

Schools and the Achievement Gap: A Symposium

Almost everyone, Right as well as Left, recognizes the great disparities that currently exist between the education generally received by poor and minority students compared to that received by white middle- and upper-class students. Richard Rothstein, in his new book, *Class and Schools: Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap* (Teachers College/Columbia Univ. & Economic Policy Inst., 2004, 203 pp.), makes a powerful case that the income/wealth, residential, employment and other powerful disparities that characterize our society are responsible for and perpetuate these educational disparities — which in turn reinforce and perpetuate these other, larger disparities. His book makes a strong case for major economic and social reform, absent which reform in school policy and programs can have only limited benefit to those the education system now is failing. We asked him to prepare a summary of his argument, then asked a range of commentators, Left and Right, to respond to his argument, with Rothstein's response to those eight comments closing out the symposium.

We'd be happy to hear from readers and may publish further comments and letters in the next issue of P&R. PRRAC law student intern Nicole Devero assisted in formulating and overseeing the symposium - CH

Even the Best Schools Can't Close the Race Achievement Gap

by Richard Rothstein

The achievement gap between poor and middle-class, black and white children is an educational challenge, but we prevent ourselves from solving it because of a commonplace belief that poverty and race can't "cause" low achievement and that therefore schools must be failing to teach disadvantaged children adequately. After all, we see many highly successful students from lower-class backgrounds. Their success seems to prove that social class cannot be what impedes most disadvantaged students.

Yet the success of some lower-class students proves nothing about schools' power to close the achievement gap. There is a distribution of achievement in every social group. These distribu-

tions overlap. While average achievement of low-income students is below average achievement of middle-class students, there are always some middle-class students who achieve below typical low-income levels. Some low-income students achieve above typical middle-class levels. "Demography is not destiny," but students' family characteristics are a powerful influence on their relative average achievement, even in the best of schools.

Widely repeated accounts of schools that somehow elicit consistently high achievement from lower-class children almost always turn out, upon examination, to be flawed. In some cases,

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“schools that beat the odds” are highly selective, enrolling only the most able or most motivated lower-class children. Some are not truly lower-class schools – for example, schools enrolling children who qualify for subsidized lunches because their parents are poorly paid but highly educated. Some schools “succeed” with lower-class children by defining high achievement at such a low level that all students can reach it, despite big gaps that remain at higher levels. And some schools’ successes are statistical flukes – their high test scores last for only one year, in only one grade and in only one subject.

While the idea that “if some children can defy the demographic odds, all can” seems plausible, it reflects a reasoning whose naiveté we easily recognize in other policy areas. In human affairs, where multiple causation is typical, causes are not disproved by exceptions. Tobacco firms once claimed that smoking does not cause cancer because we all know people who smoked without getting cancer. We now consider such reasoning specious. We understand that because no single cause is rigidly deterministic, some people can smoke without harm, but we also understand that, on average, smoking is dangerous. Yet despite such understanding, quite sophisticated people often proclaim that success of

some poor children proves that social disadvantage does not cause low achievement.

Social Class and Learning

Partly, our confusion stems from failing to examine the concrete ways that social class actually affects learning. Describing these may help to make their influence more obvious.

Overall, lower-income children are in poorer health, and poor health depresses student achievement, no matter how effective a school may be.

Partly, our confusion stems from failing to examine the concrete ways that social class actually affects learning.

Low-income children have poorer vision, partly because of prenatal conditions, partly because, even as toddlers, they watch too much television both at home and in low-quality daycare settings, so their eyes are more poorly trained. Trying to read, their eyes may wander or have difficulty tracking print or focusing. A good part of the over-identification of learning disabilities for lower-class children is probably attributable simply to undiagnosed vision problems for which therapy is available and for which special education placement should be unnecessary.

Lower-class children have poorer oral hygiene, more lead poisoning, more asthma, poorer nutrition, less adequate pediatric care, more exposure to smoke, and a host of other health problems - on average. Because, for example, lower-class children typically have less adequate dental care, they are more likely to have toothaches and resulting discomfort that affects concentration.

Because low-income children are more likely to live in communities

where landlords use high-sulfur home heating oil, and where diesel trucks frequently pass en route to industrial and commercial sites, such children are more likely to suffer from asthma, leading to more absences from school and drowsiness (from lying awake wheezing at night) when present. Recent surveys of black children in Chicago and in New York City’s Harlem community found one of every four children suffering from asthma, a rate six times as great as that for all children. Asthma is now the single biggest cause of chronic school absence.

Because primary care physicians are few in low-income communities (the physician to population ratio is less than a third the rate in middle-class communities), disadvantaged children (even those with health insurance) are also more likely to miss school for relatively minor problems, like common ear infections, for which middle-class children are treated promptly. If in attendance, children with earaches have more difficulty paying attention.

Each of these well-documented social class differences in health is likely to have a palpable effect on academic achievement. The influence of each may be small, but combined, the influence of all is probably huge.

The growing unaffordability of adequate housing for low-income families also affects achievement – children whose families have difficulty finding stable housing are more likely to be mobile, and student mobility is an important cause of failing student performance. [See “High Classroom Turnover: How Children Get Left Behind,” *Poverty & Race*, May/June 2002.] A 1994 government report found that 30% of the poorest children had attended at least three different schools by third grade, while only 10% of middle-class children did so. Blacks were more than twice as likely as whites to change schools this much. It is hard to imagine how teachers, no matter how well trained, can be as effective for children who move in and out of their classrooms.

Differences in wealth are also likely to affect achievement, but these are

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Poverty and Race (ISSN 1075-3591) is published six times a year by the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 3000 Conn. Ave. NW, #200, Washington, DC 20008, 202/387-9887, fax: 202/387-0764, E-mail: info@prrac.org. Chester Hartman, Editor. Subscriptions are \$25/year, \$45/two years. Foreign postage extra. Articles, article suggestions, letters and general comments are welcome, as are notices of publications, conferences, job openings, etc. for our Resources Section. Articles generally may be reprinted, providing PRRAC gives advance permission.

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What Works: A Fifty Year Retrospective

by David Barton Smith

Three watershed events in the struggle to end divisions by race in the United States are marking major anniversaries: the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1965 Medicare-Medicaid legislation. While we have fallen far short of the vision of the movement that produced these events, what has worked? I list concrete examples of five general strategies that have given good returns on investments.

1. Visibility: Nothing happens until the inequities and disparities are made visible. The Medicare-Medicaid legislation was passed only after disparities in access to care by race and income began to be documented by regular national surveys. Since the 1989 revisions of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 (HMDA), residential mortgage lenders are required to publicly report detailed information, including the race of loan applicants. Nationally, loan approval rates, unadjusted for risk, are substantially lower for blacks than whites. The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in 1992 did the first "risk adjusted" study. The study concluded that minorities in the Boston Area were rejected for loans 56% more often than equally creditworthy whites. After scathing headlines, heated industry rebuttals and lending agency efforts to improve the fairness of their loan application processes, the number of loans approved nationally for blacks has increased and rejection rates have declined. Public disclosure reports by race for individual lending institutions are available both in hard copy and from the web site of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (www.ffiec.gov). As a result, lenders concerned about their public image have a strong incentive to demonstrate good faith by following such best practice loan fairness guidelines.

2. Testing: Making disparities vis-

ible, however, rarely forces change. There are just too many more comfortable, moralistic and victim-blaming alternative explanations. Randomized testing varying only the race of the testers clears away this ideological underbrush. By the 1970s, testing was being used by fair housing agencies to determine the validity of housing discrimination complaints. In 1979, the Department of Housing and Urban Development sponsored the first national testing study of discrimination in housing markets. The study demonstrated the feasibility of such surveys and the persistence of a high de-

Choice was viewed as the wolf in sheep's clothing that would undermine the goal of integration.

gree of discrimination in the housing market. This has been followed by a series of regular testing studies that have kept pressure on and have documented progress in reducing the level of discrimination. Perhaps reflecting these pressures, the Census documents a modest decline in residential segregation in most metropolitan areas over the last 20 years.

3. Gold: The golden rule in America is that those that have the gold rule. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act attempted to impose the condition of integration and non-discrimination on all organizations receiving federal funds. Unwavering commitment to this principle in implementation of the Medicare program worked. Almost 1,000 hospitals integrated their accommodations and medical staff in a period of a few months. The visible symbols of Jim Crow in the nation's hospitals disappeared almost overnight, and gross racial disparities in access to services gradually disappeared over the next decade.

4. Regionalism: Patterns of geographic and residential segregation limit the ability to reduce unequal treatment. Treatment may be integrated and equal within school districts or health systems but unequal between. The more affluent and predominantly white suburban areas do better. Health systems and school districts that don't overlap such boundaries can do little to reduce the overall level of segregation and are limited in their ability to address treatment disparities. For a brief period in the 1970s and 1980s, federal regional health planning certificate of need requirements forced integration of specialized health services in many metropolitan areas. Metropolitan areas that had been operating under city-suburban court-ordered desegregation have achieved a greater degree of integration. In general, metropolitan areas whose schools or health systems are regionalized have fewer disparities and better overall outcomes.

5. Universality: "Freedom of choice" was the rallying cry of the segregationists in the 1960s and is embedded within market/competitive solutions to schools and healthcare. The initial success of the Medicare program in integrating hospitals was based on a single universal program (all persons over 65) and a restructuring of the hospital system to restrict consumer choice. This meant one entrance, one waiting room and race-blind room assignment. The goals of desegregation and equity trumped individual consumer choice. Choice was viewed as the wolf in sheep's clothing that would undermine the goal of integration.

These five general strategies have worked because the majority of Americans believe (or at least can be shamed into saying they believe) in equal opportunity and that segregation and discrimination should not be tolerated. Yet, the sheep's clothing arguments of the wolf of segregation have blunted

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Why Is HHS Obscuring a Health Care Gap?

by H. Jack Geiger

Over the past four years my colleagues and I have read and reviewed more than a thousand careful, peer-reviewed studies documenting systematic deficiencies and inequities in the health care provided for African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and members of some Asian subgroups. The evidence is overwhelming. Unfortunately, the Department of Health and Human Services seems intent on papering it over.

This is the only conclusion that can be drawn from HHS's recent treatment of the first national report card on disparities in the diagnosis and treatment for this country's most vulnerable populations. The department edited and rewrote the report's summary until it reflected nothing close to reality.

The reality is this: If you are an African American man with one form of lung cancer, you are far less likely than a similarly ill white patient to receive a surgical procedure that would cut your chances of early death nearly in half, from 95 percent to 50 percent — even if you have the same health insurance coverage and are in the same hospital. If you are a Hispanic trauma victim with multiple bone fractures, you are less likely to be given adequate pain medication — or any at all. If you are a low-income or minority child with severe asthma, your chances of getting the most effective drug combinations are slimmer, and you endure repeated attacks of the disease and hospitalizations. Native Americans with diabetes, or Asian/Pacific Islanders with HIV-AIDS, all too often experience such disparities in care. The pattern extends over the full range of medical conditions.

The reasons are complex. Patients often mistrust the medical system because of perceived past discrimination. On the physicians' side, poor communication, lack of cultural understanding, and subconscious negative racial and ethnic stereotyping can be in-

involved. Much needs to be learned. But even though there are at least eight major reviews of all this evidence, including the Institute of Medicine's landmark 2001 study, "Unequal Treatment," there has been no overall national assessment of the scope of the problem. So it was a welcome development when Congress mandated HHS's Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), a body with an impeccable track record of expertise and honesty, to produce the first annual national report card on disparities.

"Of all the forms of injustice, discrimination in health care is the most cruel!"

The AHRQ did its job well. Its draft report was a clear and massive presentation of the data on disparities in care associated with race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Its summary was blunt, noting that such disparities are "national problems that affect health care at all points in the process, at all sites of care, and for all medical conditions," affecting health outcomes and entailing "a personal and societal price."

After "review" by HHS, those truthful words are gone, as are most references to race and ethnicity, now described as problems that existed "in the past." Prejudice is "not implied in any way." Disparities are simply called "differences," and — incredibly — "there is no implication that these differences result in adverse health outcomes."

What of the thousand or more studies to the contrary? The new summary says: "Some studies and commentators have suggested that a gap exists between ideal health care and the actual health care that Americans some-

times receive." Worse, the new summary begins with a short list of relatively minor health areas in which minority and poor populations do slightly better than the majority (because, an AHRQ spokesman said, "Secretary [Tommy] Thompson likes to focus on the positive.")

