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ARTICLE

Dark Times Indeed: NCATE, Social Justice, and the Marginalization of Multicultural Foundations

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ABSTRACT

This article uses the recent and seemingly local NCATE decision to drop the terminology of “social justice” from its examples of dispositions in teacher education to make a larger and more global argument: that the multicultural foundations field (educational foundations, educational studies, and multicultural education) has become fundamentally marginalized in its ability to impact educational policymaking. This article first traces the political context of NCATE’s decision to drop the disposition of social justice. It then provides three distinct empirical data sets at three ever-more finely grained units of analysis—a national-level analysis of influence, a state-level analysis of coursework requirements, and a classroom-level analysis of syllabus construction—that demonstrate such marginalization. The article concludes that multicultural foundations has abdicated its responsibility to future teachers, schools of education, and the public at large by removing itself (and being removed) from the paramount discussions and debates of the role of schools in a democratic and pluralistic society committed to equity and equality for all students. NCATE’s decision is thus not only a single, but actually singular, example of multicultural foundation’s current inability to, in Maxine Greene’s (1976) terminology, challenge mystification in “dark times.”

INTRODUCTION

Thirty years ago the educational philosopher Maxine Greene (1976) warned that teacher education was perilously close to abdicating its responsibility for preparing future teachers able to challenge the mystifications of her times. These were dark times, she warned, when educators could not or would not question the myths of “equal opportunity,” “meritocracy,” and the taken-for-granted presumption that “democracy has been achieved” rather than always “an open possibility” (p. 14). She went on to argue that “there must always be a place in teacher education for ‘foundations’ specialists, people whose main interest is in interpreting—and enabling others to interpret—the social, political, and economic factors that affect and influence the processes of education” (p. 15).

Greene must find the contemporary situation eerily familiar. This article uses the recent and seemingly local decision by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to drop the terminology of “social justice” from its examples of dispositions in teacher education to make a larger and more global argument: that multicultural foundations has become fundamentally marginalized in its ability to impact educational policymaking; and, as such, truly unable to challenge and interrupt today’s ever-pressing mystifications within teacher education. [1] Greene (1976) was prescient in her analysis, noting that already in the mid-1970s, foundations coursework was far from secure: “It is not of incidental interest that the proponents of the ‘competencies’ orientation favor elimination of the ‘foundations’ component in the teacher education curriculum and have already succeeded in eroding it” (p. 15). Today, one can forget about mere erosion. We are being washed away.

This article first traces the political context of NCATE’s decision to drop the term “social justice” from its examples of potential dispositions. This is done in order to highlight this event as an exemplary moment where multicultural foundation’s marginalization was made starkly visible by its actual absence from the policy table. This article then provides three distinct empirical data sets at three ever-more finely grained units of analysis—a national-level analysis of influence, a state-level analysis of coursework requirements, and a classroom-level analysis of syllabus construction—that demonstrate such marginalization. None of the data sets are in and of themselves definitive; when viewed in combination, though, the overarching picture offers a strong *prima facie* argument to support the claim of marginalization.

The first data set provides a national perspective of the number and relevance of multicultural foundations scholars and voices within teacher education and the education policy debates surrounding it. The second data set provides a comprehensive perspective of the coursework requirements (focusing specifically on multicultural education courses) in every single teacher education program within a single state. The third data set examines a large set of multicultural foundations syllabi to determine the format, scope, and specific practices of classroom instruction for future teachers.

The results, in brief, are that the level of influence in national educational policy debates and actual policymaking is miniscule; that the requirements for multicultural foundations coursework rarely exceed a single introductory course; and that most such introductory coursework seldom forces prospective teachers to leave the safety of the textbook or the four walls of the college classroom. This article thus concludes that multicultural foundations has abdicated its responsibility to future teachers, schools of education, and the public at large by removing itself (and being removed) from the paramount discussions and debates of the role of schools in a democratic and pluralistic society committed to equity and equality for all students. The clear-cut example is in regards to NCATE's decision to remove social justice as a possible disposition. But the real examples are littered across the K-16 educational landscape, beginning in the deafening silence of voices at the national level and percolating down to the college classroom level of actual practices and policies. These are dark times indeed for multicultural foundations.

KNOWING WHO IS BEHIND US: CONTEXTUALIZING NCATE'S DECISION

In the summer of 2006, NCATE came up for re-accreditation in front of the Education Department's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality. At stake was NCATE's ability to continue accrediting education schools as well as its desire to expand accreditation reviews to nontraditional institutions (such as online universities). For close to a year NCATE had been fighting charges of facilitating the ideological indoctrination of students due to the inclusion of "social justice" as an example within its set of possible dispositions. The National Association of Scholars (NAS), for example, had filed a formal inquiry with the US Department of Education because, it argued, social justice "is a term necessarily fraught with contested ideological significance" and, by listing it, NCATE was "clearly encouraging and legitimating the adoption by teacher preparation programs of what appears to be a political viewpoint test" (NAS, 2005, pp. 1-2; see also Hess, 2006; Johnson, 2005; Will, 2006).

