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Social Service Field Experiences and Teacher Education

> Education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness.
>
> *John Dewey*

Think of the way that the world looks to many beginning educators working in the urban centers of our society. Children often go to school in neighborhoods with rising homicide rates; they come from families victimized by sinking wages, a lack of job opportunities, and curtailed government assistance. Some of them are homeless, many are in despair. For all, a prevailing sense of social disaffection combined with drug abuse and violent crime provide the admixture for a fearful and hopeless street climate. Significantly, these children of poverty and violence are, more often than not, also children of color.

Now think of the way that the world is presented in many teacher education programs in the United States. Popular references to time-on-task, to various preset models, taxonomies, and generic teaching strategies, to recipelike discipline and management techniques, to narrow conceptions of lesson plan design, and to a general mentality of matching learning behaviors with prefashioned learning objectives (Ginsburg 1988) still dominate, underscoring the fact that teacher education is still removed from broader socioeconomic considerations.

There are, of course, many thinkers who have sought to broaden the analytical sights of teacher education and who have brought the causes of justice and equality to the forefront of educational studies, particularly and quite appropriately, to teacher education. The work of educators such as Ira Shor (1983), whose experience with working-class students in New York, provides a positive direction for teacher education; Paulo Freire's (1970) well-known achievements with oppressed workers in South America are also paramount. Yet, for many educational theorists and the students they teach, the notion of cultural diversity, social disaffection, and poverty is rarely informed by the hard realities of life in our cities. Educational thinkers who confuse rhetoric for active social amelioration may not

be promoting the kind of teacher who will work in the interests of culturally diverse and low-income youth. Similarly, those who promote "reflective" teacher education also hope for teachers who will look broadly at the profession of teaching and at the social consequences of the teacher's influence. We maintain, however, that deep reflection can only occur when students have something meaningful upon which to reflect. Landon Beyer (1984) reminds teacher educators that reflection is method, not a curricular theme, and that reflection, in and of itself, promises nothing.

We suggest that preservice teachers can best broaden their view by discussing issues of race, class, and gender and by working in the interests of disenfranchised, inner-city youth in a community-based field experience. We hope that students, through classroom discussions and firsthand experiences with diverse students and their families, will come to find joy in helping those students in most despair and will, as a result, commit themselves to teaching in urban settings, instead of opting for suburban teaching positions. Our views are confirmed by teacher educators such as Martin Haberman (1992) who maintains that urban teachers must receive their professional preparation in the urban environment (although we do not share his faith in alternative certification). To this end, we have sought to recover the socio-civic and multicultural ground of teaching at the University of Houston by placing our preservice teachers in social service activities throughout our city.

Being There

Fall of 1991 was the inaugural semester of our newly developed teacher education program. It was marked by a series of stops and starts, questions about the worth of various assignments, and an unfulfilled sense of what was really appropriate for beginning teacher education students. Like most other teacher educators, we were saddled with far too many students, shrinking budgets and resources, and students who had already been bruised by the bureaucracy of a large public university. Our course in the teacher education program, which would best be considered an introduction to teaching and education, and is a junior-level undergraduate course, is the first in the University of Houston's eighteen credit-hour professional development sequence. In the second semester, students take specialized methods courses; the third and final semester consists entirely of student teaching.

Like most other teacher educators, we require our students to observe and student teach in local public schools. In initially trying to deal with issues of social consciousness, we added a cultural dimension to their school experience by placing students in schools where the population is comprised primarily of low-income students of color. However, we grew dissatisfied with this experience as the single engagement with diverse students and their families. We found, with a few outstanding exceptions, that the teachers with whom our students were placed did not represent culturally sensitive teaching. Thus, it became clear to us that simply working in diverse schools was not enough. We then asked our

students to conduct a community study of a neighborhood school that integrated what we believed to be central questions of race, diversity, ethnicity, and socioeconomics. We had hoped that such an assignment would provide our students with an emerging sense of an ethnography as conducted by a participant-observer, but the results were disappointing. To wit, many students wrote passages that showed little insight into the conditions of those they saw and often observed from the distance of their car windows.