There is a pattern here. A few weeks ago, all of the different institutes that make up the National Institutes of Health released their draft "strategic plans" to overcome racial and ethnic disparities in health status — the burdens of greater illness and shorter life expectancies of America's minority populations. Disparities in health care obviously contribute to those burdens. But only three of the NIH's 14 institutes even mentioned them.

A recent report by a panel of experts convened by Physicians for Human Rights recommended corrective steps to be taken by government at every level, as well as by the medical profession, hospitals, HMOs, community groups and civil rights organizations. But the federal government has an especially critical role to play in collecting and honestly analyzing data, supporting a more diverse health workforce, and ensuring enforcement of civil rights in the health care system. To avoid the truth, or cloak it in more comfortable words, is to abandon that responsibility.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. understood what is at issue here. "Of all the forms of injustice," he said, "discrimination in health care is the most cruel."

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Organizing for Regional Equity: The Gamaliel Foundation

by Jill Mazullo

Where can you find the crux of the Civil Rights Movement today? Some say it's emerging in the Gamaliel Foundation and the work of its affiliate organizations, such as MICAHA (the Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope), the Jubilee Interfaith Organization in New Jersey, or MOSES (Metropolitan Organizing Strategy for Enabling Strength) in Detroit. They are just 3 of the 55 such grassroots, multi-racial organizations that operate as affiliates of the Gamaliel Foundation, an organizing institute headquartered in Chicago.

When executive director Greg Galluzzo came on board in 1986, he charged the foundation with training new leaders in the style of Saul Alinsky, the famed father of community organizing who emerged a leader in the tough stockyard neighborhoods of Chicago. While Alinsky had worked on a neighborhood scale, empowering residents and workers to demand social reforms such as better housing, safer working conditions and lower crime, the Foundation has broadened its organizational emphasis to a regional scale—lately even tackling policy issues that are national in breadth.

Following the lead of Minnesota organizer Pamela Twiss, Gamaliel staff

became familiar with the work of urban affairs specialists like David Rusk, Myron Orfield and John Powell, all of whom conduct research in the areas of social and fiscal equity, land use reform and regional governance. Gamaliel staff members quickly saw ways that the academics' arguments for regionalism could be applied to their community organizing model.

As a result, Gamaliel asked Rusk, Orfield, Powell and George Ranney to serve as ongoing strategic partners. Gamaliel taps these regional affairs

The coalition can lend a moral component to many social policy arguments.

theoreticians and academics and puts their analyses into the hands of organizers who can effectively move from theory to practice.

The Gamaliel model generally works in the following fashion: A handful of concerned grassroots activists from anywhere in the U.S. will contact the Foundation to discuss a regional problem they're facing. The issue may be school funding, or sprawling development, or providing adequate mass transportation to low-income residents. The citizens may have been meeting independently for months, even years, and seek assistance in building a broader coalition. With Gamaliel's help, the small band of activists learns that the issues concerning them are likewise of importance to churches throughout the region, in the core city as well as older, low tax base suburbs. Even organizations in property-wealthy suburbs have self-interest in joining such a regional coalition; their faith requires that they serve those with little means to protect themselves.

By re-framing their arguments from a regional perspective, these individuals move from a powerless position where they are talking amongst themselves into a diverse coalition of churches, synagogues, neighborhood organizations, leagues of cities and other like-minded organizations operating under one banner. Together, the coalition can lend a moral component to many social policy arguments, such as demanding affordable housing in affluent suburbs, better bus service for low-income neighborhoods, and adequate school funding so children throughout the region have access to a decent education.

The new organization then hires a strong community organizer who can train people to conduct surveys of the coalition members. Ultimately there may be up to 2,000 surveys collected asking for core issues the individuals want to see addressed. The results are boiled down into the three issue areas for reform that emerge from the survey. The organizers work with leadership at Gamaliel to draft an agenda for reform on the three emerging issue areas. The organizers then host large meetings with upwards of 1,500 people, where strategic elected officials are in attendance. The organizers and the meeting attendees aim to hold elected officials accountable by asking them to commit publicly to voting favorably on regional bills forthcoming in their legislature.

This model has worked many times in metropolitan regions throughout the U.S. and produced successful legislation embraced by the Gamaliel coalitions. The affiliates have organized successful, racially integrated coalitions for broad reforms on land use, transportation, fair housing, tax equity, school funding reform, health care and immigrant rights. Here are just a handful of reforms they've

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The source of the Gamaliel (pronounced gah-MAY-lee-ehl) Foundation name: Gamaliel is a Biblical figure from the New Testament who served as a mentor to Paul, the patron saint of organizers. The Gamaliel Foundation web site: www.gamaliel.org. Link to download "An Activist's Guide to Metropolitix: Building Coalitions for Reform in America's Metropolitan Areas," by Myron Orfield: www.ameregis.com

helped achieve:

- 1) Passing a fair housing bill:** Minnesota state legislator Myron Orfield was determined to pass a fair housing bill in the early 1990s to take the pressure off the central cities to house all of the region's low-income population. He argued that suburbs ought to provide a portion of affordable housing based on the regional need. Orfield pursued the bill three years in a row. The first year, the tenor of the debate was just plain ugly: Legislators from wealthy suburbs could hardly conceal their disdain for the low-income people who might relocate to their community. But the second year, a number of faith-based organizations associated with Gamaliel spurred priests and pastors to turn out at legislative hearings. The pastors also paid personal visits to outspoken legislators, challenging them to defend their basest comments. The presence of men and women in pastoral garb brought out the best in the legislators, and the debate became more substantive, and more polite as well. The third year, a housing compromise passed, allowing the seven-county Metropolitan Council to negotiate housing goals and withhold regional services to cities that did not participate in the regional housing fund.
- 2) Siting a landfill:** A landfill was originally proposed to be sited within the city limits of Gary, Indiana. Initially, even elected officials in Gary wanted the waste dump to be located in their city for the sake of economic development. But the Interfaith Federation (IF), a Gamaliel affiliate, said the proposed site was irresponsible because the waste dump would be situated in a low-income, largely black neighborhood. IF argued that placing the

dump in a rural location removed from densely populated urban areas was a better approach. The key for IF was repositioning the issue from a single-minded focus on economic development to the moral issue of who would have to live with the nuisance of the waste dump itself. IF was successful in framing the issue, and the waste dump was ultimately built in a rural locale.

In many ways, Gamaliel is the Civil Rights Movement of today.

- 3) Creating a regional transit authority:** Transit in the Detroit area has been conducted piecemeal for decades, lacking coordination from one county to the next. Transportation activists in Michigan thought this was inefficient, since mass transit is regional by nature and crosses many jurisdictional lines. MOSES pressured local and state politicians to think beyond their borders and consider coordinating the transit systems. With Gov. Jennifer Granholm on their side, the three-county Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority was founded. This and other organizing successes led Gamaliel to name MOSES the organization of the year in 2002.

These policy wins and many more by Gamaliel affiliates across the country are a real testament to the organizing model at the heart of the institute. The coalitions bring people together around seemingly intractable policy issues. The organizers choose their issues carefully, zeroing in on winnable battles for which they can provide workable solutions their members agree upon.

Gamaliel is notable in its ability to attract and retain people from all faiths, all races, all classes; the affiliate organizations consist of workers, students, ministers, laypeople and more.

Gamaliel is very intentional in its promotion of people of color, working hard to ensure they have prominent leaders of all races. Galluzzo says it's important that newcomers to the organization see diverse leadership so they can envision themselves moving up the ranks into key roles in the future.

Gamaliel leaders have challenged themselves to grow in response to shifting policies in the U.S. Their current push is a national campaign for civil rights for immigrants called Rolling Thunder, with dozens of large meetings planned for this fall across the country. Galluzzo says it's a difficult path since the organization is currently better tooled for regional reforms, but the leadership clearly stated they need to defend the rights of immigrants who cannot speak for themselves out of fear of deportation.

In many ways, Gamaliel is the Civil Rights Movement of today. They can rally a crowd as few can, and are multiracial in thought and deed. Watch what they can do in your region.

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the effectiveness of each of these strategies. Visibility has been fought with privacy objections, testing by raising the specter of costly government intrusion, regionalization by the rhetoric of community empowerment and entrepreneurship, and universality by appeals for consumer choice and competition. The vision of the Civil Rights Movement will be realized to the extent that the wolf is named for what it is and the long-term impact of such alternatives on the cost and quality of life for all citizens made clear.

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usually overlooked because most analysts focus only on annual family income to indicate disadvantage. This makes it hard to understand why black students, on average, score lower than whites whose family incomes are the same. It is easier to understand this pattern when we recognize that children can have similar family incomes but be of different economic classes: black families with low income in any year are likely to have been poor for longer than white families with similar income in that year. White families are likely to own far more assets that support their children's achievement than are black families at the same income level, partly because black middle-class parents are more likely to be the first generation in their families to have middle-class status. Although median black family income is now nearly 2/3 of white income, black family assets are still only 12% of whites'. This difference means that, among white and black families with the same middle-class incomes, the whites are more likely to have savings for college. This makes white children's college aspirations more practical, and therefore more commonplace.

Child Rearing/ Personality Traits

Social class differences however, amount to more than these quantifiable differences in health, housing, income and assets. There are powerful social class differences in child rearing habits and personality traits, and these too cause average differences in academic achievement by social class.

Consider how parents of different social classes tend to raise children. Young children of more educated parents are read to more consistently, and are encouraged to read more by themselves when they are older. Most children whose parents have college degrees are read to daily before they begin kindergarten; few children whose parents have only a high school di-

ploma or less benefit from daily reading. White children are more likely than blacks to be read to in pre-kindergarten years.

A five-year-old who enters school recognizing some words and who has turned pages of many stories will be easier to teach than one who has rarely held a book. The latter can be taught, but the child with a stronger home literacy background will typically post higher scores on reading tests than one for whom book reading is unfamiliar — even if both children benefit from high expectations and effective teaching. So, the achievement gap begins.

Homework exacerbates academic differences between middle- and working-class children because middle-class parents are more likely to assist with homework.

If a society with such differences wants children, irrespective of social class, to have the same chance to achieve academic goals, it should find ways to help lower-class children enter school having the same familiarity with books as middle-class children have. This requires re-thinking the institutional settings in which we provide early childhood care, beginning in infancy.

Some people acknowledge the impact of such differences but find it hard to accept that good schools should have so difficult a time overcoming them. This would be easier to understand if Americans had a broader international perspective on education. Class backgrounds influence *relative* achievement everywhere. The inability of schools to overcome the disadvantage of less literate homes is not a peculiar American failure but a universal reality. Turkish immigrant students suffer from an achievement gap in Germany, as do Algerians in France, as do Caribbean, African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils in

Great Britain, and as do Okinawans and low-caste Buraku in Japan.

An international survey of 15-year-olds, conducted in 2000, found a strong relationship in almost every nation between parental occupation and student literacy. The gap between literacy of children of the highest status workers (like doctors, professors, lawyers) and the lowest status workers (like waiters and waitresses, taxi drivers, mechanics) was even greater in Germany and in the United Kingdom than it was in the United States. After reviewing these results, a U.S. Department of Education summary concluded that "most participating countries do not differ significantly from the United States in terms of the strength of the relationship between socioeconomic status and literacy in any subject." Remarkably, the Department published this conclusion at the very time it was guiding a bill through Congress — "No Child Left Behind" — that demanded every school in the nation abolish social class differences in achievement within 12 years.

Urging less educated parents to read to children can't fully compensate for differences in school readiness. If children see parents read to solve their own problems or for entertainment, children are more likely to want to read themselves. Parents who bring reading material home from work demonstrate by example to children that reading is not a segmented burden but a seamless activity that bridges work and leisure. Parents who read to children but don't read for themselves send a different message.

How parents read to children is as important as whether they do; more educated parents read aloud differently. When working-class parents read aloud, they are more likely to tell children to pay attention without interruptions or to sound out words or name letters. When they ask children about a story, questions are more likely to be factual, asking for names of objects or memory of events.

Parents who are more literate are more likely to ask questions that are creative, interpretive or connective,

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like “what do you think will happen next?,” “does that remind you of what we did yesterday?” Middle-class parents are more likely to read aloud, to have fun, to start conversations, as an entree to the world outside. Their children learn that reading is enjoyable and are more motivated to read in school.