Arthur E. Wise, NCATE's president, denied such a charge to the committee: "I categorically deny the assertion that NCATE has a mandatory 'social justice' standard . . . We don't endorse political or social ideologies. We endorse academic freedom, and we base our standards on knowledge, skills and professional disposition" (quoted in Powers, 2006). Yet as Powers (2006) noted, "But Wise knew who was behind him, both in physical proximity and in order of speech—a small group of third-party witnesses ready to pick apart NCATE's practices." Wise thus announced that NCATE would eliminate all references to social justice because "the term is susceptible to a variety of definitions." The third-party witnesses had nothing to attack; and NCATE received a five year renewal of its license to accredit.

One cannot really blame NCATE for its decision. Sitting behind Wise were the presidents of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), NAS, and the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). These three organizations, in conjunction with David Horowitz's "academic bill of rights" campaign (Horowitz, n.d.), have been the leading organizations in high profile and highly effective attacks on the so-called "liberal bias" in higher education. FIRE has championed students' contestation of teacher education dispositions at, among other institutions, Brooklyn College and Washington State University; ACTA has built upon the Ward Churchill scandal (University of Colorado-Boulder, 2006) to argue that "the extremist rhetoric and tendentious opinion for which Churchill is infamous can be found on campuses across America. . . In course after course, department after department, and institution after institution, indoctrination is replacing education" (ACTA, 2006, foreword; p. 3).

NCATE's decision can thus be seen, from an organizational perspective, as prudent. NCATE must be seen as

but one in a host of institutions under attack from neo-conservative organizations and think tanks funded by a small group of well-financed right-wing foundations (deMarrais, 2006). As Michael Berube (2006) has pointed out, this is a conscious move by the conservative movement to go beyond attacking the *content* of academic discourse—what he terms substantive liberalism—and instead focus also on the *context and process* of academic discourse itself, which Berube terms procedural liberalism. By consciously redefining “social justice” as non-inclusive and one-sided (i.e., liberal), such organizations were thus also able to redefine NCATE as seemingly against academic pluralism (see Fish, 2004, for an explication of this strategy).

Moreover, and more pragmatically, there was literally no one sitting behind Arthur Wise willing and able to defend the other side to the committee; namely, there was no one who could speak to the ancient origins of, societal consensus around, and empirical evidence for social justice as a cause for all individuals (and especially for future teachers) in a democratic and pluralistic society.

And it is this fact of visible absence that raises the glaring questions for the multicultural foundations field. For multicultural foundations scholars are precisely the individuals who have developed extremely nuanced and powerful methodologies and theories for unearthing, examining, and explicating social inequities in our schools. If anyone in teacher education should have been sitting behind Arthur Wise, either in person at the meeting or metaphorically through other means in other public and visible venues, it should have been multicultural foundation scholars. So, simply put, where were multicultural foundations scholars when the question of dispositions was put on the table? The answer, simply stated, was that they were too marginalized to be heard.

THE MARGINALIZATION OF FOUNDATIONS

This section empirically examines the marginalization of the multicultural foundations field at three distinct levels of analysis. It does so in order to document the actual structures, policies, and practices that, in all of their seemingly mundane minutia, formally and systematically exclude multicultural foundations from the table of educational policymaking such as occurred with NCATE’s decision.

Before proceeding, though, it is useful to point out that this marginalization, at this particular historical moment in contemporary educational debates, is deeply ironic. It is ironic exactly because so much of educational practice and policymaking has become centered on issues at the heart of multicultural foundations—e.g., urban education, cultural competence, structural inequities, and the performative and organizational limits of testing and accountability (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Oakes, 2004; Rogers & Oakes, 2005). In fact, the very dispositions indexed by the term of social justice—issues of cultural competence and “fairness” (the term NCATE now uses in place of social justice)—are of utmost relevance for teachers, administrators, and the general public at large. Only 32% of teachers feel very well prepared to address the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (NCES, 2000, p.35), while at the same time an overwhelming majority of teachers (almost 80%) believe that it is “absolutely essential” that effective teachers have an ability to work well with students whose backgrounds are very different from their own (Public Agenda, 2000, p. 39). Given the overwhelming presence of whiteness (Sleeter, 2001) in the pool of teacher candidates—close to 90% of teacher candidates are white, female, and come from educated, middle-class, English-speaking families (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2004, tables 255 & 265)—multicultural foundations coursework is a crucial component for developing such dispositions.

