's father clearly articulates how his cultural background and goals stand just far enough outside a perceived norm. This same social norm correlates directly with the way schools construct and maintain particular types of cultural capital. "Behavior and practices that lie outside the range of prescribed ways, irrespective of their potential value to learning, are defined as not school, or at least, as inappropriate for school" (Olneck, 2000, p. 321). Although Becky's parents comprehend the educational practices other parents engage in with their children, they also expressed desire for their children

to "have family and friends and neighbors" like they did and "to be happy…" The cultural capital they are attempting to pass to their children exists somewhat outside the realm of school related activities, but they are also activities that serve to strengthen familial connections and values. Many other families in this study expressed a similar view. The desire to have their children stay connected to family and the kinds of activities the family enjoyed together became a refrain across the interviews.

In the final visit with this family, the researchers asked the parents why they thought poor children did not do as well in school as wealthy children. The following dialogue ensued:

Father: Well, we *are* trying to set an example, but we are not reading and studying and doing business and paper every day and computers. Our kids are not seeing us do that. Our kids are seeing us use a paper and pencil to add numbers instead of just knowing 5+5=10.

Mother: Because we don't know how to use a computer. [later] I think people that have money expect more out of their kids than people who don't.

Father [to mother]: Why? They send them off to schools.…Maybe they don't have nothing else to utilize their time. Like Stanley [brother of the target child]. He's not going to take that extra time to study tonight because he has to mow the yard.

Mother [speaking in a reflective mode]: I don't know why the kids that don't have nothing don't do well. I really don't. I wonder that. Because I see that, that's just the way it is.

While this family was able to identify traits associated with success in school like literacy activities and computers, they willingly ascribed to values outside those deemed important or worthy by middle class norms. As such, these parents are placed at odds with the cultural politics embedded in school curricula. By informing students and parents what they should aspire to and who they should be, education can alienate the very people it ideally aims to serve.

Other interview questions elicited parents' long-term goals for their children. Although many of the responses included further education as a hoped-for goal, many of the parents focused more attention on wanting their children to have economic security and contentment in life more than academic degrees or advanced professional roles:

I don't care as long as he is happy. I want them to do something that they will be able to pay their way and be comfortable.

I want them to be well-off. I would rather them go to school, get the best education that they could get and go sit at a desk and make more than I could ever dream of and not have to worry about next week, because I won't get paid until next week. And, as far as it comes to my daughter, you know, I hope she marries a man so that

she doesn't have to work, that she can sit at home, or, she can go to school and get a degree, if she wants, but she don't have to use them.

You don't have to go to college, but you need to finish high school, because otherwise you are going to be doing like I've done as far as jobs. You are going to have a hard time getting one.

I wouldn't push her to do anything she didn't want to do as far as, you know, education or a job. I would like for her to go to college, but if she definitely didn't want to do that I wouldn't force her to do it.

Beyond highlighting the ways parents may or may not be actively present in their children's education, these comments suggest familial goals and values that students are most likely carrying to class with them. These goals represent areas that teachers, administrators, and families might address in the development of curricula. While Nieto (2004) writes that it makes sense to provide future teachers with a variety of multicultural experiences in educational courses, it would also be in the best interest of K-12 students to participate in similar experiences. Implications and recommendations for using goals such as those described above are included later in this article.

Study 3: Latinos in Rural Mid-America

Similarly removed from the dialogue concerning curricular goals and pedagogy are immigrant children and their parents. Using Juan Guerra's *Close to Home* (1998) a study of a trans-national Mexican community's letter writing practices as a model, study 3 examined the way literacies were perceived and utilized by a small group of Spanish-speaking children and their teachers at a rural elementary school in central Kentucky (Ghiaciuc, 2003). The county where this school is located had recently experienced a surge in its Latino/Mexican population whereby the census numbers indicated a jump from 36 Mexican residents in 1990 to 1,087 in 2000. These shifting demographics created new challenges for the community, its residents, and its officials.