In thinking back on our "mini-ethnography" assignment, we had expected that our students would come to understand better and appreciate the multicultural richness of Houston's neighborhoods and that they would later incorporate what they learned into their teaching. Other teacher educators have employed the ethnographic method with the hope that their students would show the depth of understanding of the anthropologist who conducts such investigations routinely.

Our lack of success with student ethnographies could not be attributed to familiar and routine locales. The majority of the neighborhoods surrounding the University of Houston, a truly urban university, are decaying parts of the inner-city. One area in particular is known as Freedman's Town, where many African Americans settled after the Emancipation Proclamation. In fact, many of the brick streets and old clapboard homes are used today. Unfortunately, poverty is also far too common. Another neighborhood, to the east, known as Denver Harbor, is predominantly Latino. Owing to its proximity to the Port of Houston, Denver Harbor's residents are largely the working poor. However, the high labor force participation in the area does not eliminate extreme poverty, violence, and social disaffection.

The rich ethnic life of these neighborhoods gave us a unique opportunity for our student ethnographies. Yet, even when placed in these settings, our students had trouble taking hold of the assignment. Whether it was owing to our inability to communicate ethnographic methods to our students or the nature of the assignment, many wrote papers that showed little understanding of the conditions they saw. Part of the problem, we surmise, was due to our students' wariness of such neighborhoods. We were the first to admit that many of the neighborhoods in which our students observed were potentially dangerous.

We acknowledge the complexity and sophistication of ethnographic work and wonder whether it can be successfully managed in an introductory course. Indeed, it might be considered pedagogical arrogance to believe that our instructional and motivational skills were so developed as to enrich our students' understanding of professional anthropology. Many of the finest social minds of the day struggle with ethnographic methods. As an example, the superb work of Jose Limon draws attention to the complexity of the ethnography. In his rich work on the subjugation of Mexican American men in south Texas, he writes:

> In the construction of our own ethnographic narratives, we are inevitably faced with the problem of rhetorically managing what we are pleased to call "the

data." How much is enough to persuade and not bore or overwhelm? And, where do we place it in the structural development of our own text? What is the proper relationship between the data and our interpretive analysis, recognizing full well that the selection and organization of the data have already taken us a long way toward our understanding of it? (1989, 472–473).

Even if teacher educators were able to develop ethnographic expertise in their students, such an assignment cannot act as a substitute for *interacting* with people who represent diverse cultures. Ethnographic methods certainly have their place in multicultural teacher education field experiences, but overemphasizing method may tend to obscure the important issues of where such experiences take place and with whom. We are very much concerned with the process by which our students report their experience, but we are more concerned with our students' active, cultural acquisition and the natural learning situations that emerge as a result.

Our early assignments served to increase our dissatisfaction with the ethnography, and we searched for a new way for our students to feel and appreciate the lived experience of inner-city youth and to understand better the social context of inner-city problems.

We knew of other so-called multicultural methods we did not want. Suggestions to expand our reading list, while important, struck us as a typically institutional and ineffective response, as a bookish attempt to transmit information about diversity and other provocative themes. Our previous experience with readings about diversity led us to believe that there were diminishing returns associated with such assignments; a few readings were effective, but adding more did little to increase our students' cultural awareness or sensitivity. The work of other teacher educators, like Mary Louise Gomez (1991), who staked her hopes on using a reading list that included pieces like Richard Rodriguez's (1983) *Hunger for Memory*, reinforced in our minds the proclivity among well-intentioned teacher educators to talk about students and their families rather than to talk with them. We were also influenced by our intuitions, which were corroborated by the results of Michigan State University's *National Center for Research on Teacher Learning* report on learning to teach (1992). The report suggested that providing teachers with knowledge about various cultural groups simply did not make them better able to teach children of color. More talk about our problems and about the children of Houston clearly failed to fulfill the need for our students to talk *with* our city's children and their families. In our deliberations, we recalled the work of Florence Kluckhorn, whose early work on the participant-observer technique in a New Mexico village led her to admit, "...I think I gained more than I lost by...lapses of cold objectivity" (1940, 343). We were also reminded of Ruth Landes's admonishment that "separateness from the objects of discussion forfeits the experience that words should mirror" (1965, 64).