Multicultural foundations should thus seemingly be a central component of teacher education (deMarrais, 2005), especially since the teaching of complex and contested topics oftentimes encounters massive covert and overt student resistance (Butin, 2005a). As Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggest:

Because many teachers-to-be enter education believing that schools are impartial institutions, that cultural diversity is problematic, that knowledge is objective and neutral, that learning consists of passively absorbing new information and repeating it by rote, and that teaching entails dispensing information, preparing them to be culturally responsive requires a complete resocialization. (p. xix)

Resocialization, though, is not so simple. The research on teacher change is clear here; as Virginia Richardson and Peggy Placier (2001) note in a review of the research, “What we see expressed in these current studies of teacher education is the difficulty in changing the type of tacit beliefs and understandings that lie buried in a person’s being” (p. 915). The teaching of social justice should thus (seemingly) be centrally important and centrally located in teacher education. But this is far from the case.

National-Level Analysis of Influence

The first step for determining the relative influence of the multicultural foundations field is assessing the national presence and impact it might have in influencing educational policy. A review of the literature finds that the multicultural foundations field has minimal presence.

In previous research, I detailed (Butin, 2005b), for example, that between 2001 and 2004, only a single major education policy report out of ten dealing with “fixing” teacher education explicitly referenced the multicultural foundations. This included policy reports from the political left, right, and center, and boasted prominent members (such as Linda Darling-Hammond, Mary Hatwood Futrell, and Ellen Condliffe Lagemann) who are aware of and active in fields aligned with the multicultural foundations. A detailed content analysis of three of the major reports found that out of a combined total of 224 pages, the multicultural foundations garnered just four sentences. One of my conclusions was that

“What this portends is the near total ascendancy of an instrumentalist conceptualization of teaching and learning in educational policymaking...the most contextual and contested educational issue—‘culture’—has become acontextual and neutral...The ‘problem’ of at-risk schools has been circumscribed in the language of efficiency and accountability. Culture (of students, teachers, schools, communities) has been erased” (Butin, 2005b, pp. 293-294).

Such (willful) disregard for a central theme within the multicultural foundations signals a fundamental lack of ability to be heard.

This inability to be heard at the national level may be due, in part, to the fact that the multicultural foundations field no longer has a formal and official presence in the policy-making bodies that determine and debate what actually should be taught in education schools. Dottin, et al. (2005) document the recent withdrawal of the Council for the Social Foundations of Education (CSFE) from NCATE. CSFE is the national umbrella organization for the social foundations field, having member organizations such as the John Dewey Society, the American Educational Studies Association (AESA), and the History of Education Society. CSFE officers and individuals have, over the past two decades, served in various capacities in NCATE, from serving on accrediting committees, advising and writing standards, and leading specific task forces (Dottin, et al., 2005). The relationship with NCATE ended in 2004: “While money was the apparent reason for the recent break up between CSFE and NCATE [due to the membership fee of \$15,000], there continues to be an undercurrent of other concerns. Many within the social foundations of education community do not look with favor on national accreditation as a structure, or on NCATE as an adequate example of such a system” (Dottin, et al., 2005, p. 251). With no similar relationship to Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) either, no formal relationship exists today by which the multicultural foundations field can put forward its perspective surrounding issues of the review and accreditation of the majority of education schools.

Finally, such lack of presence is mirrored in the general positioning of multicultural foundations within teacher education. An analysis of data drawn from the federally-funded *Survey of Earned Doctorates* (SED; Thurgood, et al., 2006) clearly demonstrates this. The SED asks all doctoral students to, among other things, self-identify their specific doctoral subspecialty. There are 40 distinct categories within education (e.g., music education, psychology, social science education), with only a single one (“social/philosophical foundations of education”) that indexes multicultural foundations. Assuming that the methodology is more or less sound (e.g., self-identification issues, completion rates), the data show a precipitous decline in those that identify themselves as foundations scholars. Table 1 provides a summation of the data.

Table 1. Number of Doctoral Degrees Awarded in the Social/Philosophical Foundations of Education

	1960– 99	1960– 64	1965– 69	1970– 74	1975– 79	1980– 84	1985– 89	1990– 94	1995– 99
<i>Education - TOTAL # of doctorates</i>	233,488	9,609	17,945	33,856	37,119	36,316	32,479	33,038	33,126
<i>Social/philosophical foundations of education</i>	6,854	312	1,188	1,430	1,197	930	605	545	647
<i>doctorates in foundations, as % of total doctorates</i>	2.9%	3.2%	6.6%	4.2%	3.2%	2.6%	1.9%	1.6%	2.0%