As then-recent INS raids had created a degree of trepidation among many residents, interviews with students for this study were limited. All four of the Latino students in this study ranged in age from 6-9. There were three boys and one girl. The four teachers and two ESL tutors who served as a focus in this study were all female, ranging in age from mid-twenties to mid-fifties.

With student and parental consent, each student was interviewed twice and all of their in-class writing assignments were collected and copied. Together with each student, the researcher reviewed their portfolios and asked them to discuss their attitudes towards their writing and writing processes. Important to these interviews were open discussions concerning students' biliterate skills both on and off the written page. The researcher compared students' opinions of their own

writing and literacy practices to the opinions of their teachers, while looking for patterns between what students suggested and what they produced in class. Similarly, the researcher looked for patterns in what teachers expressed about their classroom goals and how those goals did or didn't match up to the goals students expressed for themselves. Most of the goals expressed by students seemed to reflect parental or familial goals that could be interpreted as outside mainstream pedagogy.

This study focused on how literacy was accounted for, perceived by, and utilized among Spanish speaking children; how students and teachers felt about first and second language abilities; and how second language learners were best served in the classroom. Study 3 examined what students suggested in interviews about their feelings toward literacy activities. Different perspectives and actions toward literacy activities were observed, many of which implicitly extended Brandt's notions of "literacy sponsors" to children themselves.

Of interest were how writing activities and acts of sponsorship by parents and students revealed social and cultural values that may or may not have manifested in classroom settings. Together, these research and analytic methods helped create a layered examination, whereby teachers, students, and to a less visible-degree their parents displayed a complex dialogue about literacy and identity, as well as primary and secondary languages, from within a variety of roles. Of particular importance were analyses of instances where consciously or not students visibly worked against English-dominant instruction by speaking Spanish. In doing so, students created scenarios whereby most classroom teachers were pushed out of their own zones of authority and forced to develop alternative methods of instruction to address problems not anticipated by the curriculum.

Central to this study is the position that individual identity and literacies in language minority students are essentially erased within the institution of education by policies that exclude and/or seek to replace minority language and culture with English-only assimilationist policies. Supportive of this argument were interviews with students about their own educational goals and those of their teachers. Importantly, parental concerns and goals were often interpreted through their children due to linguistic and socio-cultural barriers.

Case Study

On a surface level, Lucy, a third-grade student represented a high level of academic success. Bright and intellectually curious, Lucy came from a bilingual household. While she communicated that both her parents worked much of the time, her mother encouraged her to perfect her English skills at the exclusion of her Spanish language skills. During one interview Lucy stated, "My Mom- when I read in Spanish,

sometimes my Mom says, 'You can't read in Spanish because then you'll forget English'." Despite the fact that Lucy's mother openly encouraged use of the English language, Lucy expressed concern that she seemed to be losing her Spanish language skills. Born in New York, Lucy spent her early years surrounded by her parents and her Spanish-speaking grandparents, who she claimed continually read and spoke to her in Spanish. Once immersed in public school though, Lucy explained that she began to "lose her Spanish."

> Researcher: So they wouldn't let you speak Spanish at school?
> Lucy: No!
> Researcher: Were there other Spanish-speaking kids in your class?
> Lucy: Yeah, but they weren't allowed (to speak Spanish).
> Researcher: Were they (the teachers) trying to help you learn English?
> Lucy: [nods head indicating yes] So I forgot all the Spanish.