In this manner, we became convinced that there was simply no substitute for experience. If a teacher education program claimed, as we hoped ours could, to speak for the social needs of teaching, then its students and instructors would have to become participants in the public sphere. All too often we felt that the voice of the oppressed had been taken up by others who stretch credulity in speaking from distant and comfortable places. For our own part, we recognized that, in spite of our firsthand experience with urban persons of color, we could not speak for them; rather, we wanted our students to speak with them and to discover for themselves the problems associated with urban life. We wanted our students to listen and to develop a commitment to public engagement. Immersion in culture through social service in a community-based project represented, in essence, our best chance at developing a more socially enlightened generation of teachers.

The Community-based Project

Houston is the fourth largest city in the country, replete with most of the problems facing other major cities. The extraordinary diversity of our city is reflected in the ethnicity of the largest school district in the metropolitan area. The Houston Independent School District's student population represents Latino (46.5 percent), African American (37 percent), White (13.6 percent), and Asian (2.7 percent) students. Like California, the public school population in Texas recently became a "majority minority." The diversity of our city suggested to us that we could help to engage our students in the development of their social consciousness by asking them to participate in community service.

After contacting our university's volunteer program, we discovered that our institution already had in place a vehicle for placing students in social service agencies. We then chose those agencies that we thought would be most effective in helping our students understand diversity and assisted in making the necessary contacts. Students were given a list of our selected agencies from which to choose. However, if students wished to find a community-based project on their own (i.e., one not on our list) that fit the objectives of the study, they were given the opportunity to work in those sites. To avoid potential legal challenges or liabilities, we did give our students the option of a library-based, local history research project. However, very few students chose this assignment.

The agencies which our students chose were wide-ranging. Several chose to work in the schools attended by the children of battered women. Others worked at a Salvation Army evening "English as a Second Language" program. Still others chose to work as volunteers at Chicano Family Centers, urban YMCA after-school programs, community health centers, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, homeless shelters, or homes for mothers addicted to crack cocaine and their children, to name a few.

However, the true success of this venture was to be revealed in the students' reactions to their experiences. In their community-based report, we invited them to address a few questions, such as "What can schools do to address the kinds of social problems that you saw during your community-based experience? What

surprised you, and why? Would schools be different places if all educators shared in your community-based experience?"

What Our Students Said

In general, we were overwhelmed by our students' responses. For example, a student who volunteered in a school for the children of undocumented workers, whose parents were either in jail, dead, or missing, wrote that "those who claim that we do not have a responsibility to educate these children have not seen them." Another student maintained that she now saw the connection between teaching and social service. She wrote that teachers have "to act as a caseworker many times to try to find out what is really going on in that child's life." She continued, "most people need to spend a couple of weeks in the trenches and get their hands dirty and see that life isn't as peachy for everyone else."

Another student volunteered at a Houston food bank, where he loaded trucks with donated goods. In addition to serving the community, he worked with court-sentenced traffic offenders (mostly those who had outstanding traffic tickets who were given community service as part of their sentence) who taught him "street talk" in Spanish and Vietnamese. He, in turn, taught them how to say the equivalent words in English. Learning "the talk" may not seem important or meaningful, but we would argue it is indicative of cultural participation and a sense of social understanding, precisely the kind of experience we were seeking. And in his paper, he wrote, "We talked about our backgrounds, our lives, our different and separate communities and all the while we were working with one common goal to help the hungry and needy of Houston."

Another student who worked at a Latino Family Center wrote, "I realized that it was not so much that their fathers were drunks or that their mothers preferred welfare, it was just that society did not prepare itself for the multitude of people who were willing to work to have a better life, who happened to be a darker color and speak a different language. I learned some new things about life and myself." A student who volunteered in a shelter for battered women suggested that "so many schools stress academics without considering the children's personal situations."