Thus from the time that Greene (1976) noted the plight of the foundations until today, the actual number of foundations scholars has declined by more than 50%; from a high of 1,430 doctorates awarded in foundations during the five-year period of 1970-1974 to the total of 647 in the most recent five-year period of 1995-1999. This objective decline is mirrored by the foundations' relative position to other doctorates within education. Whereas, in the period of 1965-1969, doctorates in foundations accounted for 6.6% of all educational doctorates, in the most current five-year period they account for but 2% of all educational doctorates. Even if one were to exclude all doctorates awarded in fields focusing on practitioners (e.g., educational leadership, educational administration, and curriculum and instruction [which are the three largest categories of doctorates awarded]), the number of doctorates within the social/philosophical foundations still constitute just barely over 3% of all doctorates in the most current five-year period.

There is therefore a decidedly obvious trend at the national level. The multicultural foundations field is too small, too disconnected, and too easily overlooked to be heard within the current educational policy debates. While it is uncertain whether any single one of these conditions is the primary "problem," it is clear that the confluence and interlinked aspects of these issues exacerbates the overall national level of influence that the multicultural foundations field may hope to achieve.

State-Level Analysis of Coursework Requirements

The marginalization of multicultural foundations may be viewed as well at the level of coursework. Specifically, if the dispositions of cultural competence, social justice, and "fairness" do indeed require a complete "resocialization," it would seem to be important to offer as many opportunities as possible to engage such issues in the college classroom. Yet that is not the empirical case on the ground.

An analysis was conducted of every approved elementary teacher certification program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Specifically, the analysis examined whether prospective elementary teachers were required to take a multicultural education course. The analysis focused on traditional university-based teacher education programs because, even with the national emphasis on alternative certification pathways, such traditional routes continue to produce the vast majority of our new teachers. This is especially the case in Pennsylvania, as it is a "net exporter" of teachers (certifying more teachers each year than it hires) and thus has limited alternative certification pathways. The analysis focused on elementary education because more than half of all new teachers gain such certification, and this pathway has the most required educational coursework, and, thus, the opportunity to take a multicultural education course. This analysis is therefore a best-case scenario, with all other types of certifications almost surely requiring less coursework from prospective teachers. Finally, the analysis looked only at multicultural education courses (as opposed to foundations, introduction to education, or educational psychology), given the presumption that teacher resocialization takes time. One cannot confront issues of, for example, gender bias in the classroom in just two 50-minute class sessions and consider prospective teachers' dispositions altered.

Minimal research exists concerning required educational coursework in multicultural education. Fuller (1992) found that out of 19 institutions, 18 had a multicultural education course, but only half of these required it. Bennett and Jordan (1997) found that of 139 elementary education programs, only 20 (14%) required coursework in multicultural education. And a US Department of Education (Adelman, 2004) analysis of actual undergraduate coursework taken by future teachers found that multicultural education was not among the top thirty courses taken; for post-baccalaureate coursework, multicultural education was taken by just 17% of

teachers.

There were eighty-six elementary education programs approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (see Appendix A). Relevant information of exact coursework requirements (through Internet searches of each university’s website) were found for eighty-three of them. While multicultural education courses had varying titles – e.g. “multicultural education,” “education in a diverse society” – course descriptions were very uniform. Alvernia College’s description of their required “Diversity in the Classroom” course, ED 301, is typical in that it, “Explores the ways learning is influenced by culture, language, race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status”

Table 2 provides a summary of the results. Twenty-three percent of all elementary education programs required a multicultural education course. For comparison sake, secondary education programs with citizenship/social studies certification were also included. Nine of the teacher education programs with elementary education programs did not have a Citizenship certification; of the remaining 74 that did, 16% required a multicultural education course. The implication is that, in the best-case scenario of elementary education, fewer than one in four future teachers has the opportunity to take a multicultural education course in college. Once secondary education programs are considered, fewer than one in five teachers is required to gain exposure to and involvement in the complex and contested issues of K-12 education.

Table 2. Status of required coursework in multicultural education

	<i>Elementary Education</i>			<i>Secondary Education - Citizenship</i>		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Not Required	59	71.1%		59	71.1%	79.7%
Required	19	22.9%		12	14.5%	16.2%
Elective	2	2.4%		2	2.4%	2.7%
unknown	3	3.6%		1	1.2%	1.4%
no program				9	10.8%	
Total	83	100%		83	100%	100%

It is of particular, if tangential, interest that a coursework requirement in multicultural education did not correlate to any obvious factor, including NCATE accreditation. Coursework requirements in multicultural education at the elementary and secondary (citizenship education) level were examined in relation to NCATE accreditation (see Appendix A), and the total enrollment and in-state tuition of the institution. (These data were taken from the 2004-05 US News & World Report rankings). Table 3 presents the Pearson correlations.