There are stark class differences not only in how parents read but in how they converse. Explaining events in the broader world to children, in dinner talk, for example, may have as much of an influence on test scores as early reading itself. Through such conversations, children develop vocabularies and become familiar with contexts for reading in school. Educated parents are more likely to engage in such talk and to begin it with infants and toddlers, conducting pretend conversations long before infants can understand the language. Typically, middle-class parents “ask” infants about their needs, then provide answers for the children (“Are you ready for a nap, now? Yes, you are, aren’t you?”). Instructions are more likely to be given indirectly (“You don’t want to make so much noise, do you?”). Such instruction is really an invitation for a child to work through the reasoning

behind an order and to internalize it. Middle-class parents implicitly begin academic instruction for infants with such indirect guidance.

Yet such instruction is quite different from what policymakers nowadays consider “academic” for young children: explicit training in letter and number recognition, letter-sound correspondence, and so on. Such drill in basic skills can be helpful but is unlikely to close the social class gap in learning.

Soon after middle-class children become verbal, parents typically draw them into adult conversations so children can practice expressing their own

Middle-class children’s self-assurance is enhanced in after-school activities that sometimes require large fees for enrollment and almost always require parents to have enough free time and resources to provide transportation.

opinions. Lower-class children are more likely to be expected to be seen and not heard. Inclusion this early in adult conversations develops a sense of entitlement in middle-class children; they feel comfortable addressing adults as equals and without deference. Children who want reasons rather than being willing to accept assertions on adult authority develop intellectual skills upon which later academic success in school will rely. Certainly, some lower-class children have such skills and some middle-class children lack them. But, on average, a sense of entitlement is social class-based.

Parents whose professional occupations entail authority and responsibility typically believe more strongly that they can affect their environments and solve problems. At work, they explore alternatives and negotiate compromises. They naturally express these

personality traits at home when they design activities where children figure out solutions for themselves. Even the youngest middle-class children practice traits that make academic success more likely when they negotiate what to wear or to eat. When middle-class parents give orders, they are more likely to explain why the rules are reasonable.

But parents whose jobs entail following orders or doing routine tasks exude a lesser sense of efficacy. Their children are less likely to be encouraged to negotiate clothing or food. Lower-class parents are more likely to instruct children by giving directions without extended discussion. Following orders, after all, is how they themselves behave at work. So their children are also more likely to be fatalistic about obstacles they face, in and out of school.

Middle-class children’s self-assurance is enhanced in after-school activities that sometimes require large fees for enrollment and almost always require parents to have enough free time and resources to provide transportation. Organized sports, music, drama and dance programs build self-confidence (with both trophies and admiring adult spectators) and discipline in middle-class children. Lower-class parents find the fees for such activities more daunting, and transportation may also be more of a problem. In many cases, such organized athletic and artistic activities are not available anywhere in lower-class neighborhoods. So lower-class children’s sports are more informal and less confidence-building, with less opportunity to learn teamwork and self-discipline. For children with greater self-confidence, unfamiliar school challenges can be exciting; such children, who are more likely to be from middle-class homes, are more likely to succeed than those who are less self-confident.

Homework exacerbates academic differences between middle- and working-class children because middle-class parents are more likely to assist with homework. Yet homework would increase the achievement gap even if all parents were able to

Civil Rights Movement Book

Our new book, *Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching* (produced with Teaching for Change), provides extensive resources to help teach about the Civil Rights Movement in a way that highlights the important contributions of rank-and-file participants in the Movement and that connects students with present-day social movements. A valuable resource for teachers, community organizers, etc.

For further information and to order a copy, go to www.civilrightsteaching.org.

assist. Parents from different social classes supervise homework differently. Consistent with overall patterns of language use, middle-class parents — particularly those whose own occupational habits require problem solving — are more likely to assist by posing questions that decompose problems and that help children figure out correct answers. Lower-class parents are more likely to guide children with direct instructions. Children from both strata may go to school with completed homework, but middle-class children gain more in intellectual power from the exercise than do lower-class children.

Twenty years ago, Betty Hart and Todd Risley, researchers from the University of Kansas, visited families from different social classes to monitor the conversations between parents and toddlers. Hart and Risley found that, on average, professional parents spoke over 2,000 words per hour to their children, working-class parents spoke about 1,300, and welfare mothers spoke about 600. So, by age three, children of professionals had vocabularies that were nearly 50% greater than those of working-class children and twice as large as those of welfare children.

Deficits like these cannot be made up by schools alone, no matter how high the teachers' expectations. For all children to achieve the same goals, the less advantaged would have to enter school with verbal fluency similar to the fluency of middle-class children.

The Kansas researchers also tracked how often parents verbally encouraged children's behavior, and how often parents reprimanded their children. Toddlers of professionals got an average of six encouragements per reprimand. Working-class children had two. For welfare children, the ratio was reversed, an average of one encouragement for two reprimands. Children whose initiative was encouraged from a very early age are probably more likely, on average, to take responsibility for their own learning.

Social class differences in role modeling also make an achievement gap almost inevitable. Not surprisingly,

middle-class professional parents tend to associate with, and be friends with, similarly educated professionals. Working-class parents have fewer professional friends. If parents and their friends perform jobs requiring little academic skill, their children's images of their own futures are influenced. On average, these children must struggle harder to motivate themselves to achieve than children who assume that, as in their parents' social circle, the only roles are doctor, lawyer, teacher, social worker, manager, ad-

Teachers and counselors can stress doing well in school to lower-class children, but such lessons compete with children's own self-images, formed early in life and reinforced daily at home.

ministrator or businessperson.

Even disadvantaged children now usually say they plan to attend college. College has become such a broad rhetorical goal that black eighth graders tell surveyors they expect to earn college degrees as often as white eighth graders respond in this way. But despite these intentions to pursue education, fewer black than white eighth graders actually graduate from high school four years later, fewer eventually enroll in college the year after high school graduation, and even fewer persist to get bachelor's degrees.

A bigger reason than affordability is that while disadvantaged students *say* they plan on college, they don't feel as much parental, community or peer pressure to take the courses or to get the grades to qualify and to study hard to become more attractive to college admission officers. Lower-class parents say they expect children to perform well, but are less likely to enforce these expectations, for example with rewards or punishments for report card grades. Teachers and counselors can stress doing well in school

to lower-class children, but such lessons compete with children's own self-images, formed early in life and reinforced daily at home.

Culture and Expectations

Partly, there may be a black community culture of underachievement that helps to explain why even middle-class black children often don't do as well in school as white children from seemingly similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Middle-class black students don't study as hard as white middle-class students, and blacks are more disruptive in class than whites from similar income strata. This culture of underachievement is easier to understand than to cure. Throughout American history, many black students who excelled in school were not rewarded in the labor market for that effort. Many black college graduates could only find work as servants, as Pullman car porters or, in white-collar fields, as assistants to less qualified whites. Many Americans believe that these practices have disappeared and that blacks and whites with similar test scores now have similar earnings and occupational status. But labor market discrimination, even for blacks whose test scores are comparable to whites, continues to play an important role. Especially for black males with high school educations, discrimination continues to be a big factor.

Evidence for this comes from the continued success of employment discrimination cases — for example, a prominent 1996 case in which Texaco settled for a payment of \$176 million to black employees after taped conversations of executives revealed pervasive racist attitudes, presumably not restricted to executives of this corporation. Other evidence comes from studies finding that black workers with darker complexions have less labor market success than those with lighter complexions but identical education, age and criminal records. Still more

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evidence comes from studies in which blacks and whites with similar qualifications are sent to apply for job vacancies; the whites are typically more successful than the blacks. One recent study trained young, well-groomed and articulate black and white college graduates to pose as high school graduates with otherwise identical qualifications except that some reported convictions for drug possession. When these youths submitted applications for entry level jobs, the applications of whites with criminal records got positive responses more often than the applications of blacks with no criminal records.

So the expectation of black students that their academic efforts will be less rewarded than efforts of their white peers is rational for the majority of black students who do not expect to complete college. Some will reduce their academic effort as a result. We can say that they should not do so and, instead, should redouble their efforts in response to the greater obstacles they face. But as long as racial discrimination persists, the average achievement of black students will be lower than the average achievement of whites, simply because many blacks (especially males) who see that academic effort has less of a payoff will respond rationally by reducing their effort.

Helpful Policies

If we properly identify the actual social class characteristics that produce differences in average achievement, we should be able to design policies that narrow the achievement gap. Certainly, improvement of instructional practices is among these, but alone, a focus on school reform is bound to be frustrating and ultimately unsuccessful. To work, school improvement must combine with policies that narrow the social and economic differences among children. Where these differences cannot easily be narrowed,

school should be redefined to cover more of the early childhood, after-school and summer times when the disparate influences of families and communities are most powerful.

Because the gap is already huge at age three, the most important new investment should probably be in early childhood programs. Pre-kindergarten classes for four-year-olds are needed, but barely begin to address the problem. The quality of early childhood programs is as important as the existence of programs themselves. Too

The association of social and economic disadvantage with an achievement gap has long been well known to educators.

many low-income children are parked before television sets in low-quality daycare settings. To narrow the gap, care for infants and toddlers should be provided by adults who can create the kind of intellectual environment that is typically experienced by middle-class infants and toddlers. This requires professional care-givers and low child:adult ratios.

After-school and summer experiences for lower-class children, similar to programs middle-class children take for granted, would also likely be needed to narrow the gap. This does not mean remedial programs where lower-class children get added drill in math and reading. Certainly, remediation should be part of an adequate after-school and summer program, but only a part. The advantage that middle-class children gain after school and in summer likely comes from self-confidence they acquire and awareness they develop of the world outside, from organized athletics, dance, drama, museum visits, recreational reading and other activities that develop inquisitiveness, creativity, self-discipline and organizational skills. After-school and summer programs can be expected to have a chance to

narrow the achievement gap only by attempting to duplicate such experiences.

Provision of health care services to lower-class children and their families is also required to narrow the achievement gap. Some health care services are relatively inexpensive, like school vision and dental clinics that cost less than schools typically spend on many less effective reforms. A full array of health services will cost more, but likely can't be avoided if there is a true intent to raise the achievement of lower-class children.

Policies to make stable housing affordable to low-income working families with children and policies to support the earnings of such families should also be thought of as educational policies — they can have a big impact on student achievement, irrespective of school quality.

The association of social and economic disadvantage with an achievement gap has long been well known to educators. Most, however, have avoided the obvious implication: To improve lower-class children's learning, amelioration of the social and economic conditions of their lives is also needed. Calling attention to this link is not to make excuses for poor school performance. It is, rather, to be honest about the social support schools require if they are to fulfill the public's expectation that the achievement gap disappear. Only if school improvement proceeds simultaneously with social and economic reform can this expectation be fulfilled.

Richard Rothstein (rr2159@columbia.edu) is a research associate of the Economic Policy Institute, a visiting professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the author of Class and Schools. Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap (Teachers College Press, 2004). This article is adapted from a summary of that book prepared for the October 2004 issue of American School Board Journal. □

Social Class, But What About the Schools?

by Pedro A. Noguera

Long before publication of *Social Class and Schools*, I was a fan of Richard Rothstein's work. As a *New York Times* columnist for several years, Rothstein's commentaries on education were distinguished by his ability to bring common-sense insights to complex policy issues. In a field where policy typically is driven by ideology and the latest reform fad, Rothstein's perspectives were frequently a breath of fresh air, and I often found myself clipping the articles to share with students and colleagues.

Hence, I was not surprised to find myself in complete agreement with most of the arguments in his new book. In fact, many of the points he raises about the ways in which poverty influences the academic performance of poor children, I have made myself (my 2003 book, *City Schools and the American Dream*). Like Rothstein, I have often taken issue with those (like the Thernstroms and The Heritage Foundation) who assert that there are "no excuses" for the achievement gap between Black and white, or middle-class and poor children. As Rothstein makes clear, lack of health care, inadequate nutrition or inability to secure stable housing has an effect on the achievement of poor students, and those who claim that children whose basic needs have not been met should do just as well as more privileged children are either lying or delusional.

Despite my concurrence with Rothstein on number of educational issues, there are at least two disturbing aspects to his main argument that I take issue with. First, there is substantial evidence that the schools poor children attend are more likely to be overcrowded, underfunded and staffed by inexperienced teachers. Poor children of color are also more likely to attend schools that are segregated by race and class; less likely to have access to the rigorous math and science courses needed for college; less likely to have access to computers and the

internet; and less likely to be in a school that is safe and orderly. Rothstein does not argue that improving these conditions would not help poor children; he simply suggests that this is not where the emphasis for change should be placed. He focuses instead on the family background of poor children and the multi-faceted effects of poverty, factors that clearly have an influence on achievement but which are harder to address. Rothstein argues that im-

Reducing poverty and improving schools should not be treated as competing goals, but for the time being at least, there is far greater support for improving education.

proving school conditions would not lead to elimination of the achievement gap. While this may be true, I find it hard to understand how any reasonable person could argue that improving the abysmal conditions present in so many schools serving poor children would not have a positive effect on learning outcomes.