Many of our students reported dramatic personal revelations regarding race and ethnicity and class. As an example, one student volunteered at a clothing bank serving a large Latino neighborhood. She was surprised that the people who came to the clothing bank were part of strong family units and admitted that her early misconceptions, which were not firsthand, were formed largely by the media and the dominant culture. She noted that frequently whole families, often with six or seven children, came together to the bank. She realized that poor English skills and the lack of education, rather than fragmented family units, prevented economic success for this population. She reflected on the culture uniting her clients and concluded that, although most of them were Latino, it was more a culture of poverty that was common to those she met than a specific ethnic

culture. She observed that the volunteers themselves were poor and extremely committed, reporting that her experience caused her to gain great respect for this culture. It also showed her that, within the culture of poverty, people were generous and committed to helping one another.

Perhaps the best example of the community-based assignment came from a young woman who admitted in her paper that her life had been somewhat sheltered. Her community-based work at Houston's Salvation Army "English as a Second Language" Center introduced her to a family who recently arrived in the U.S. from Mexico. Nina[2] expected to expand her knowledge about Latino culture from her tutee, Maria, but was surprised by the extent of her misconceptions about that culture. Nina explained that prior to her work with Maria she had held many beliefs about Latinos commonly accepted among educators. These beliefs were dispelled by what Nina learned about Maria and Maria's family.

For example, many teachers in Maria's school assumed that students like Maria were not succeeding because they were not interested in learning. Yet, as Nina got to know Maria better, it became evident that Maria was more sincere about learning than any of her teachers realized. In fact, Maria felt that her teachers were more interested in grades than in real teaching and real learning. She thought that her teachers cared less about her desire to speak English like a native speaker than they did about her passing exams.

Nina's acquaintance with Maria's family further contradicted her notion that Latino students typically do not succeed in school because they do not value education. Nina saw that education was of paramount importance to Maria's family. Her father worked very hard to learn English and was promoted due to his language improvement. This reinforced the family belief that education is the key to success. Moreover, when Nina met Maria's younger siblings, she asked the typical question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Nina admitted that she was surprised by their high aspirations. Their responses included veterinarian, lawyer, and teacher.

Nina was also surprised by how much the family respected teachers and the school system. For instance, just prior to Nina's visit with the family, the middle school attended by Maria's sister had been criticized in the media. Maria's sister was outraged at the bad press given to her school and kept emphasizing to Nina all of its positive aspects. Nina concluded that "teachers don't know how much they are respected." She had not anticipated so much school pride from Maria's sister.

The same misconception surfaced in regard to Maria's mother and her attitude toward school. The teachers were under the impression that Maria's mother was not interested in the education of her children because she was not involved in the school. Nina described her amazement at the magnitude of this misconception. In actuality, the mother did not talk to the teachers because she was ashamed of her limited English skills and relied on her children for school communication. Yet, Maria's mother devoted countless hours a week driving her

children to various school activities and then waiting in parking lots for them to finish. Nina explained that the teachers were upset that they were not getting parent participation, and yet "they didn't realize how much participation they were getting."

Nina's relationship with Maria also taught her to interpret events from a cultural perspective. For example, during the time that Nina was tutoring Maria, Maria's mother decided to get a job cleaning offices. At first Nina considered the turmoil that this decision cast on the family to be stereotypical. She later understood that this incident thrust the family into a basic questioning of values and roles that comes about when people adopt a new culture. The whole family began to reevaluate the role of the mother and to compare it in terms of Latino versus European-American norms.

Nina also viewed Maria's choice of boyfriends through a cultural lens. She was choosing between one young man of Latino descent who believed that married women should stay at home after marriage and a young European American man from school who encouraged Maria to continue on to higher education. Nina claimed that superficially Maria's conflict was between two young men, but on a deeper level they represented her own cultural conflict. Nina came to be part of Maria's family, joining them for dinner and spending many hours in conversation. Nina is now learning Spanish, and there are plans to go to Mexico with the family next summer.