Table 3. Pearson correlations of select variables

		NCATE accredited	Multicultural Education required- elementary	Multicultural Education required- secondary	total enrollment	Tuition 04-05
NCATE accredited	Pearson Correlation	1	.188	-.028	.488(**)	-.628(**)
Sig. (2-tailed)						
		.094	.802	.000	.000	
N						
		83	80	82	83	83
Multicultural Education required-elementary	Pearson Correlation	.188	1	.518(**)	.053	-.195
Sig. (2-tailed)						
		.094	.000	.639	.083	
N						
		80	80	80	80	80
Multicultural Education required-secondary	Pearson Correlation	-.028	.518(**)	1	.042	-.073
Sig. (2-tailed)						
		.802	.000	.709	.516	
N						
		82	80	82	82	82
total enrollment	Pearson Correlation	.488(**)	.053	.042	1	-.236(*)
Sig. (2-tailed)						
		.000	.639	.709	.031	
N						
		82	80	82	82	82

	83	80	82	83	83		
Tuition 04-05	Pearson Correlation		-.628(**)	-.195	-.073		-.236(*)
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.083	.516	.031		
N		83	80	82	83	83	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Required coursework in multicultural education at the elementary level was correlated solely to a similar requirement at the secondary level. Neither NCATE accreditation, size of the institution, or tuition had any statistical significance. (To be expected, given the type of institutions that NCATE accredits, there was a strong correlation between NCATE accreditation and the size and tuition of an institution.) Thus, for the purposes of this article, it is critical to note that while other variables may impact the decision to require multicultural education coursework (e.g., specific institutional history, activist group of faculty), such variables appear to be highly idiosyncratic and not related to NCATE's own focus on "diversity."

Classroom-Level Analysis of Syllabus Construction

Yet what exactly is it that students actually gain in the multicultural foundations courses taken? Is the content of sufficient depth and rigor to support prospective teachers' grappling with these important issues? The final level of analysis to be considered is the actual course syllabus. While a syllabus is not isomorphic with what actually occurs in the classroom, it provides the limiting factors (e.g., the specific assigned text in and of itself determines what knowledge, and from what theoretical perspective, the students will be exposed to).

An internet search was conducted for social foundations of education and multicultural education syllabi. Only those courses taught within teacher preparation programs were used. Courses were differentiated between multicultural education, foundations of education, and introduction to education courses (see Butin, 2004, for a more detailed methodological articulation of this form of analysis). Two hundred and twelve syllabi matching such criteria were found. While this search yielded a convenience sample of syllabi, there appears to be little self-selection bias of the pool of syllabi on the Internet. Syllabi came from 182 different institutions, the vast majority of which were in the U.S. (98%). Ninety-one percent were from the last five years. Table 4 provides a descriptive overview of the number and types of course syllabi found.

Table 4. type of course

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
foundations course	88	41.5	42.7
Introduction to education course	64	30.2	31.1
multicultural education course	54	25.5	26.2
Total	206	97.2	100.0
Missing a title	6	2.8	
Total	212	100.0	

The analysis of syllabi was grounded in Zeichner and Hoeft's (1996) four-fold typology of distinguishing teacher education programs. Zeichner and Hoeft (1996) argue that all teacher education programs can be categorized along four distinct dimensions with regards to diversity: *infusion* versus a *segregated* approach to

cultural diversity; *culture-specific* versus *cultural-general* socialization strategies; *interacting with* versus *studying about* cultures; and “the degree to which the teacher education program itself is a model of the cultural inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness so often advocated by teacher educators for K-12 schools” (p. 528).

This specific analysis focuses on the latter two dimensions in that they are applicable to individual courses. Zeichner and Hoefft (1996) describe the third dimension of *interacting with* versus *studying about* cultures as the depth of field experiences with “pupils and adults from different backgrounds” (p. 527); the fourth dimension (the degree of cultural “modeling”) is understood as the extent to which courses or programs build upon the strengths of students’ cultural backgrounds and experiences, foster active engagement, and respond to “varied student needs” (p. 528). This may include, for example, pedagogical practices conducive to student-student discussions rather than formal teacher-student lecturing or the accommodation of students’ distinctive cultural norms for public displays of achievement. Alternatively, the presumption of a one right answer and the corresponding lack of “discussion of different perspectives [about multiculturalism]” is cited as a case of a teacher education program that may foster cultural diversity in rhetoric rather than reality.

Such theoretical distinctions were operationalized as follows to allow for syllabi analysis: Zeichner and Hoefft’s (1996) third dimension of *interacting with* versus *studying about* cultures was operationalized as the level and type of field experiences in a course; Zeichner and Hoefft’s (1996) fourth dimension of cultural “modeling” was operationalized as the number and variety of required readings.