My other point of disagreement with Rothstein concerns his argument that some of the money being spent to improve schools should be redirected to address issues such as health care and housing that contribute to the hardships experienced by poor children in America. My disagreement on this point is political rather than substantive. While I agree that much more needs to be done to address the needs of poor children in America, such as providing access to quality early childhood programs, I also know that there has not been much political will or support for taking on these issues since the War on Poverty in the 1960s. There is, however, substantial popu-

lar support for the idea of improving public education and using it as a vehicle to promote opportunity and social mobility. Like Rothstein, I agree that schools cannot be expected to address the effects of poverty on children alone, but from a tactical standpoint I believe it makes sense to support the idea of advancing equity by expanding educational opportunities, rather than dismissing such efforts as unrealistic or hopelessly unattainable. Put more simply, reducing poverty and improving schools should not be treated as competing goals. Both are necessary, but for the time being at least, there is far greater support for improving education.

There are other parts of Rothstein's argument that I also take issue with: his arguments regarding minority student attitudes toward school (I contend that oppositional attitudes are often produced in school); his narrow focus on Black and white students at a time when Latinos and Asians are the fastest growing groups nationally; and his lack of attention to the difference that highly qualified teachers can make in influencing student outcomes.

But most of all I am troubled by his dismissal of the high-performing/high-poverty schools that have been documented by The Education Trust and others. While there may indeed be a bit of exaggeration about some of these schools, I know from my own research and experience (see my article "Transforming High Schools" in the May 2004 issue of *Educational Leadership*) that such schools do exist, and while they may not close the achievement gap as some have claimed, they do succeed in reducing academic disparities. The existence of such schools is the most important evidence available that the quality of schools poor students attend does matter. I'm not sure if Rothstein would argue against this point or why he does not weigh in more heavily on the need to

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do more to improve schools. In all likelihood, it is because his goal is to call for greater attention to the effects of poverty rather than seeing so much emphasis placed on reforming schools. While I don't have a problem with that emphasis, I do think it is important to show what effective schools can do to promote student achievement. This

ultimately is where Rothstein and I disagree, and while I strongly endorse the attention he directs toward the effects of poverty on achievement, I believe that the book he's written is not really about schools, it's about what he thinks schools cannot do. The limitations he identifies are certainly real and profoundly important, but what he pays insufficient attention to is the extraordinary difference that

good schools can make for students who are lucky enough to get access to them.

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Don't Lose the Battle Trying to Fight the War

by John H. Jackson

In the year that we commemorate the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the 40th anniversary of passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Richard Rothstein's "Even the Best Schools Can't Close the Race Achievement Gap" highlights the importance of our nation's commitment to address people of color's socio-economic ills as a tool for addressing and closing the racial achievement gap.

In theory, I wholeheartedly support Rothstein's assertion that it is not by accident or outrageous misfortunes that many of the areas that have the lowest achievement levels are urban areas populated by poor people of color who are confronted with many social challenges—people who often also have the lowest opportunity levels. This has been a challenge that has begged for an answer for over a century.

Immediately following passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, in 1965, Dr. Kenneth Clark, noted expert social scientist in the *Brown* case, described in his classic text, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*, the psychology and pathology of urban life. Like Rothstein's, Dr. Clark's analysis highlighted the outcomes rooted in historical and contemporary forms of discrimination against populations who were blocked access to educational and economic opportunities. That same year, Senator Daniel Moynihan headed up a commission which issued a report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, that again, like

Rothstein's work, indicated that the lack of socioeconomic opportunity led to family instability in poor black communities and gave rise to a "culture of poverty" which often leads to unfavorable sociological outcomes.

Thus, while Clark, Moynihan and now Rothstein provide an accurate diagnosis of the symptoms that lead to the racial achievement gaps that we see in school systems across the nation, the

The remedy is not as simple as Rothstein indicates.

remedy is not as simple as Rothstein indicates. Rothstein's approach seems to indicate that by wiping out the social challenges that exist in urban communities the racial achievement gap will also disappear. Its underlying tone suggests, that many of the educational barriers that produce the achievement gaps are centered in the student's sociological background rather than in the institutions that are charged with educating all students—regardless of socioeconomic background. For example, Rothstein asserts that African American students are "more disruptive" in class than their white peers. His assertion is likely rooted in the fact that these students are more often referred to the office for discipline and penalized more than their white peers. However, as research by the Harvard

Civil Rights Project and The Advancement Project indicates, African American students are more often sent to the office for "subjective" offenses and are more often penalized for offenses their white peers are not penalized for. In this case, the bulk of the problem lies less with the student's actions than the system of discipline which labels a similar act "disruptive" on one hand and "acceptable" on the other. Here, the answer lies in ensuring that teachers have the professional development needed to understand and educate the population that sits before them. Furthermore, removing students from this "culture of poverty" won't alone close the achievement gap, as numerous studies have proven that even minority students in wealthier areas, on average, have lower test scores than their white peers in similar areas.

While Rothstein's approach to addressing the problem identifies a significant barrier in addressing the gap, it does not account for the gap, nor should it absolve schools of their responsibility to ensure that there are highly qualified teachers in the classrooms, appropriate class sizes and adequate resources.

If history is to be our guide in addressing this challenge, in 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson launched a national War on Poverty. One of the first steps he took to address it was working to pass the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which outlined the federal government's role in

Simplistic and Condescending

by Jenice L. View

ensuring equal educational opportunities for all children—through teacher quality, resource equity (Title I) and other components. Today, 40 years later, Title I is yet to have been fully funded, and in 2004 President Bush and Congress failed to fully fund the reauthorization of the Act (The *No Child Left Behind Act*)—falling more than \$8 billion short of the resources required to give states and districts what is needed so that teachers can teach and students can learn in all communities.

Thus, it remains difficult to measure the true weight the “culture of poverty” has on the racial achievement gap in education when the first battle—addressing the “culture of ensuring educational opportunities to some and denying them to others”—has yet to have been won. Nonetheless, the strength of Rothstein’s current work is not in his diagnosis of the war on poverty that stills needs to be fought, but the context that his work provides to energize stakeholders to pick up arms to address the battle that exists in their local schools and districts—the battle to ensure equal access to a high-quality education for all students. If we win enough of these battles, we will surely win the war on poverty.

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Request for Syllabi

We’ve received several syllabi for courses dealing with race and poverty issues. We’d like to list them (and how to access them) in a future issue of *P&R*. If you teach/taught or are taking/took such a course, please pass on (preferably by email) such a syllabus.

Pity the low-income person who, by virtue of lousy wages alone, is considered an incompetent parent. Let’s patronize her who is unworthy of talking with or reading to her child or helping with homework (following a 16-hour shift or her second job) because she cannot be relied on to do it correctly. And, should the low-income parent feel too fatigued or too defeated by racism at the end of a hard day’s work, let’s nevertheless encourage his kids to address him “as an equal and without deference” in order to promote the same sense of entitlement that middle-class kids feel and use to their academic advantage.

Simplistic and condescending? No less than Rothstein’s article. So, to give Rothstein the benefit of the doubt, let’s first assume that the supporting evidence for some of the more outrageous claims about urban, low-income African American families are contained within the book’s endnotes, and are more current than the 20-year-old data he cites on (rural? White?) Kansas families. While he seems to have no direct experience with low-income African American families, we can hope that the citations include information about the cultural supports and transformations of the last 40 years in the wake of legal desegregation, including those within the Black church.

Secondly, his international comparison is not credible because the article fails to address native language literacy of dark-skinned immigrants to Europe and Japan compared with the native language literacy of white Europeans. In addition, it is not clear if the data he cites on parental occupation and student literacy hold constant for language proficiency.

Thirdly, the impact on urban communities of the crack cocaine epidemic cannot be overlooked, leaving behind children with impaired health and grandparents to compensate for the failings of addicted parents.

Finally, if the wealth gap between middle-class whites and middle-class

Blacks is indeed shrinking, and if many of the current Black achievers are first-generation middle-class, from where did they all come? How do we explain the circumstances of their birth and their low-income parents and the differences in outcomes? In other words, how is it that being poor one generation ago was less of a barrier to achievement than now? Perhaps it is due to the worsening income and wealth gaps between rich and poor of all races and ethnicities, a fact that is neither irrelevant nor in the control of

How is it that being poor one generation ago was less of a barrier to achievement than now?

parents or teachers. The final paragraph of the article makes the most sense:

The association of social and economic disadvantage with an achievement gap has long been well known to educators. Most, however, have avoided the obvious implication: To improve lower-class children’s learning; amelioration of the social and economic conditions of their lives is also needed. Calling attention to this link is not to make excuses for poor school performance. It is, rather, to be honest about the social support schools require if they are to fulfill the public’s expectation that the achievement gap disappear. Only if school improvement proceeds simultaneously with social and economic reform can this expectation be fulfilled.

Jenice L. View (jenice@aol.com) is a middle school teacher at a public charter school in Washington, DC and co-editor of Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching. □

Inequality and the Schoolhouse

by Stan Karp

Richard Rothstein asks how much schools can be expected to overcome the staggering inequality that continues to define our society. It's the right question. Educational inequality—whose manifestations go well beyond test score gaps—is perhaps the central problem our schools face. How we deal with it will go a long way toward determining whether our society's future will be one of democratic promise or growing division.

Weighing the ability of schools to compensate for the inequality that exists all around them is a question of balance, and there are dangers to be found on both sides of the equation. There's little doubt that schools could do more to bridge gaps between students whose affluence provides private tutors and summer camps and those whose poverty or language status adds only extra burdens. They could use the inadequate resources they receive more efficiently and equitably. They could provide more academic supports, more engaging curriculum, and more effective, high-quality instruction. They could move beyond a superficial multiculturalism that "celebrates diversity" toward a deeper anti-racist practice that helps uncover why some differences translate into access to wealth and power, while others become a source of discrimination and injustice. Schools could also design better systems for encouraging multi-sided accountability and promoting democratic collaboration with parents and communities. To do any of this, schools need pressure from inside and out to make reducing educational inequality a more visible and more urgent priority.

That said, it seems to me that Rothstein is essentially correct when he argues that schools face unreasonable expectations from those who demand schoolhouse solutions to the political, economic and social inequality that we allow to persist. Currently, the achievement gap, narrowly defined by test scores and, more recently, by

NCLB's absurd "adequate yearly progress" formulas, is being used to label public schools as failures, without providing the resources and strategies needed to overcome them. To expect schools to wipe out long-standing academic achievement gaps while denying them substantial new resources and leaving many of the social factors that contribute to this inequality in place is not a formula for

Schools need pressure from inside and out to make reducing educational inequality a more visible and more urgent priority.

providing better education to those who need it most. Instead, it's a strategy for eroding the common ground that a universal system of public education needs to survive.

It's one thing to document academic achievement gaps. It's quite another to use those data, as NCLB and many of its supporters do, to promote a punitive program of test-driven sanctions, privatization and market reforms

which have no record of success as school improvement strategies and which promise to do for schooling what the not-so-free market has done for health care and housing. (Just how serious this privatization agenda is and how cynically concern for achievement gaps is being manipulated to advance it is currently a major point of difference among those who otherwise share a common interest in addressing issues of educational inequality.)

Fifty years after *Brown v. Board of Education* schools are being rightfully taken to task for failing to deliver on its promises. But the bill for that failure, as Rothstein's book shows, needs to be itemized to include the appalling gaps in income, health care, nutrition, family support, housing, school funding and other factors that translate into inequality in classrooms. Yes, we need to press our schools to do a better job. But until society as a whole picks up the tab for the equality it so often invokes as a goal, we will all continue to pay a heavy price.

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Even the Best Schools Can't Do It Alone

by Wendy Puriefoy

At a time when the No Child Left Behind Act all but monopolizes the debate on school reform, Richard Rothstein raises important points that underscore the broader context of public education—a context that deserves to be taken seriously now more than ever. To be sure, schools will benefit when policymakers and communities pay attention to the role that race and class disparities play in shaping the all-too-predictable patterns of academic

achievement.