Students easily connected their community-based experiences to their observations of public school classes, also required during the semester. When students conducted ethnographies, they had great difficulty applying what they had learned to the world of schools. For example, several students felt that the teachers at their assigned observation schools were divorced from the problems they encountered at their community-based sites. Many felt that teachers were mainly caught up in trying to get their standard work done and remained focused only on academic aspects of their jobs. In particular, one student wished that the teachers would concentrate more on the children. As she stated, "If they (the students) know you and trust you, they will talk to you, and you can help them out. If kids are falling asleep in class, find out why, don't just assume that they're bad kids trying to get you mad. Maybe they're hungry. Don't assume that they're bad kids trying to give you a hard time. Think about other reasons." Back in the school setting, she was stunned to find that the teachers at her school were apathetic about what she had learned during her community-based experience.

On the other hand, the teachers at another student's site were very impressed by and interested in her community-based work. Yet, she observed situations at the school which she criticized in light of her experience. She stated, "I've seen instances in schools where teachers screamed at the children with behavioral problems. If they had seen what I saw, the real situation the child has to live in everyday, they wouldn't yell and scream and treat them so badly." She continued, "Anytime that a child is acting out, it's for a reason, and you need to find what

that reason is. I know teachers are there to teach all the content areas and all that which is a lot of work, but they're also there for the child's psychological benefit. A lot of people choose to ignore that. They don't want to be involved."

The interviews we conducted suggested to us that the students had, indeed, internalized a dedication to working with urban youth. One student who projected herself into her future as an urban teacher reported that what she had seen in her community-based experience would influence her teaching, suggesting that the community-based experience "helps you understand them (students) better." Another student communicated to us the spirit of the community-based project, noting the impact her work had had on her both personally and professionally: "I can't help but think that if I'm a better person I'll be a better instructor."

Many of our students reported that they will continue to volunteer even after the course is over. We are hopeful that the community-based experience will encourage the unique leadership abilities that result when one first serves others (Devle & Rice 1990). In addition, we are confident that the community-based experience will encourage our students to redefine their values (Schultz 1990), perhaps creating teachers who will encourage their students to conduct community service.

Although we are pleased with the impact of the community-based project, we are mindful that much more needs to be done to prepare our students for the urban classroom. For example, we have recently established several urban professional development schools where teachers-to-be work with exemplary urban teachers. The experienced teachers, in turn, work with university faculty to improve the urban educational experience. Our initial results suggest that the teachers who have been prepared in the urban professional development schools are more successful with diverse students than those who have been educated in the traditional program.

However, our efforts at improving the preparation of teachers are still hampered by state regulations and mandates. In 1987, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, responding to legislative pressure to eliminate so-called unnecessary education courses, reduced the number of teacher education professional development courses to a maximum of eighteen credit hours, six of which are student teaching. The course in which we require the community-based field experience is three credit hours. But this class also requires a minimum of forty-five hours of classroom observation (another state requirement, yet we require more hours of observation). The curriculum includes multicultural issues but must also deal with instructional issues, classroom management, and other curricula that must be explored before students take methods classes. This legislation will "sunset" in 1994, but it remains to be seen what type of courses will be approved.

Establishing a Community-based Field Experience

As teacher educators, we hope to educate future teachers who will resist formulaic approaches to instruction and who will see their profession as one that has strong ties to the improvement of society. At the University of Houston, we want

our students to understand the relationships among dominant culture ideology, the disaffection among people of color, and the disenfranchisement of those for whom poverty is a way of life. The insights our students have made as a result of their community-based experience have led us to the conclusion that teacher education programs might benefit from a course requirement like our social service experience. We share Joseph Larkin's (1993) view that such an experience can enhance preservice teachers' ability and willingness to serve urban students.

A good starting point for other teacher educators interested in this idea would be to contact either their institution's volunteer program or other volunteer agencies within their city. Or, perhaps teacher education faculty can develop a list of minority community centers and projects sponsored by organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) or the Urban League.