Field experiences in schools or community settings are standard practice in teacher education programs (though not as standard as might be imagined given the findings below). Prospective teachers are required to observe, participate, and ultimately lead, classrooms over the course of their teacher education coursework as preparation for their own future profession as teachers. Yet field experiences engage multiple domains, with engagement with diversity being just one of numerous and oftentimes more pressing issues. Prospective and preservice teachers are usually much more interested in issues of classroom management, best practices, and assessment than something less pressing and more abstract such as gender or racial stratification across math groups or curricular tracks.

“Field experiences” were then differentiated between (and coded as) either “traditional” field experiences or “multicultural” field experiences. The latter were coded for if the syllabus explicitly stated that the field experience engage, at least in part, issues such as culture, diversity, or social justice. This could have been accomplished by a student in multiplicity of ways, such as a journal entry, through an interview, or in a paper. While this may sound vague in theory, there was in fact a sharp demarcation in all of the syllabi. Traditional field experiences were simply stated; multicultural field experiences, on the other hand, were always described at length in each syllabi.

A foundations of education course at a small liberal-arts college provides a typical example describing the requirements for a “multicultural” field experience:

[assignment #4] For this assignment you will engage in semi-structured observations of one or more of the following: male-female interaction patterns in [name] College classrooms...gender bias in college texts, etc... [assignment #7] As part of your fieldwork you need to observe, with a gender sensitive lens, and report on areas such as curriculum content, displays, textbooks, teacher-student interaction, tasks allocation, seating, discipline, and extra-curricular activities.

Likewise, a diversity course at a university assigned a “Cultural Immersion Paper” that required students, in part, to work “with a group and/or school culture of English learners...prepare a five to seven page report of your experience...[that] describes your own cultural identity...describes the group or setting you chose to immerse yourself in and why...[and analyzes] your own stage of cultural diversity using Salyere’s six-stage model.”

Table 5 provides a descriptive overview of the use of field experiences across all of the syllabi. While almost half of all courses required some type of field experience (45.4%), less than one quarter actually specified that

the field experience should be approached through multicultural perspectives.

Table 5. Number of Syllabi with Required Field Experience Components

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
No field experience required	97	46.6	53.0
“Multicultural” field experience required	41	19.7	22.4
Field experience optional	3	1.4	1.6
“Traditional” field experience required	42	20.2	23.0
Total	183	88.0	100.0
Missing (unable to determine)	25	12.0	
Total	208	100.0	

Table 6 further disaggregates the field experiences by the type of course. What one discovers is that foundations of education courses make least use of multicultural field experiences (7%), followed by introduction to education courses (15%), with multicultural education courses using such experiences the most (51%). Even more striking is that most foundations courses (62%) and almost half of all introductory courses (47%) have absolutely no field experience requirement at all. The overarching conclusion is that prospective teachers studying about issues of schooling in a pluralistic society are all too often isolated in classrooms far removed from the very issues under discussion and analysis.

Table 6. Cross-tabulation of type of course, by type of field experience

	field experiences				Total
	None	With Multicultural Component	Optional	Without Multicultural Component	
foundations course	44 (62%)	5 (7%)	2 (3%)	20 (28%)	71
Introduction to education course	26 (47%)	8 (15%)	0 (0%)	21 (38%)	55
multicultural education course	25 (47%)	27 (51%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	53
Total	95 (53%)	40 (22%)	3 (2%)	41 (23%)	179

To now examine “cultural modeling,” a proxy variable of “required readings” was used to operationalize the extent to which a program “models” cultural inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness. This operationalization is acknowledged as being of a more tentative nature. The rationale for this proxy variable lies in the research in K-12 education which suggests that textbook use is detrimental to, if not antithetical of, a constructivist orientation of the professional development of knowledge. Textbooks are described as fragmented, repetitive, superficial, fact-based, and devoid of a coherent narrative voice (Schmidt & McKnight, 1997; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Sadker (Sadker & Sadker, 1980; Zittleman & Sadker, 2002), moreover, argues that teacher education textbooks continue to marginalize and misstate gender issues. My own research suggests that textbook use is negatively correlated to the use of primary source documents within foundations of education courses (Butin, 2004).

It is thus plausible that the use of textbooks in foundations of education and multicultural education courses mitigates against the cultural inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness spoken of by Zeichner and Hoeft (1996). While the use of a textbook in and of itself does not prevent the “discussion of different perspectives” in the classroom, there is *prima facie* evidence that textbooks may constrain constructivist and culturally competent pedagogy.