Unfortunately, Rothstein uses his astute observations about the manifestations of these disparities to suggest that the causes of the achievement gap are personal or cultural, rather than deeply systemic. In its focus on the victims of the system rather than the system itself, Rothstein's scrutiny smacks of the old "cultural deprivation" accounts of unequal success rates, the idea that we can somehow explain

away the achievement gap by finding fault with the lifestyles of those who end up on the wrong end of it. The trouble with this line of thinking is that it often discourages comprehensive, systemic reform in favor of “reforming” those who would benefit from it. If we are serious about creating lasting and effective reforms, we must look for problems within schools, not pathologize children and families.

Rothstein’s analysis represents a particular barrier to comprehensive reform because it fails to rise above a set of superficial choices, reinforcing a rhetorical dichotomy that plays directly into the hands of those for whom supporting public education is not a priority. The fallacy of this dichotomy becomes clear when we realize that solving social disparities and improving public education are not competing aims, but two parts of the same large one. Suggesting that we can either reform schools *or* address inequalities in health care, housing, wealth and parental attention presents us with a set of false choices that all of us and underprivileged communities in particular have a vested interest in reconciling. The danger of ignoring school-based variables in favor of child-based variables is that it can have the flavor of resigning underprivileged commu-

nities to a fate, instead of engaging them and others to take an active, participatory role in the function of local schools. In other words, the problem is not, as Rothstein claims in his title, that “Even the Best Schools Can’t Close the Race Achievement Gap.” The reality is that *Even The Best Schools Can’t Do It Alone*.

Public schools rely on public involvement. Nonprofit organizations like local education funds play a vital role in fostering both awareness of, and responsibility for, education issues at the local level. When we engage communities in generating assets and ideas for public education, we help

We must look for problems within schools, not pathologize children and families.

dispel the myth that a scarcity of resources forces us to choose between preparing our children at home and in our communities or educating them in the classroom.

Of course, this is not an easy process. The first step towards building broader support for public education is seeing public education as a broader

CORRECTION

In our July/August issue, “Some Lessons from *Brown* for the Fair Housing Movement” mistakenly described Martin Luther King’s Chicago housing march as having occurred in early 1968; the actual date was August 1966.

issue, and at their best, Richard Rothstein’s observations help us to do just that. But contrary to their author’s implications, the observations are relevant to school reform not because they expose its limits, but because they expand its potential. Only when we fully recognize the relationship between community health, economic vitality and academic achievement can we work towards solutions equal to the complexities of the task. Such a commitment to a shared public education may well be the first step towards a coherent new vision ensuring that every child can benefit from a quality education.

Wendy D. Puriefoy (WPuriefoy@PublicEducation.org) is Executive Director of the Public Education Network. □

PRRAC Update

- We thank and say goodbye to our two summer law student interns, **Nicole Devero** (who returns to Georgetown Law Ctr.) and **Nisha Agarwal** (who returns to Harvard Law School but will continue to assist from afar with several PRRAC projects, including our Dec. 3-4 Housing Mobility Conf.)
- And we welcome our new part-time intern: **Elizabeth Grote**, a 2nd year law student at George Washington Univ. who spent 3 years in the Neighborhood Defender Service in Harlem after graduating from Yale.

- We’re delighted that Bill Emerson Hunger Fellow **Rebekah Park** has joined our regular staff as Research Associate.
- Changes in PRRAC’s Social Science Advisory Board: **Richard Berk** leaves us, and we thank him for his years of service. And we have added 5 new members: **Margery Austin Turner**, director of The Urban Institute’s Metropolitan Housing & Communities policy center and HUD Deputy Asst. Sec. for Research from 1993-96; **Xavier de Souza Briggs**, Assoc. Prof. At Harvard’s Kennedy

School of Govt., MLK Jr. Visiting Fellow in Urban Studies & Planning at MIT (2002-2004), and Acting Asst. Sec. for Policy Development & Research at HUD from 1998-1999; **Gregory D. Squires**, Chair of the Sociology Dept. at George Washington Univ. and author of recent and forthcoming books on redlining, sprawl, organizing access to capital, and predatory lending; **John Goering**, professor in the Baruch School of Public Affairs, CUNY and author/editor of several books on housing segregation and discrimination; and **Camille Zubrinsky Charles**, Asst. Prof. in the Dept. of Sociology and Research Assoc. at the Center for Africana Studies, Univ. of Pennsylvania. Welcome!

What Teachers Know

by Mark Simon

For teachers, the most disheartening aspect of the Administration's "No Child Left Behind" agenda is the dishonesty in the goals and supposed success stories. No responsible educator disagrees with the stated purpose of leaving no child behind and closing the achievement gap, but we must begin with the truth.

The myth perpetrated by conservative education reformers is that we can abandon the war on poverty while expecting the children of the poor to achieve middle-class success in school simply by "raising expectations." NCLB has provided cover for growing social inequality, de-funding of the public sector, a privatization agenda increasingly unjustified by any research, and a blame game that scapegoats the teacher work force. The liberal-conservative compromise that created the NCLB act seems premised on an assumption that teachers aren't really trying. The most talented teachers particularly resent the message. Rothstein's book provides ammunition for teachers and principals to respond to the hype.

I recently gathered a group of accomplished teachers to discuss *Class and Schools*. They agreed that the book helped them to articulate what teachers already know – that teaching lower-class kids well is tougher than teaching middle-class kids. The book doesn't lessen their commitment to closing the achievement gap. It did lead them to want to personally take new steps – walking tours of their school community and other strategies to get to know their students and families better; political activism to fight for expansion of Head Start and other pre-school programs that help prepare students and families for school; and initiating school- and district-wide conversations to reconsider decisions which had narrowed the focus of education to what is tested – de-valuing important non-cognitive aspects. (This is not covered in Rothstein's summary

here, but was an important point in the book.) Most importantly, they talked of the weight it lifted from their shoulders, allowing them to celebrate human-scale improvement rather than perpetually feeling bad about their work.

It is surprising how little we know about teaching practices that cause students to succeed, particularly in high-poverty schools. Ironically, the hyped

NCLB has provided cover for growing social inequality, de-funding of the public sector, a privatization agenda and a blame game that scapegoats the teacher work force.

myth-making success stories promoted by The Education Trust, Heritage Foundation and purveyors of 90-90-90 schools (90% poverty, 90% minority and 90% meeting high academic standards), by making it sound so easy, have actually distracted educators from recognizing the more nuanced successes that need to be documented and replicated. *Class and Schools* should allow us to more realistically analyze what teacher behaviors, beliefs and school practices actually improve stu-

dent achievement and expand student potential.

Rothstein makes clear (not in his summary here but in the last pages of the book) that part of his intent is to provide an antidote to the demoralizing atmosphere that is driving the most creative, accomplished teachers out of teaching, particularly fleeing schools with high-poverty students. This is a significant issue. The class/race disparities represented by vastly different teacher working and student learning conditions have widened to crisis proportions. Rather than dismissing the need to correct the unequal distribution of teacher talent as "politically and financially fanciful," as he does in the book, Rothstein should have included it under "Helpful Policies." In all other respects, *Class and Schools* brings the realities of what teachers instinctively know to the policy-making table, hopefully before it's too late.

Mark Simon (msimon@jhu.edu) is the Director of the MCEA-JHU Center For Teacher Leadership at Johns Hopkins University. Formerly he taught high school Social Studies in Montgomery County, Maryland, and served for 12 years as the elected president of NEA's 3rd largest affiliate, the Montgomery County Education Association. □

Family and School Matter

by Krista Kafer

Richard Rothstein is right. His new book *Class and Schools* underscores what researchers like James Coleman, Derek Neal and Christopher Jencks have been saying for decades: Life outside of school is the greatest predictor of success in school.

It should come as no surprise that adults' decisions impact their children's academic progress. A child

born to married parents is less likely to have developmental delays or behavioral problems, repeat grades or be expelled. Parents who read regularly to their children will see them grow as readers. It is equally true that conflict and instability at home will seep into a child's performance in the classroom.

Even, so, demography is not destiny, and Rothstein admits as much.

However, he discounts the power of a good school to make a difference. He attributes the success of high-poverty/high-performing schools identified by The Education Trust, The Heritage Foundation and others to selectivity or statistical anomaly. He believes such models may serve a few but are not the answer for most.

His pessimism, however, is unfounded. Research shows that the greatest in-school predictor of academic success is the quality of teaching. What happens 33 hours a week, 180 days a year matters.

The late James Coleman, groundbreaking researcher on the primacy of socioeconomic influence, also found that Catholic and other private schools achieved greater academic results with poor students than public schools serving their peers. Similarly, albeit more recently, Harvard University's Paul Peterson found poor black students using vouchers to attend private schools outperformed their public school counterparts.

Successful schools are not limited to the private sector. Educators are replicating public school models like KIPP Academies around the country because they raise achievement among low-income students. Whether public or private, such effective schools have much in common. Led by strong prin-

Unfortunately, the author's solution — to enact a host of new Great Society programs — is unlikely to make a difference.

cipals and talented teachers, these schools create an environment focused on learning and character development. They build a solid foundation in the basics before moving to higher-level material. Faced with many challenges, they often use a longer school day or school year to get the job done.

While a school can never fully fill

the space left by a deprived home life, it can go a long way. Giving kids access to schools of excellence will make a difference.

Unfortunately, the author's solution — to enact a host of new Great Society programs — is unlikely to make a difference. After almost four decades of Head Start, welfare, and federal academic and after school programs, there is little to show for the effort.

The focus has been in the wrong place. Since family is the greatest determinant of academic success, followed by teaching quality, these should be the focus of change. Policies that encourage marriage, parental responsibility and access to good schools will narrow the gap between poor students and their middle-class peers. A healthy family and a good school are what a child needs most.

Krista Kafer (krista.kafer@heritage.org) is Senior Policy Analyst for Education at the Heritage Foundation. □

Schools Count

by Dianne M. Piché and Tamar Ruth

In *Class and Schools*, Richard Rothstein suggests that school reform will not produce results unless and until the entire liberal social and economic agenda is fully enacted. He has summarized a one-sided collection of unsurprising and not very new studies about the impact of poverty, discrimination and class-related child-rearing practices on student outcomes. His purpose is clear: to make a case that schools cannot be expected to produce the dramatic improvements demanded by increasing numbers of parents and voters, and called for under the No Child Left Behind Act, because there is very little schools can do to mitigate achievement gaps caused primarily by non-school factors.

Rothstein is wrong about the potential and power of schools, and here's why:

First, education continues to be the

single most important and effective "equalizer" of opportunity in our society. If there is one place progressives can and should put their energy and see results, it is in improving public schools, because despite the persistence of race and sex discrimination in the job market, education remains the most promising ticket into the middle class for black and Latino children. For example, in the years following enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the inception of Head Start and Title I programs in 1965, along with court-enforced desegregation, we saw dramatic narrowing of the gap between African American and white children on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Certainly there are "non-school" factors that are difficult or outside the power of schools to overcome, as Rothstein describes. Rather than write

off the potential of schools, however, we should redouble our efforts to ensure that all children have access to schools that work, including: qualified teachers; a safe and supportive learning environment; and, critically, instruction that is not dumbed down but rather matched with the same high standards taught in the suburbs and required now by growing numbers of states in order to graduate. If states and school districts are not willing or able to desegregate schools with high concentrations of poverty (and the Prospects study conducted for the National Assessment of Title I, as well as other credible research, has made it clear that one of the worst educational environments is high poverty concentration in the classroom), they and the federal government should provide additional, carefully targeted resources

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to such schools and their students to enable them to succeed, including: highly qualified teachers; extended time (e.g., high-quality summer and after-school programs); additional highly-trained professionals (e.g., reading specialists, master teachers/coaches); professional development in reading and other core subjects that is aligned with the state's standards; and sufficient pay or other incentives for good teachers to remain in these schools. While a certain amount of racial and economic isolation in schools is outside the control of school officials (the result of entrenched residential segregation), school boards retain control over student assignment and attendance policies and ought to do all in their power to reduce poverty concentration in classrooms; magnet schools, controlled choice and compliance with NCLB's new transfer provisions can all help reduce isolation and improve learning outcomes.