It is important to point out that teacher educators must be involved in organizing these activities and model the commitment they expect of the students. In our program, faculty make as many visits as possible to community-based project sites and engage in projects of their own. For example, the lead author, located at an urban professional development school, works with several elementary school students from a large apartment complex who have shown signs of gang affiliation. Pamela Norwood conducts parent training programs at a multiservice school where teacher education students work in the interests of poor African American students side-by-side with graduate students in social work. Our own work in the community not only makes us better teachers but also adds to our credibility with students. If teacher education faculty assign students to a community-based field experience about which they have little knowledge, students will take notice and make the same claim they do now about field experiences in the school: that the university faculty is out of touch. Significantly, universities rarely reward faculty for this type of community work, but we have come to recognize the importance of our projects and argue that faculty must make a serious commitment to the socio-civic orientation.

Our community-based field experience is unique to our institution and city, but we are willing to share our insights on the implementation of this project with others who are interested in developing a similar program. While we invite personal inquiries, a few initial suggestions follow. To begin, we would like to point out that multicultural teacher education must take place in distinctly urban and ethnically diverse locations and that both school and community multicultural field experiences must be an ongoing programmatic focus. The community-based project is only one piece of our overall program. For instance, students are placed in schools where a majority of the pupils are of color and on free or reduced lunch. We do not allow a student to observe or student teach in a school that does not fit these requirements (the diversity of the Houston area, however, makes this an easy task).

We would also suggest that such placements be long term. Cultural learning cannot be reduced to a field trip. Forays into the urban and culturally diverse world for a week or a month may serve only to reinforce dangerous stereotypes, a point which leads to another suggestion. Teacher educators must let the experience do the teaching. Of course, it is very important to discuss and debrief with students about their community-based field experiences, but, if teacher educators must continually "teach" students about societal inequality and "talk them out" of their initial and sometimes intolerant views of low-income, culturally diverse students and families, then the experience is not sufficiently expansive. A fear may exist among teacher educators that students' initial, and often racist, views will become more entrenched as a result of a community-based experience. We argue that a student who continues to "blame the victim" in spite of striking evidence to the contrary may not be fit to teach and should perhaps be counseled out of the profession. Teacher educators must be willing to go to great lengths to ensure that future teachers embody the aims of a democratic and diverse society. We also recognize that multicultural learning involves moral learning, and moral learning, as Aristotle pointed out, is learned best through experience.

Teacher educators of color who have experiences with culturally diverse students are crucial for multicultural teacher education. What message is sent to students when multicultural education is a curricular priority, yet none or very few of the faculty who teach in that program represent persons of color with experience in culturally diverse settings?

We suggest that the community-based field experience be attached to a three to five credit-hour class that includes a concurrent placement in diverse schools settings. The class should deal with specific instructional issues, such as lesson planning, and integrate these topics into the overall theme. Such integration helps students to see how issues of race, class, and gender are incorporated into the daily life of teaching. For instance, when faculty discuss various models of instruction, which includes alternative "models" such as critical pedagogy, students are asked to think about which of these methods might be most sensitive to the learners they have encountered in their field work. After experience in their community-based projects, the inadequacies of the seven-step lesson, for example, are evident to students.

Another critical activity is to evaluate the community sites yearly. We send out surveys to each of our students and ask them to report on their community-based experience. We have found that a positive site one year can become a very dissatisfying experience the next. Of course, our students cannot help but share their experiences in class, and we use those reactions in our planning as well. While we have found at least a dozen sites where students consistently come away with precisely the experience we hope for (a Chicano family center is one that comes to mind), we continue to look for additional placements. And placements come looking for us. Schools that maintain after-school tutoring programs, in particular, seek our students as volunteers. It is often difficult to explain to the

schools that the focus of our program is to place students "outside" the school walls. We have not quite arrived at the best way to deal with such inquiries, but we have not compromised our requirement that their community-based learning activity be completed in the community.

We ask our students to commit a total of twenty hours to their community-based field experience, which we would increase if we were able to provide additional credit hours to the course. However, the state of Texas does not allow additional certification courses or credit hours.