Table 7 provides a descriptive overview of what types of courses make use of textbooks. Overall, 89% of all courses used a textbook as the primary mode of instruction. Introduction to education and multicultural education courses made greatest use of a textbook (95 and 94%, respectively); foundations of education courses made least use of a textbook (81%).

Table 7. Cross-tabulation of type of course, by whether a textbook is used

	is a textbook used?		Total
	No	Yes	
foundations course	16 (19%)	67 (81%)	83
Introduction to education course	3 (5%)	60 (95%)	63
multicultural education course	3 (4%)	51 (94%)	54
Total	22 (11%)	178 (89%)	200

This classroom-level data suggests that prospective teachers receive limited and limiting opportunities to genuinely engage the complex and contested issues at the heart of the multicultural foundations. This is compounded by the fact that teacher socialization for cultural competence and engagement with social justice is a difficult endeavor. Prospective teachers enter teacher education programs unaware of or resistant to ideas that our society is not equitable, that it is not a meritocracy, or that they themselves may be complicit in the perpetuation of implicit social and cultural prejudices. The passive transmission of knowledge from teachers to students works poorly, as it does for neutral content knowledge. It is thus seemingly incumbent on courses such as foundations of education and multicultural education to engage in active learning strategies to help teach such contested knowledge.

Yet the data cited above portray a dismal picture. Textbooks are ubiquitous and multicultural field experiences are nearly non-existent outside of multicultural education courses. Even in multicultural education courses, where discussions about diversity and social justice are most salient, content knowledge is fundamentally textbook-driven and classroom-bounded. Diversity, it appears, is all too often taught from afar.

Two examples will suffice. An “Education in American Society” course at a branch campus of a tier 1 public university states in its syllabus that “This course . . . will provide you with a broad and detailed exposure to the realities and intellectual context of teaching. . .”. The requirements for the course are a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the course text, eight quizzes, and five one-page “reaction papers” in the format of “(Author’s name) is right because . . . (Author’s name) is wrong because . . . This is important because . . . After reading and discussing the selections I now know . . .”. A multicultural education course at a southern state university lists its course objectives as (in part): “at the end of this course, students will be able to . . . write thematic units that incorporate a multicultural perspective [and] help their students develop inter-cultural awareness.” The only student evaluation in the course is “based upon class participation and a paper . . . on a topic of your choosing and my [the professor’s] approval.” The only text is a multicultural education reader.

These are not anecdotal examples. In fact, there is an overwhelming preponderance of evidence that foundations of education and multicultural education courses are divorced from the cultures they study and teach about, and do not practice what they preach. The courses just cited have no collaborative group work, little self-initiated learning, and no field experience, much less field experiences that engage issues of diversity or social justice. What this research finds is that most students in most courses are provided with miseducative forms of socialization towards cultural diversity. This is not a phenomenon occurring just to a few groups in a few places. These patterns are consistent and widespread across institutions, courses, demographics and geography.

IMPLICATIONS

The conclusions of such findings are troubling. If we take seriously Nieto's (1995) injunction that schools provide students a "democratic apprenticeship" through both pedagogical practices and curricular content, then our education schools seem unprepared. For democracy, as the saying goes, is not a spectator sport: It takes time and effort to learn how to engage in substantive dialogue; to think carefully and critically about complex, contested, and consequential social issues; and to be able to reflect on and act upon what it means to live in a just society. Such is especially the case as issues of diversity and equity become ever more predominant in our educational conversations.

Yet the only courses prospective teachers take towards engaging issues of cultural diversity seem to instead limit both what is learned and how it is learned. Prospective teachers seem to gain numerous opportunities to *learn about* other groups and cultures; they gain numerous opportunities to *hear about* the correct way to engage with cultural diversity. What they do not seem to gain, though, is the opportunity to engage with and discuss cultural diversity in sustained, substantive, and educative ways.

Such opportunities for discussion and debate, moreover, are inherently constrained at the state level by the lack of requirements for multicultural foundations coursework and at the national level by any formal voice of the relevance and role of multicultural foundations in teacher preparation. This isolationism—at the classroom, state, and national level—is doubly ironic given that multicultural foundations both teaches about and was founded for greater understanding about, relationship with, and analysis of school-community linkages (see., e.g., Cooper, 2007; Zeichner, 2003).

As such, I'd like to suggest that the dispositions debate (irrespective of its ultimate outcome) is fundamentally important because it demonstrates both the extreme relevance and extreme precariousness of the multicultural foundations field within teacher education. This is not to say that the controversy surrounding NCATE's decision to drop the term of "social justice" is irrelevant. Rather, it is to point out that NCATE's decision is one among many such public and not-so-public events occurring through K-16 education at the local, state, and national level.