Second, Rothstein's contention that most successful high-poverty or high-minority schools are flukes, statistical outliers or selective academies is not supportable. Despite Rothstein's effort to deflate and discredit as many success stories as he can, our own experience in teaching and advocacy is completely consistent with The Education Trust reports on successful schools and the belief that success is possible in far more schools (<http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/dtm/>), and for many more students, than currently reported. There are success stories on an individual, school and community-wide basis all across the country, and we each have been fortunate to live, witness and celebrate success everywhere we go. For example:

- Last year, every single one of author Ruth's students (all nonwhite, most eligible for free or reduced price meals, and many new to learning English) met the school district's benchmark in reading, and most far exceeded the standard. Her experience as a classroom teacher, and her prior work with poor Latino toddlers, refutes Rothstein's notion that only a

handful of poor children can "defy the odds." Rather, her own experience both as an "at-risk" child growing up, and now as an educator, speaks powerfully to the fact that students can succeed if we believe in and support them.

- In the larger community of eastern Montgomery County, MD, where both authors live, the public schools are majority nonwhite and enroll large numbers of poor and immigrant children. Under the superintendent's leadership, a program of sensible, coherent instructional programs and inter-

Rothstein's contention that most successful high-poverty or high-minority schools are flukes, statistical outliers or selective academies is not supportable.

ventions targeted to poor neighborhoods and schools is dramatically closing the gap, erasing many of the pre-school literacy deficits Rothstein asserts are responsible for the gap at the get-go. In one Title I school where author Piché volunteered and sent her own children, the system's intensive and balanced literacy initiative brought nearly all low-income and non-English-proficient second graders to or above level on the district's early reading assessment, including a number of children who might otherwise have been consigned to special education.

- In St. Louis, where author Piché has represented schoolchildren in an ongoing desegregation case, we have seen results from strategies to improve achievement. Specifically, over the last two decades, thousands of poor black children from St. Louis transferred to majority white and middle-class suburban districts, where their parents could not afford to live. Under this program, the largest public school choice program in the nation, the students achieved graduation and college-going rates enormously higher

than the city schools they otherwise would have attended.

- In California, one of the most underfunded states, with huge numbers of poor and immigrant students, Education Trust West has identified increasing numbers of high-poverty schools making or exceeding state achievement targets. The Citizens' Commission in Civil Rights met with and interviewed educators at some of these schools (and many others across the country) as part of our Title I monitoring project and found some common themes: 1) an overarching belief among staff that all children could succeed (and with it a refusal to make excuses or to blame parents); 2) a relentless focus on literacy and getting all students to read on grade level by the third grade; 3) continuous examination and use of data, including periodic assessment in reading and math, to implement instructional improvements and changes; 4) a strong principal and senior staff who respect teachers, encourage collaboration and celebrate success but who also communicate and enforce high standards; and 5) a sense of connection to a larger community (e.g., through parent involvement, adult volunteers, business partners and support from clergy and faith communities). Significantly, very few of these schools received any "extras" above and beyond their regular district allocations for staffing and materials and their Title I grants. But what they did with their resources was to use them in the smartest, most efficacious ways to improve achievement.

Finally, Rothstein fails to address how schools and school officials themselves are often responsible for perpetuating and exacerbating achievement gaps. Many more kids would succeed in school and huge parts of the gaps would be erased if adults in charge of schools ended policies and practices we know are bad for kids, including the following:

1. The persistent, widespread inequitable distribution of education resources, including teachers. In many parts of the country, rich students get more and poor students get less. We are dismayed that in an entire work on

the achievement gap, Rothstein makes light of perhaps the most consequential maldistribution of resources, that of good qualified teachers. He writes off closing the well-documented teacher quality gap as “politically unrealistic” (p.132 of the book). But this “in-school” problem is one of the largest contributing factors to the achievement gap in the first place. An extensive and growing body of research by Richard Ingersoll (Univ. of Penn.), Jennifer King Rice (Univ. of Md.), William Sanders (Univ. of Tenn.) and others has established that teacher quality is the most significant in-school variable that influences student achievement.

2. Tracking and academic-content gaps. Rothstein acknowledges that poor and minority students have the same educational aspirations as middle-class and white students: to go to college and make a good living. But with a set of widespread practices that expand rather than close gaps, schools themselves make attainment of these goals virtually impossible for many students. These practices include: a) tracking poor and minority students into whole classes or, in the earlier grades, groups, where expectations and standards are low and remain low throughout students’ educational careers; b) counseling and steering similarly situated minority students into less challenging and dumbed-down high school classes, while white students are encouraged to take honors, Advanced Placement and other more rigorous courses; c) in some schools, not requiring, encouraging or even offering a full sequence of college-preparatory classes; and d) the failure of states and districts to ensure that the same courses (e.g., algebra, biology) in fact have the same or comparable rigor across school class and race lines.

3. Bad adult behavior toward children and their parents. In many high-poverty communities, there are adults working in and supervising schools who are downright disrespectful of students and their families. Rothstein addresses the impact of discrimination occurring off school premises, but neglects to acknowledge the poison-

ous impact of within-school discrimination and other demeaning conduct. Under the category of “bad adult behavior,” we include both overtly and covertly biased remarks and practices, schools that are managed as if they were prisons and not places of learning, and school environments that are unwelcoming to both students and parents. We also include the persistent overuse of suspension, expulsion and so-called “zero tolerance” policies that, as applied, deny students an ongoing opportunity to learn and often have an adverse and disproportionate impact on minority and male students.

Rothstein fails to address how schools and school officials themselves are often responsible for perpetuating and exacerbating achievement gaps.

4. Dishonest grading and promotion practices. While we do not favor large-scale retention, we also know, as reported by the National Assessment of Title I, that in general students in poor urban schools receive “A’s” for work that would only pass for a “C” in the better-off suburbs. Children do not ultimately benefit when they are promoted from grade to grade without having attained the grade-level mastery of reading and math skills necessary to do core subject coursework (including comprehending more complex texts) in succeeding years. Intervention and additional assistance should be immediate and targeted to prevent an accumulation of deficits that ultimately will lead to dropouts or failure to meet graduation standards.

To his credit, Rothstein does acknowledge the persistence of and harm caused by segregation, and calls for school and wider community (e.g., residential) integration, proposals with which we agree. In addition, his recommendations for addressing poverty through progressive policies in the areas of preschool and child care, health

care, housing and income security are all very important. We do not disagree with any of them.

But, as discussed above, we disagree completely with his thesis in *Class and Schools* that schools themselves can do little to close achievement gaps.

Not only is Rothstein’s thesis incorrect, it also provides ammunition to an entrenched, retrograde education establishment desperate to excuse achievement gaps at a time when there is a growing public consensus that such gaps are neither inevitable nor morally defensible. This “establishment” includes some (though by no means all) public officials, school administrators and classroom teachers who are challenged, and in some cases personally threatened, by the gap-closing promises and requirements of the bipartisan NCLB. It also includes many middle- and upper-class parents and voters who, historically, have been reluctant to send their tax dollars to the other side of town to improve the schools of poor and nonwhite students.

Ironically, 50 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, those very provisions in NCLB that call for racial and economic justice in the provision of educational resources (including high-quality teaching) are among the most threatening to some otherwise moderate to liberal constituencies, including the nation’s largest teachers’ union. These NCLB provisions include the requirement that states put all schools on a trajectory to ensure that all children, including poor and minority students, can read and do math at the state’s own levels of proficiency within 12 years (a timeline decried as unrealistic by many in the education establishment, but way too long for most parents whose children will have fallen far behind, or dropped out, by the time the deadlines roll around). Less widely discussed (perhaps because the Bush Administration has been complicit in state and local disregard of these provisions) are additional requirements in NCLB to redirect resources to the schools with greatest needs, including closing the

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Rothstein Responds

well-documented “teacher quality gap” between rich and poor schools. Compliance with this provision (which was supported by a coalition of civil rights organizations but opposed by the teachers’ unions) could involve the re-deployment of highly qualified teachers at well-off schools to those with high concentrations of poverty and/or the provision of economic and other incentives for good teachers to remain in high-needs schools.

Most of us who support a broad progressive economic and civil rights agenda know the playing field in and out of school very likely will not be leveled in our lifetimes, nor during the school careers of millions of poor African American and Latino children now in or about to enter the public school system. But we refuse to give up on a generation or even a classroom of children, or to stop pushing lawmakers, school administrators and other educators to do their very best, even as the Right Wing pushes for more shredding of the safety net and the Left backs off its commitment to enforcing racial equality in education. It is not only reasonable but also morally imperative that we expect all schools to do right by all students.

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Tamar Ruth (Tamar_Ruth@fc.mcps.K12.md.us) is an award-winning elementary school teacher in Montgomery Cty., MD, a doctoral student in education policy and leadership at the Univ. of Maryland, and on the board of the Montgomery County Education Assn. (the NEA teachers union). □

Several commentators charge that I devote too much attention to social reform and not enough to school improvement as a strategy for equalizing outcomes between blacks and whites. Getting the balance right is difficult, but the biggest obstacle to doing so is an excessive emphasis on the role of schools. Were the obstacles reversed, I would have written a different book.

My summary for *P&R* of *Class and Schools* insisted that both are needed: “Improvement of instructional practices is among [policies to narrow the achievement gap], but alone, a focus on school reform is bound to be frustrating and ultimately unsuccessful. To work, school improvement must combine with policies that narrow the social and economic differences between children. . . . Only if school improvement proceeds simultaneously with social and economic reform can [the gap be closed].” In *Class and Schools*, I explain that I devoted this work primarily to the social and economic causes of the achievement gap, not because school inadequacies are unimportant, but because our public discussion of school and socioeconomic effects is now so imbalanced: Volumes are produced weekly on how schools should improve (and with many of them I agree), leaving me little to add. But silence on the complementary importance of social and economic reform is deafening.

In neither my summary nor my book do I deny that schools like KIPP, or those cited by The Heritage Foundation or The Education Trust, are better than most and succeed in *narrowing* the achievement gap. What I do deny is the claim of some of their fans that such schools can *close* the achievement gap without simultaneous social and economic reform. Interestingly, leaders of these schools, when pressed, almost never make such claims. They realize, as many policy analysts do not, that their efforts alone can be only modestly successful if socioeconomic deprivation remains unaddressed.

Some of the commentators (Pedro Noguera, for example) appreciate the need for complementary work on both socioeconomic reform and school improvement, but think I have gotten the balance wrong. Perhaps so. But clearly the emphasis in public policy today is so exclusively on schools that a correction is in order. If, in some unimaginable (in today’s political environment) future it swings too far in the direction of social and economic justice, my book may serve a less useful purpose.

Other commentators, however, who claim to have read both the summary and the book, stubbornly misrepresent the argument as “school reform will not produce results unless and until the entire liberal social and economic agenda is fully enacted” (Dianne M. Piché and Tamar Ruth). These commentators go on to assert, with no evidence whatsoever, that “education continues to be the single most important and effective ‘equalizer’ of opportunity in our society.” Is educational improvement more effective than full employment, anti-discrimination policies in housing and labor markets, progressive taxation, adequate public health, and unionization? Perhaps so, but I’d like to know the basis for such a claim. Recent research on inter-generational mobility suggests that we are less mobile than we thought and less mobile than other advanced countries — most of which pay more attention to social and economic equality than we do. The conundrum is that it is difficult to overcome class differences using a tool — schools — whose outcomes are themselves heavily influenced by social class.

As to Piché and Ruth’s historical illustration, their memories are short. They correctly note that “in the years following enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the inception of Head Start and Title I programs in 1965, along with court-enforced desegregation, we saw dramatic narrowing of the gap between African American and white children on the National

Assessment of Educational Progress.” But they fail to note that these were also years in which Medicare and Medicaid were enacted, in which the minimum wage was higher (in real terms, and relative to the median wage) than it is today, when affirmative action in employment was aggressively pursued, when suburban housing was opened for the first time to black families, and when black family size decreased (giving children more parental time and attention). Did these play no role? Surely, school improvements such as Title I were important, but the years when the gap on the National Assessment narrowed were those when school and socioeconomic policies to address inequality were pursued simultaneously. In the 15 years from 1965 to 1980, the poverty of black children declined by over a third (from 66% to 42% of all black children). Subsequently, black children’s poverty continued to decline, but at a much slower rate. The 1965 to 1980 period provides no support for believing that school improvement can close gaps without complementary progress in the social and economic conditions experienced by poor and minority children. (Piché and Ruth cite Head Start in support of their complaint about my thesis, but as my summary and book stress, I regard expansion of early childhood programs as one of the most important initiatives we can take. Whether this is considered an educational or social reform is beside the point.)

I frequently encounter caricatures of my argument, such as that of Piché and Ruth, by liberals who retain, with the Bush Administration and other conservatives, a belief that the only important barrier to equality worth addressing is schools’ “soft bigotry of low expectations” and other failures, such as inadequate financing, classes that are too large, and teachers who are too poorly trained. While these are certainly barriers, I wonder why there is such resistance to acknowledging that there are others outside of schools and that these are also worthy of attention. One need not let schools off the hook and deny that our educational system is unequal in order to contend

that schools are not unique in their inequality.