From observations, however, it did not appear that Lucy had forgotten all her Spanish. She often engaged in conversation with a student named Maria, using Spanish to conduct typical classroom discussions regarding schoolwork, lunch, and minor arguments. It was noticeable that it often took Lucy a few minutes longer than Maria to respond in Spanish. Situated between two languages, Lucy attempted to accommodate multiple subjectivities in order to function as a limited bilingual student. Although her mother, teachers, and English-speaking classmates encouraged, and in some cases required her to speak English, Lucy's father, grandparents, and Spanish speaking classmates re-enforced her desire to learn and re-learn Spanish. She related her parent's position as follows:

> Lucy: My Mom never forgets her Spanish, but I do and my Dad knows a lot of Spanish.
> Researcher: Does your Dad just want you to speak in English, too?
> Lucy: He wants me to speak in English and Spanish
> Researcher: Does he try to help you with your Spanish? (Lucy nods yes). What does he try and do?
> Lucy: He tells me more numbers that I don't know and he tells me more words that I don't know how to say.

In many ways, Lucy's parents can be interpreted as offering two conflicting types of literacy sponsorship. Lucy's mother offered encouragement in educational and socially (American) supported realms by reportedly helping her with her reading and spelling words. Lucy's father offered a connection to her past and familial native language by providing instruction in Spanish. Both literacies being offered to Lucy were tools that helped her perceive classroom literacy practices as distinctly different from her home culture. Spanish, as Lucy had been taught, had no real place in the American classroom.

"As people interact with existing institutions and social practices in which the values, beliefs, bodies of knowledge, styles of

communication, and biases of the dominant culture are imposed, they are often stripped of their power to articulate and realize their own goals" (Leistyna & Woodrum, 1996, p. 3). While many of the studies of second-generation immigrants (see Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) reveal that these students will gravitate towards one language or the other dependent on their parent's cultural and socio-economic positions, Lucy often seemed to reside in a liminal space in which she had not yet decided where her greatest allegiance, if any, should rest. Importantly, teachers can play a pivotal role in helping students both navigate educational channels regarding identity and understand or reject accepted forms of knowledge.

In three interviews that occurred mid-way through the study, a number of teachers reflected how they initially assumed that some of their Spanish-speaking students were "playing dumb" or merely refusing to learn English. Theorists like Yaldon (1997) have suggested that sometimes student silence in the classroom might be used as a way to retain privilege. Extending this notion to our analyses here, students' inability or refusal to participate in ways we deem normative can actually be regarded as an attempt to influence classroom goals and values. Juan, another case-study student, perplexed many of his teachers and ESL tutors by refusing to read, write, or speak in English. After further investigation, his tutor discovered that his siblings were fluent in English and that his parents encouraged him to learn the language. What his tutor discovered was that Juan was able to speak and understand English.

If forced to work on a written assignment though, Juan sought the help of a bilingual tutor and had them translate for him, or if no other option were available, he would demand one-on-one interaction with a teacher who would scribe his words for him. His negotiation skills in the realm of English literacy were both supported and negated by his dependence on Spanish speaking tutors. On the one hand, Juan's abilities in English were obviously improving. According to his ESL tutor, Juan's test scores were improving. However, from his classroom teacher's perspective, Juan's dependence on translators continued to subtly undermine teachers' instructional efforts by indicating to him that it was acceptable to circumvent English in certain school scenarios. It was surprising then that for our interview Juan answered the researcher's questions in English. Like many of his Spanish-speaking classmates, Juan expressed a desire to read and communicate in Spanish outside of the classroom. Where though do student goals or values enter the curriculum?

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

In each of the studies, children and parents valued school achievement. Yet, the values and ways of operating clearly differed

between home and schools. While this pattern has been written about for decades (see Heath, 1983; Tharp & Gallimore, 1993), we would like to focus the conclusions, implications, and recommendations on attending to what parents want for their children and what children want for themselves. We believe that we must begin with finding out what goals families have and how they fit or collide with the goals of the schools. We must examine whether we as educators are alienating students and their families by imposing middle class values on our expectations for schooling. In the cases described above, attending to parents' goals and expectations around homework, classroom behavior, how to spend free time, and what language to speak have the potential to contribute toward a curriculum that meets the needs of students far better than traditional or progressive educational practices alone can.

