Post-Colonial Ruptures and Democratic Possibilities: Multiculturalism as Anti-Racist Pedagogy

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Introduction

Within the last decade, conservatives such as Allan Bloom, Lynne Cheney, Diane Ravitch, Pat Buchanan, and Senator Jesse Helms have placed the issue of culture and difference at the center of the debate about education and democracy. They have asserted the primacy of the political in invoking the language of culture and in doing so have let it be known that culture is a terrain of political and ideological struggle. The ideological and political parameters of this struggle have been made manifest on a number of cultural fronts, including the schools, the arts, and the more blatant attacks aimed at rolling back the benefits of civil rights and social welfare reforms constructed over the last three decades. What is being valorized in the dominant language of the conservative offensive is an undemocratic approach to social authority and a politically regressive move to reconstruct American life within the script of Eurocentrism, racism, and patriarchy. Similarly, within these discourses, the call to define civilization as synonymous with selected aspects of Western tradition is being

matched by a fervent attempt to reduce pedagogy to the old trans-
mission model of teaching and learning.

In what follows, I want to analyze the implications that this
struggle over culture has for redefining a language of critique
and possibility which is capable of challenging the authoritarian-
ism and cultural amnesia that are hallmarks of this new cultural
conservatism. In addition, I want to analyze the implications this
debate has for reconstructing the purpose and meaning of public
and higher education as part of a broader concern for developing
a politics of cultural difference in a radical democratic society.
First, I will highlight some central elements of the conservative
attack on multiculturalism, focusing primarily on the work of Di-
ane Ravitch. Second, I will draw upon some insights provided by
post-colonial theorists in order to critically engage various notions
of multiculturalism put forth in conservative and liberal dis-
courses. Finally, I will attempt to take up the pedagogical impli-
cations of what I call a border pedagogy by focusing on the issue
of anti-racist teaching.

The Conservative Cultural Counteroffensive[1]

During the last decade of the Reagan era, various sectors of
the Right, including "fundamentalists (anti-obscenity and anti-
abortion), nationalists (anti-flagburning and English Only advo-
cates) and political conservatives (anti-affirmative action and anti-
civil rights)," have turned their attention to mobilizing a populist
campaign against what they allege is a crisis of authority, power,
identity, and values in American culture (Yudice 129). Giving a
new twist to the relationship between the political and the per-
sonal, the conservative backlash has attempted to reverse many of
the gains made by women, gays and lesbians, ethnic and racial
minorities, and other subordinated groups who have organized
around a politics of identity. Alarmed by the challenges posed by
these groups to the authority of academic canons, the alleged
superiority of Western intellectual tradition, and the refusal to
acknowledge that ethnic, racial, gender, and other relations play
a significant role in the development and perpetuation of existing
hegemonic, social arrangements, conservatives have launched a
mass-based cultural offensive in order to radically change public

opinion and taste. The conservative offensive has been conducted most recently on two cultural fronts. One attack has focused on both popular and "high" culture. As part of this counteroffensive, fundamentalists and conservatives have waged protests against the public screening of such films as *The Last Temptation of Christ*, they have brought obscenity charges against specific pop and rap musicians claiming that their lyrics were obscene and satanic, and under the auspices of the Meese Commission they have conducted a "war" against pornography.

More recently, conservatives have turned their attention to denouncing public funding of controversial artworks. Rallying against the exhibition of works by photographers Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe, conservatives have attempted to mobilize public opposition to images depicted as anti-Christian, obscene, and vulgar. The focus on Serrano's and Mapplethorpe's work is not coincidental. Serrano's photograph *Piss Christ* depicted a wood and plastic crucifix in the artist's urine while the Mapplethorpe exhibition contained sexually explicit gay and sadomasochistic photographs.[2] Both exhibits provided the opportunity for conservatives to launch attacks not only on artistic freedom, but more specifically to wage a populist campaign infused with elements of homophobia, fundamentalism, nationalism, and racism. For example, utilizing the discourse of a "sex panic," Senator Jesse Helms has sought to immobilize moderate and liberal opposition by condemning Mapplethorpe's photography on the grounds that "the homosexual theme goes throughout his work" (qtd. in Dowd B6). In addition, Helms has attempted to pass a Senate amendment that would forbid public funding for what he labeled "indecent" and "offensive" art. Helms's bill was modified before it was passed by the Senate, but not because it legitimated a scurrilous attack on the work of gay and lesbian artists. Homophobia aside, liberals rallied against the bill as a result of massive pressure by the arts community. But the compromise bill, which required that the National Endowment for the Arts adhere to legal bans on obscenity in funding public art work, has had the effect of increasing "self-censorship and anxiety in the arts community, spurred by new episodes of formal censorship and McCarthyite witch-hunts" (Vance 49). More specifically, the right-wing attack against the arts has sent a chilling effect through various funding agencies for the arts and, in part, has succeeded

in mobilizing a "moral panic" that has a distinctly homophobic and anti-democratic character. At stake in the political and pedagogical struggle over high and popular culture is an attempt by conservatives to dismantle those sectors of the arts that combine artistic freedom with social criticism.[3]