For conservatives, the reason for an emphasis on schools is obvious. Schools are tax-supported institutions, and an attack on the public sector is at the core of a conservative agenda. Public sector employees (both administrators [“bureaucrats”] and unionized workers) are enemies conservatives love to have. Proposals to narrow income inequality, or to intervene in the private housing, employment or health sectors, are attacks on private interests at the core of the conservative base. Far better to blame schools for all our ills.

But why do liberals join in this distortion? Is it because an excessive focus on school reform brings the flattering support of conservative allies? Truthfully, I don’t know the answer.

***In the long run,
effective public policy
cannot proceed from a
myth.***

Pedro Noguera offers a possible explanation. He agrees that both socioeconomic and educational policy are necessary to enhance equality, but thinks that school improvement is more politically practical: “for the time being at least, there is far greater support for improving education.” He worries that, in the present political environment when public funds are scarce, advocacy of social and economic reform will undermine support for school improvement, leaving funds for neither.

In response, I urge him to consider two points. First, in the long run, effective public policy cannot proceed from a myth. Denying the obvious importance of socioeconomic conditions in perpetuating inequality may, in the short run, build support for school improvement efforts, but these quickly degenerate into an excessive attack on schools, as in present federal policy with its exaggerated emphasis on testing, basic skills and accountability, and its nonchalance about

the need for better and more equitable school funding. We also set schools up for failure when we discuss closing the achievement gap with schools alone. Even if school improvement were our exclusive concern, would we achieve it by establishing goals (closing the gap) that can’t be achieved and that make no distinction between progress and failure?

Second, I think Professor Noguera may not be making the best estimate of political practicality. We’ve not, after all, been so successful to date in improving schools to the point where they come anywhere close to generating equal outcomes for children from different social classes. And reforms like universal health care, full employment policy, more progressive taxation, adequate housing (consider the Section 8 program) are not wild pie-in-the-sky ideas but policies that are very much part of a practical agenda, and very much needed. Certainly, the present administration has no interest in them, but the prior administration made some progress in all of them, despite daunting political opposition. If, by some chance, advocates of social and economic reform can win greater power in our political institutions, we can hope that they will not be hindered by arguments of liberals that only schools can make a difference.

Finally, I am gratified by the reaction of Mark Simon’s teacher group to my book. One reason I wrote it was that I have been troubled by the demoralization I have encountered among dedicated, highly skilled and indefatigable teachers in schools serving disadvantaged children. They know that they make a difference and bitterly resent being labeled “failures” and considered indistinguishable from teachers who are far less qualified, only because their students don’t achieve at the same level as privileged suburban children. If my book can help, in a small way, make them feel better about their selfless and unrecognized dedication, it will have been worth it for that reason alone. □

Resources

When ordering items from the Resources Section, please note that most listings direct you to contact an organization other than PRRAC. Prices include the shipping/handling (s/h) charge when this information is provided to PRRAC. "No price listed" items often are free.

When ordering items from PRRAC: SASE = self-addressed stamped envelope (37¢ unless otherwise indicated). Orders may not be placed by telephone or fax. Please indicate from which issue of P&R you are ordering.

Race/Racism

- **Standing in the Shadows: Understanding & Overcoming Depression in Black Men**, by John Head (2004), has been published by Broadway Books. [8957]

- **"Affirmative Action & Diversity: The Beginning of the End? Or the End of the Beginning?"** by Mark R. Killenbeck (32 pp., March 2004), is available (\$10, downloadable free) from the Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Rd., Princeton, NJ 08541, 609/921-9000, www.ets.org [8975]

- **"Next Steps for US Activists: Building on Commitments Made at the UN World Conf. Against Racism"** (57 pp. + Apps., March 2004) is available (likely free) from Global Rights, 1200 18th St. NW, #602, Wash., DC 20036, 202/

822-4600, margareth@globalrights.org, www.globalrights.org [8976]

- **"National Survey of Latinos: Politics & Civil Participation,"** by the Pew Hispanic Ctr. (2004), is available at www/pewhispanic.org/page.jsp?page=Reports-Reports%20Section [8980]

- **"The Long Shadow of Jim Crow: Voter Intimidation & Suppression in America Today,"** a joint report by the People for the American Way Fdn. and NAACP, is available at www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?old=16368 [8987]

- **Equal Justice Society e-Newsletter** just began publishing with its Summer 2004 issue. To get on (free) sub list, contact kkamisugi@equaljusticesociety.org [8988]

- **Small Grants - Race/Ethnicity, Immigration & Poverty:** The Natl. Poverty Ctr. seeks proposals to broaden understanding of the relationships between race, ethnicity, immigration & poverty. Up to 5 proposals will be funded, with a max. \$20,000 per award. Drafts of funded research will be presented at a Jan. 2006 Ann Arbor conf. Feb. 15, 2005 deadline, npcinfo@umich.edu [8993]

- **"Exploring the Complexity of Diversity: Culture, Competences & Ethics,"** the 5th annual DLF practitioners conf., will be held **Oct. 21-23, 2004** in Miami. Inf. from

Please drop us a line letting us know how useful our Resources Section is to you, as both a lister and requester of items. We hear good things, but only sporadically. Having a more complete sense of the effectiveness of this networking function will help us greatly in foundation fundraising work (and is awfully good for our morale). Drop us a short note, letting us know if it has been/is useful to you (how many requests you get when you list an item, how many items you send away for, etc.) Thank you.

DLF, 877/590-6492. [8979]

Poverty/Welfare

- **One Nation, Under-privileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All**, by Mark Rank (356 pp., 2004), has been published by Oxford Univ. Press. [8930]

- **"Financial Education & Asset-Building Programs for Welfare Recipients & Low-Income Workers: The Illinois Experience,"** by Dory Rand, is a 15-page article in the May-June 2004 *Clearinghouse Review: Journal of Poverty Law & Policy*, available from the Sargent Shriver Natl. Ctr. on Poverty Law, 50 E. Washington St., #500, Chicago, IL 60602, 312/263-3830, admin@povertylaw.org, www.povertylaw.org [8935]

- **"Welfare Reform in Miami: Implementation, Effects & Experiences of Poor Families & Neighborhoods,"** by Thomas Brock, Isaac Kwakye, Judy C. Polyne, Lashawn Richburg-Hayes, David Seith, Alex Stepick & Carol D. Stepick (41 pp.,

June 2004), is available (possibly free) from Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., 16 E. 34 St., NYC, NY 10016-4326, 212/532-3200, www.mdrc.org [8938]

- **"From Jobs to Careers: How California Community College Credentials Pay Off for Welfare Recipients,"** by Anita Mathur, Judy Reichle, Julie Strawn & Chuck Wiseley (2004), is available from the Ctr. for Law & Social Policy (headed by former PRRAC Bd. member Alan Houseman) at www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs_PostsecEd [8959]

- **The ASPIRE Act (America Saving for Personal Investment, Retirement & Education)** was introduced July 22, 2004, in both Senate (by Sens. Jon Corzine & Rick Santorum) and House (by Reps. Harold Ford, Tom Petri, Pat Kennedy & Phil English). It would establish a KIDS Account for every newborn child in America. Inf. from Parrish@newamerica.net [8989]

- **"Hidden in Plain Sight: A Look at the \$335 Billion Federal Asset-Building Budget"** (16 pp. Summary, Spring 2004) is available

(possibly free) from the Corp. for Enterprise Development, 777 N. Capitol St. NE, #800, Wash., DC 20002, 202/408-9788. The full study, containing complete data sources & methodology, is downloadable at www.cfed.org. [8990]

- **“Why Did the Welfare Caseload Decline?”** by Caroline Danielson & Jacob Alex Klerman, a 2004 report from the National Poverty Ctr., draws on monthly caseload data from Oct. 1989 through June 2003. Contact: npcinfo@umich.edu [9000]

- **“2004 Report on Illinois Poverty: An Analysis of Rural Poverty”** (40 pp.) is available (possibly free) from the Illinois Poverty Summit, c/o Heartland Alliance, 208 S. LaSalle St., #1818, Chicago, IL 60604, 773/728-5960, x274, arynell@heartlandalliance.org, www.heartlandalliance.org [9004]

Community Organizing

- **The Midwest Academy Organizers/Leaders Training Sessions** will take place in Chicago (Oct. 18-22, 2004), Maryland (Nov. 15-19, 2004), Chicago again (March 7-11, 2005), Calif. (June/July tba), Chicago again (Oct. 17-21, 2005), and Maryland again (Nov. 14-18, 2005). Inf. from the Academy, 28 E. Jackson Blvd., #605, Chicago, IL 60604, 312/427-2304, mwacademy1@aol.com, www.midwestacademy.com [8965]

Criminal Justice

- **“Schools and Prisons: Fifty Years after *Brown v. Board of Education*”** is a 6-page, 2004 report from The Sentencing Proj. Contact Marc Mauer at the Proj., 514 10th St. NW, Wash., DC 20004, 202/628-0871, mauer@sentencingproject.org for a copy. [8953]

- **“Reforming the Police: Racial Differences in Public Support for Change,”** by Ronald Weitzer & Steven A. Tuch, a 26-page article, appeared in the May 2004 issue of *Criminology*. Reprints may be available from Prof. Weitzer, weitzer@gwu.edu [8974]

- **“Reforming Corrections”** is a 350-page, 2004 report on California’s prison system, which it characterizes as “dysfunctional” in recommending wholesale reforms. The report emanates from a 40-member panel appointed by Gov. Schwarzenegger and chaired by ex-Gov. George Deukmejian. Available at www.report.cpr.ca.gov/corr/index.htm [8997]

Economic/Community Development

- **The Center for Neighborhood Technology 2001-2002 Annual Report** is available (likely free) from the Ctr., 2125 North Ave., Chicago, IL 60647-5415, 773/278-4800, www.cnt.org [8951]

Community Development: A highly recommended website is comm-org.utoledo.edu/index.html# [8984]

- **“States of Change: Innovative Policy & Investments for Stronger Communities,”** the Fannie Mae Annual Housing Conf., will be held Nov. 10, 2004 in DC. Inf. from www.fanniemaefoundation.org [8942]

- **NeighborWorks 2005 Training Institutes** will be held in Denver (Feb. 7-11), Mpls. (April 18-22), Boston (June 20-24), DC (Aug. 22-26) & SF (Dec. 5-9). Inf. from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., 800/438-5547, nti@nw.org, www.nw.org/training [8954]

Education

- **“Using Rigorous Evidence to Improve Policy & Practice”** is the 102-page report of the Jan. 2004 High School Reform Conf. in New Orleans. Available (likely free) from Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., 16 E. 34 St., NYC, NY 10016-4326, 212/532-3200, www.mdrc.org [8931]

- **“Beyond the Emperor’s New Clothes: The Role of the Central Office in Systemwide Instructional Improvement,”** by Larry Leverett, is the 10-page Summer 2004 issue of *Benchmark*, the quarterly newsletter of the Natl. Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform, 2121 K St. NW, #250, Wash., DC 20037-1801, 877/766-4277, AskNCCSR@goodschools.gwu.edu, www.goodschools.gwu.edu [8936]

- **“The State of the South, 2004: Fifty Years After *Brown v. Board of Education*”** (78 pp., May 2004) is available (\$20) from MDC, PO Box 17268, Chapel Hill, NC 27516-7268, 919/968-4531, www.mdcinc.org [8937]

- **“Affirmative Student Development: Closing the Achievement Gap by Developing Human Capital,”** by Edmund W. Gordon (11 pp., Spring 2004), is available (possibly free) from Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Rd., 19-R, Princeton, NJ 08541-0001, 609/734-5694, pic@ets.org, www.ets.org/research/pic [8948]

- **“Learn. Vote. Act. The Public’s Responsibility for Public Education”** (16 pp., 2004), a national survey of public opinion, is available (likely free) from The Public Education Network, 601 13th St. NW, #900N, Wash., DC 20005, 202/628-7460, www.PublicEducation.org [8955]

- **Natl. Ctr. for Rural Early Childhood Learning website** has been established at Mississippi State Univ., www.ruralec.msstate.edu [8961]

- **“No Child Left Behind: What’s in it for Parents”** is a traveling informational and motivational workshop, organized by the Center for Parent Leadership. For inf. and scheduling, contact Kim Gardner, 859/233-9849, x229, [8963]