First, based on our case studies, we suggest there may be many instances in which the actions or motives of families are misinterpreted by schools. In each of our cases the parents wanted school achievement, but not at the cost of other values they held, such as having quality family time or maintaining skill in a child's first language. Too often, even educators with a progressive or critical literacy perspective expect their goals to be shared by marginalized students, when in reality the students do not always want what we, as educators, think they might want.

Of course, in no way do we recommend that we opt for tractor riding over reading in school or forgetting about teaching students English. While learning can evolve from what students bring to class with them, we argue that there needs to be a more explicit level of reciprocity in public schooling whereby teachers engage in active dialogue with not only administrators, but also the families themselves. However, for teachers to engage in such a dialogue, to construct a deeper understanding of families' and children's goals, and then to develop responsive classroom instruction will require substantive and careful planning. Teachers will need to learn how to confront their tacit assumptions about students and their families, and they will need to create opportunities and contexts within which meaningful, respectful, and rich dialogue with families can occur. Some teachers, such as those in the studies described as well as in other studies and sites (González, 1995; Ayers, Foseca, Andrade, & Civil, 2001; McIntyre, Rosebery, & Gonzalez, , 2001), have found great value in getting to know students and their families by making visits to homes. By communicating a desire to learn from families about their aspirations and experiences, teachers create the possibility of relationship-building and, as a result, lessen the likelihood of the misinterpretations that all too frequently occur. Teachers need legitimate school time with administrator help to engage in such time-consuming work. And they need facilitation with peers or

others to discern families' goals, their possible disconnect with officially sanctioned school goals, and how to negotiate the conflict in supporting students' learning.

Further, merely becoming more aware and knowledgeable about what parents want for their children is insufficient. As educators, we much know how to take the next step and create curricula that reflects that understanding in responsive and responsible ways. This includes instruction that links to and builds from families' funds of knowledge as has been illustrated with specific examples in the works of Moll and Gonzalez (2003) and others. Further, it can mean creating increased opportunities to involve and engage families in order to continue the dialogue about goals and potential barriers perceived by families.

Current educational reforms, like the NCLB Act, have been noted by researchers like Kozol (2005) to standardize knowledge and hold educators accountable for student achievement. Immersed and often subsequently pushed out of this new framework are the familial goals of marginalized families. In an era where critical discussion of our educational agenda is prevalent, we continue to be driven by a marketplace ideology that works against notions of equality. In essence, we make large leaps over any apparent socio-material gaps and proceed towards rhetorical solutions with no basis in reality. If we are to recognize and achieve more inclusive educational opportunities, we must not forfeit opportunities to create knowledge, negotiate and transform our curricular goals, or avoid critique in the wider community. Educators and communities can play a pivotal role in helping shape the course of current global capitalism by not letting social aims be dictated to them through curriculua that ultimately reproduces socio-economic hierarchies.

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Appendix
Description of Methodologies

		Control Observer Bias	Validation	Sample Size	How participants chosen	Study published elsewhere?
Study 1	Participant observer	Shared data with teachers and parents. Used documentation of instructional classroom practices	Internal validity (Merriam, 1998), triangulation	3 families	Convenience sampling and case sampling (Glense, 1999).	No
Study 2	Participant observer, collaborator	Shared data with teachers, parents, and experts in field.	Close work with teachers and participants	Initially 45 families, extensive data collection on 22 of these	Ease of visitation, range of students, teacher identified as "high implementers" by state program	Aspects of the study presented here are not published elsewhere. Findings from this longitudinal study, however, are available in multiple journals and books.
Study 3	Participant observer	Shared data and observations with teachers, ESL tutors, and administrators. Compared interviews with participants to textual data provided by students.	Triangulation via participants, student homework, interviews, and professionals outside the study	4 students and their teachers, 2 ESL tutors, and school staff	To achieve a range of primarily Spanish speaking students	Some aspects of one student in this study were published in 52nd NRC yearbook.