Educational policymaking—from departmental decisions on what coursework to require to accrediting decisions that impact curriculum and instruction nationwide—is about the coherent, visible, and politically viable articulation of constituents' voices. It is about setting the parameters of the language game within which subsequent debate and dialogue will occur. To even position the dispositions debate, for example, as between "professional ethic or political indoctrination," assumes that the term "dispositions" is being contested around two diametrically-opposed and incommensurable perspectives.

Multicultural foundations has much to offer to such contemporary debates. But it cannot do so without effective practices and policies at multiple levels. A national voice is predicated on a place at the policy table, which itself is predicated on institutions' and individuals' belief that multicultural foundations matters to prospective teachers. And such beliefs cannot take hold until and unless actual classroom practices mirror and support the dispositions being taught. For foundation scholars to truly challenge mystifications and support the adequate teaching of critical dispositions, it is time to find means to re-center who we are and what we do.

There are multiple places to start. CSFE or a similar organization could be restarted in order to provide a platform by which multicultural foundations scholars might provide a clear and unified voice on contemporary policy issues; foundations-related organizations (e.g., AESA, The John Dewey Society) can develop policy documents that articulate the need for foundational coursework in teacher preparation and such courses' alignment to accrediting standards of NCATE and TEAC; the multicultural foundations field could initiate internal discussions on the seeming gap between the rhetoric and reality of coursework requirements and practices. None of these proposals, of course, may be ultimately successful given the depth of the problems at hand for the multicultural foundations field. But, at least, it may provide us with a flashlight to guide us through the dark times ahead.

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Appendix A

Approved Elementary Education Certification programs in Pennsylvania. All data retrieved from Pennsylvania Department of Education, <http://www.teaching.state.pa.us/teaching/cwp/view.asp?a=6&Q=32315&teachingNav=540&teachingNav=93102>. All data concerning NCATE accredited institutions retrieved from <http://www.ncate.org/public/stateInstit.asp?ch=106&state=PA>. All data accessed November 4, 2006.

Albright College
Alvernia College*
Arcadia University*
Baptist Bible College
Bloomsburg University of Pa [NCATE]
Bucknell University
Cabrini College*
California University of Pa* [NCATE]
Carlow University
Cedar Crest College*
Chatham College
Chestnut Hill College*
Cheyney University of Pa* [NCATE]
Clarion University of Pa/Main [NCATE]
College Misericordia
De Sales University
Drexel University*
Duquesne University [NCATE]
East Stroudsburg University of Pa [NCATE]
Eastern University*
Edinboro University of Pa [NCATE]
Elizabethtown College
Gannon University
Geneva College
Gettysburg College
Grove City College
Gwynedd-Mercy College*
Holy Family University*
Immaculata University*
Indiana University of Pa/Main* [NCATE]
Juniata College
Keystone College

King's College
Kutztown University of Pa* [NCATE]
La Roche College
La Salle University
Lancaster Bible College
Lebanon Valley College
Lehigh University*
Lincoln University*
Lock Haven University of Pa/Main [NCATE]
Lycoming College*
Mansfield University of Pa [NCATE]
Marywood University [NCATE]
Mercyhurst College
Messiah College
Millersville University of Pa* [NCATE]
Moravian College
Mount Aloysius College
Muhlenberg College
Neumann College
Philadelphia Biblical University
Point Park College
Pennsylvania State University [NCATE]
Pennsylvania State University/Harrisburg Campus
Robert Morris University
Rosemont College
Saint Bonaventure University
Saint Francis University
Saint Joseph's University*
Saint Vincent College
Seton Hill University
Shippensburg University of Pa [NCATE]
Slippery Rock University of Pa [NCATE]
Susquehanna University*
Temple University/Main* [NCATE]
Thiel College
University of Pennsylvania*
University of Pittsburgh/Main*
University of Pittsburgh/Bradford
University of Pittsburgh/Johnstown
University of Scranton [NCATE]
Valley Forge Christian College
Washington & Jefferson College
Waynesburg College
West Chester University of Pa* [NCATE]
Westminster College
Widener University/Main*
Wilkes University*
Wilson College*
York College of Pa

*Intern Program Approval

[1] I use the terminology of multicultural foundations as an inclusive term for coursework and academic fields

traditionally associated with educational studies, educational foundations, educational policy, and multicultural education. Traditionally, educational studies is understood to encompass educational policy and educational foundations, the latter of which itself encompasses such disparate subfields as history of education, sociology of education, and gender studies (CLSE, 1993). Given the fluid boundaries between many of these sub-disciplines (e.g., gender studies, race, class, and gender, and sociology of education), I find multicultural education to fit neatly within these fields. Thus the neologism of “multicultural foundations,” which will be used throughout the rest of this article to refer to the broad array of aforementioned coursework and academic fields.