- **Community Action for School Reform**, by Howell Baum (298 pp., 2003, \$22.95), has been published by SUNY

Press, www.sunypress.edu/details.asp?id=60769%20 [8968]

- **Spencer Fdn. Dissertation Fellowships for Research Related to Education** have a Nov. 10, 2004 application (which must be submitted electronically) deadline. Inf. from fellows@spencer.org [8969]

- **“The Talent Development High School Model: Context, Components & Initial Impacts on Ninth-Grade Students’ Engagement & Performance,”** by James J. Kemple & Corinne M. Herlihy (47 pp., June 2004), is available (possibly free) from Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., 16 E. 34 St., NYC, NY 10016-4326, 202/532-3200, www.mdrc.org [8973]

- **“Equal from the Start: Promoting Educational Opportunity for all Preschool Children — Learning from the French Experience,”** from the French-American Foundation, is downloadable at www.frenchamerican.org/html/LeGoneFAFBrochure.qxp.pdf [8986]

- **America’s Untapped Resource: Low-Income Students in Higher Education**, ed. Richard D. Kahlenberg (197 pp., 2004), has been published by The Century Fdn., www.tcf.org [9003]

- **“Preparing Today’s Leaders for Tomorrow’s High Schools,”** sponsored by the Alliance for Excellent Education (1201 Conn. Ave. NW, #901, Wash., DC 20036), will be held Oct. 3-5, 2004 in DC. Inf. from 703/739-4480, [8939]

- **“Parent Leaders: An untapped source in education,”** sponsored by the Ctr. for Parent Leadership, will be held in Kansas City, MO (Oct. 12-13, 2004) & Charleston, SC (Dec. 8-9, 2004). Inf. from 859/233-9849, x229, kgardner@prichardcommittee.org, www.CenterforParentLeadership.org [8983]

Employment/ Jobs Policy

- **“Where the Funds Are: Potential Use of Child Support Funds for Transitional Jobs Programs,”** by Abbey Frank, is a Aug. 2004 Policy Brief from the Ctr. for Law & Social Policy (headed by former PRRAC Bd. member Alan Houseman), available at www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs_Job [8998]

Environment

- **“Environment Threatened”** (July 2004), from the National Priorities Proj., offers state-by-state numbers on Bush Adm. budget cuts to clean water programs, the quality of the environment & a variety of health risks. Includes for each state: % of people breathing unhealthy air; number of people drinking unsafe water; % of people living in an area with 100 times the cancer risk goal set by the Clean Air Act; and more. Available at nationalpriorities.org/issues/env/threatened/index/html?env1 [8991]

Families/ Women/ Children

- **“Grandma and Grandpa Taking Care of the Kids: Patterns of Involvement,”** by Lina Guzman (7 pp., July 2004), is available (possibly free) from Child Trends, 4301 Conn. Ave. NW, #100, Wash., DC 20008, 202/572-6000, www.childtrends.org [8932]

- **The Evaluation Exchange** devotes its 31-page Summer 2004 issue to “Early Childhood Programs & Evaluation.” Issue (and subs) free from the Harvard Family Research Proj., 3 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138, 617/496-4304, hfrp_pubs@gse.harvard.edu [8947]

- **Asian America & Same-Sex Marriage**, a forthcoming (Fall 2005) issue of *Amerasia Journal*, seeks submissions (March 15, 2005 deadline; Oct. 1, 2004 deadline for 1-page abstract or prospectus). Submission guidelines at www.sscnet.ucla.edu/aasc/rdp2/index/html [8949]

- **“Moving Forward: Head Start Children, Families & Programs in 2003,”** by Katherine Hart & Rachel Schumacher, a 2004 Policy Brief from the Ctr. for Law & Social Policy (headed by former PRRAC Bd. member Alan Houseman), is available at www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs_New [8960]

- **“I Can’t Give You Anything But Love: Would Poor Couples with Children Be Better Off Economically If They Married?,”** by Paula Roberts (2004),

from the Ctr. for Law & Social Policy (headed by former PRRAC Bd. member Alan Houseman), is available at www.clasp.org/DMS/Documents/1093288195.25/marr_brf_5.pdf [8966]

- **“High-Wire Act: Balancing Families & Jobs at Precarious Points,”** by Jodie Levin-Epstein (2004), from the Ctr. on Law & Social Policy (headed by former PRRAC Bd. member Alan Houseman), is available at www.clasp.org/DMS/Documents/1092834134.29/High_Wire.pdf. [8967]

- **“Religion & Marriage in Urban America,”** a 3-page, June 2004 Research Brief, is available (likely free) from the Ctr. for Research on Child Wellbeing, Wallace Hall, 2nd flr., Princeton Univ., Princeton, NJ 08544, crwc@opr.princeton.edu. The Brief was adapted from “Then Comes Marriage?: Religion, Race & Marriage in Urban America,” by W. Bradford Wilcox & Nicholas Wolfinger, downloadable (go to Fragile Families link, click on Publications, then click on Working Paper Series at <http://crwc.princeton.edu> [8977])

- **“Family Support during the Transition to Adulthood”** (4 pp., Aug. 2004) is available (likely free) from the Natl. Poverty Ctr., 1015 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, 734/615-5312, npcinfo@umich.edu, www.npc.umich.edu [8985]

- **“Kids Count Puerto Rico Project”** (July 2004), from the Natl.

Council of La Raza, is the first-ever comprehensive data book on children in Puerto Rico. Contact Sonia Perez, 787/641-0546, info@nclr.org [8992]

Health

- **“Literacy and Health in America”** (48 pp., April 2004) is available (\$15, but downloadable free) from Educ. Testing Service, Rosedale Rd., Princeton, NJ 08541, 609/921-9000, www.ets.org/research [8941]

- **A New Online Tutorial on the role of race & ethnicity in the US healthcare system** is available from the Kaiser Family Fdn. at www.kaiseredu.org/Tutorials/index.cfm [8964]

- **“Primary Care Physicians Who Treat Blacks and Whites,”** by P.B. Bach, H.H. Pham, D. Schrag, R.C. Tate & J.L. Hargraves, appeared in the Aug. 5, 2004 *New England Journal of Medicine*. The 15-page article reports results of a telephone survey of over 4,000 doctors and analysis of over 150,000 doctor visits by Medicare-covered Blacks and Whites. Among the conclusions: inferior qualifications and less access to resources among doctors who treat Blacks may contribute to racial disparities in the quality of health care. [8995]

- **The Calif. Primary Care Assn. 10th Anniv. Conf.** will be held **Oct. 7-8, 2004** in Sacramento. Inf. from the Assn., 1215 K St., #700, Sacto., CA 95814, 916/440-8170, x214, www.cPCA.org [8952]

Housing

- **“HOPE VI Relocation: Moving to New Neighborhoods & Building New Ties,”** by Susan Clampit-Lundquist, is a 33-page article in Vol. 15, No. 2 (2004) of *Housing Policy Debate*. Issue (and subs) free from Fannie Mae Fdn., 4000 Wisconsin Ave. NW, No. Tower #1, Wash., DC 20016-2804, fmfpubs@fanniemaefoundation.org [8944]

- **“The HOPE VI Program: What About the Residents?,”** by Susan Popkin, Diane Levy, Laura E. Harris, Jennifer T. Comey, Mary Cunningham & Larry Buron, is a 29-page article in Vol. 15, No. 2 (2004) of *Housing Policy Debate*. Issue (and subs) free from Fannie Mae Fdn., 4000 Wisconsin Ave. NW, No. Tower #1, Wash., DC 20016-2804, fmfpubs@fanniemaefoundation.org [8945]

- **“Housing Impact Assessments: Opening New Doors for State Housing Regulation While Localism Persists,”** by Tim Iglesias, is an 82-page article appearing in the Summer 2003 issue of *Oregon Law Review*. Reprints may be available from Prof. Iglesias, Univ. San Francisco Law School, 2130 Fulton St., SF, CA 94117-1080, 415/422-5870, Iglesias@usfca.edu [8946]

- **“Paycheck to Paycheck: Wages & Cost of Housing in Counties, 2004,”** by Barbara Lipman, is available (possibly free) from the Ctr. for Housing Policy, 1801 K St. NW, #M-100, Wash., DC 20006-1301, 202/466-2121,

www.nhc.org/nhcimages/Paycheck_Counties2004.pdf [8981]

- **“Private Sector Partnerships: Investing in Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization,”** by Leigh Bezezekoff, Louis A. Galuppo, H. Beth Marcus, Barbara McCormick, Raymond Schmidt, Robin Synderman, Kari Stanley & Eleanor White (June 2004), is available (possibly free) from the Natl. Housing Coal., 1801 M St. NW, #M-100, Wash., DC 20006-1301, 202/466-2121, www.nhc.org/PrivateSectorFinal04.pdf [8982]

- **“Boom or Bust? Public Investment in Homeownership”** was a 2004 program hosted by The Population Resource Ctr. Speakers included representatives of The Census Bureau, Congressional committees and the Harvard Jt. Ctr. for Housing Studies. Copies of the speakers’ materials are available at www.prcdc.org/programs/housing04/housing04.html [8999]

- **“Hedging His Bets: Why Nixon Killed HUD’s Desegregation Efforts,”** by Chris Bonastia, is a 33-page article in the Spring 2004 issue of *Social Science History*. Reprints may be available from the author, cbonastia@earthlink.net [9002]

- **“The Housing Justice Network,”** coordinated by the Natl. Housing Law Proj., is holding its natl. meeting **Oct. 3-4, 2004** in DC, with a Basic Housing Training Session **Oct. 2**. Inf. from the Law Project. 510/251-9400, x111, asiemens@nhlp.org

[8934]

- **“The Legal Effect of *Brown v. Board of Education* on Public Housing 50 Years Later,”** the Housing & Development Law Inst. 21st annual fall legal conf., will be held **Oct. 12, 2004** in Baltimore. Inf. from HDLI, 630 Eye St. NW, Wash., DC 20001-3736, 202/289-3400. Among the speakers: PRRAC’s Florence Roisman, Elizabeth Julian, Philip Tegeler and David Freund, as well as Georgetown Law Prof. Sheryll Cashin. [8972]

- **“NeighborWorks Training Inst.”** will be held **Dec. 13-17, 2004** in New Orleans. Inf. from Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., 1325 G St. NW, #800, Wash., DC 20005, 800/438-5547, www.nw.org/training [8940]

Miscellaneous

- ***You Call This a Democracy? Who Benefits, Who Pays and Who Really Decides?***, by Paul Kivel (218 pp., \$17.95), will be published Oct. 2004 by Apex Press, 800/316-2739. [8943]

- **“Leading by Example: Diversity, Inclusion & Equity in Community Foundations”** (66 pp., 2004) is available (along with a Resource Toolkit CD ROM) from California Tomorrow, 1904 Franklin St., #300, Oakland, CA 94612, 510/496-0220; may be free. [8950]

- **“Executive Excess 2004: Campaign Contributions, Outsourcing, Unexpensed Stock Options & Rising CEO Pay,”** from the Inst. for Policy Studies & United

for a Fair Economy, is available at www.faireconomy.org/press/2004/EE2004_pr.html [8956]

● **“Litigating Economic, Social & Cultural Rights: Achievements, Challenges & Strategies”** (184 pp., 2003), featuring 21 case studies from around the world (the US case study, by Maria Foscarinis and Andrew Scherer, is “Using Civil and Political Rights), is available (no price listed) from COHRE (Ctr. on

Housing Rights & Evictions), 83 Rue de Montbrillant, 1292 Geneva, Switzerland, 41.22.7341028, cohre@cohre.org, www.cohre.org [9005]

Job Opportunities/ Fellowships/ Grants

● **The Natl. Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Vio-**

lence is hiring a **Director of Policy & Research** & a **Director of Training & Technical Assistance and Community Education & Development**. Inf. from Adelita Medina at the Alliance, PO Box 672, Triborough Sta., NYC, NY 10035, EDAlianza@aol.com, www.dvalianza.org [8970]

● **The Fannie Lou Hamer Project** seeks an **Executive Director**. The Project is a natl. org. that “reframes campaign finance as a civil rights

issue & supports other reforms that would enhance political participation by people of color, such as restoration of voting rights to former offenders.” Board is looking to relocate the project — DC, Atlanta and NC are leading contenders, but open to other sites. Contact Kristin Bradley-Bull, New Perspectives Consulting Gp., 1429 Broad St., Durham, NC 27705, cbolton@flhp.org. [8971]

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