Conclusion

While we place great hope in our teacher education program, it remains a singular voice in an otherwise hostile landscape. The state of Texas continues to address the statewide, urban teacher shortage with quick fix "alternative certification" programs and heavy recruitment of newly certified teachers from other states, who are often educated in middle-class, White communities. Whereas neither of these strategies is fundamentally inconsistent with multicultural teacher education, we have some very serious concerns regarding these trends.

Modern educators tend to view the past as both pristine and barbaric. Our nostalgia is tempered by reminders of many of the nation's early educators who, for instance, thought that separate but equal schools served the interests of a democracy. At the same time, we may long for elements of the Progressive movement and the important innovations it introduced. We survey the past and both long for it and are repulsed by it. We wonder about our legacy.

We wonder what the heritage of contemporary teacher education will be. Perhaps our era will be viewed by future teacher educators as one that offered vital insight. Perhaps our current efforts at a multicultural teacher education will be remembered as a turning point in the history of American schools, a new awakening for equality in education. Our legacy will have everything to do with whether our theory lives as practice.

Unfortunately, our era will likely be remembered as the generation that failed to recruit additional persons of color into education. This trend is unequivocal, and, for the moment at least, it is irreversible. A multicultural teacher education without persons of color cannot be considered truly multicultural.

Our work today will one day be thought of as teacher education at the turn of the century—the twenty-first century. Will our rhetoric be the mark of our day, or will we be thought of as visioned professionals who took their civic responsibility to educate all children seriously?

In 1991, University of Houston president Dr. Marguerite Ross Barnett died from a sudden illness. Her legacy for our university, however, lives on in our teacher preparation program. As an African American, she was particularly clear in shaping the mission of the university in terms of service to society, especially in relation to those who are most in need. Higher education, in her words, had a social responsibility to help "solve society's conundrums." We remember Dr. Barnett and her ambitions. We hope our students will remember her as well; we believe that she would be proud of them.

Notes

1. Portions of this chapter are reprinted from an article in Tellez, K. and Hlebowitsch, P. S. (1993). Being there: Social service and teacher education at the University of Houston. *Innovative Higher Education* 18(1):87–94.

2. All names are pseudonyms.

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FRANCISCO A. RÍOS AND GERARDO M. GONZÁLEZ

Psychological and Developmental Perspectives in a Multicultural Framework: Exploring Some Possibilities[1]

Many teacher education programs in the United States (U.S.) require their preservice teachers to take course work in psychological and developmental foundations as they relate to teaching and learning, The research base in the fields of educational and developmental psychology has *traditionally* focused on the inner processes (thinking, behaving, and feeling) of the individual as they develop over time (Lee 1994). Because most of this research is conducted in the U.S., because of the traditional focus on inner processes, and because textbooks in the field are limited in their coverage of multicultural issues, it is easy for teacher educators to present a monocultural perspective of psychological and developmental foundations (Moss 1986). This is unfortunate, since discussion of cultural differences and the cultural context in which individuals grow and learn can enrich course content and, more importantly, prepare preservice teachers to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Fortunately, provocative scholarship is being conducted (especially in cross-cultural psychology and in an emerging critical tradition in psychology) that can inform teacher educators of critical cultural differences.[2]

Beyond these curriculum concerns lie issues revolving around how these courses are taught. Indeed, the teaching methods become part of the implicit curriculum (Eisner 1985). The implicit curriculum socializes students into the values that are acceptable in that particular classroom and school. Thus, by the structure of the course and the teacher's behavior, the teacher can potentially affect preservice teachers' values with respect to compliance or initiative, competition or cooperation, mindlessness or critical reflection, homogeneity or diversity, inequality or social justice. How you teach becomes, in short, another opportunity to teach.

This chapter will begin by identifying a theme and resultant goals that guide our own[3] thinking and behavior with respect to an *introductory* educational psychology course that has a multicultural focus. We will then share some of the critical issues we struggle with as we strive to infuse multicultural education into the explicit and implicit curriculum. Next, we will highlight some critical components of the multicultural educational psychology curriculum. Finally, we will focus on several features of the course structure we have used for addressing