The second thrust of the conservative cultural offensive has expressed itself through a full-fledged attack on higher education and public schooling. This attack has manifested itself in endless diatribes against the so-called evils of political correctness and multiculturalism. Featured in a number of major academic journals and popular magazines, including the *Partisan Review, The New Republic, Newsweek, The New York Review of Books,* and *Forbes,* and in an interminable stream of editorial comments in major American newspapers, the "crisis" on American campuses has been provocatively depicted as "The Chilling of Intellectual Life," "The New Orthodoxy," "Thought Police," and "The Cult of Multiculturalism." It is worth noting some of the assumptions central to this attack, such as

> that the academy is under siege by leftists, multiculturalists, deconstructionists and other radicals who are politicizing the university and threatening to undermine the very foundations of the Western intellectual tradition. These radicals, the theory goes, are the left-wing graduate students of the '60s who sneaked into tenured positions in the '90s and are now promoting an agenda of cultural relativism. Armed with affirmative action admissions and hiring, as well as new French literary theories, the politically correct hope to transform the university into a den of multiculturalism—silencing everyone who would dare dissent by calling them "sexist," "racist" or anti-deconstructionist. (Fraser 6)

Nurtured by conservative organizations such as Accuracy in Academia and the National Association of Scholars, establishment right-wing intellectuals such as Allan Bloom, author of *The Closing of the American Mind,* Roger Kimball, an editor of *New Criterion* and author of *Tenured Radicals,* and Dinesh D'Souza, former editor of *The Dartmouth Review* and author of *Illiberal Education,* have waged a public campaign against leftist radicals in higher education. Wrapping their discourse in a broad-based attack on feminists,

radical homosexuals, Marxists, and New Historicists, conservatives such as D'Souza and Fred Siegel claim that "liberal arts students . . . are very likely to be exposed to an attempted brainwashing that deprecates Western learning and exalts a neo-Marxist ideology promoted in the name of multiculturalism" (D'Souza, *Illiberal Education* 35). Siegel extends this criticism by writing about multiculturalists in terms that are as theoretically wooden as they are ideologically extreme. He writes:

> [M]ulticulturalism's hard-liners, who seem to make up the majority of the movement, damn as racism any attempt to draw the myriad of American groups into a common American culture. For these multiculturalists, differences are absolute, irreducible, intractable—occasions not for understanding separation but for separation. (35)

There has been a strong tendency in the conservative view of multiculturalism to separate social criticism from the discourse of cultural difference. That is, any attempt on the part of progressives to use the concept of cultural difference as a basis for social criticism and curricula reform that engage issues of race, class, gender, and ethnicity is dismissed as merely an instance of separatism that threatens nothing less than the very nature of Western civilization itself;[4] or such a position is labeled as a form of "political correctness" and summarily rejected as one that infringes on the academic rights of faculty while simultaneously subjecting liberal arts students "to brainwashing that deprecates Western learning and exalts a neo-Marxist ideology" (D'Souza, "Visigoths" 81).

In the ideology of the NAS, the Madison Center for Education Affairs, and its various ideologues, the curriculum of Western culture is being undermined by the introduction of both popular and non-Western courses (read as trivial), tenured, radical academics are proselytizing a generation of students by introducing them to left-wing, anti-establishment politics, and freedom of speech is being violated on college campuses through the collective actions of left-wing faculty and students who will not tolerate opposing views on race, class, gender, and other political issues. In actuality, all of these charges appear to be bogus.[5] The liberal

arts curricula are still dominated by the works of Western culture, radical professors represent a small percentage of college faculties, and it is both patronizing and illogical to suggest that students are indifferent to or uncritical of what they are taught. The political correctness movement seizes upon the issue of free expression in order to undermine social criticism that opposes cultural chauvinism, racism, and gender discrimination. Political correctness is a euphemism used by liberals and neoconservatives to disparage radical professors, cultural workers, and students from displaying ongoing pedagogical interests in fashioning a democratic culture within and outside of higher education. Accordingly, the rallying cry against political correctness is an act of bad faith designed to legitimate and enforce the pedagogical imperative to learn a selected cultural tradition and common culture invented in a monolithic and totalizing discourse.[6]

This attack on difference and cultural diversity by cultural conservatives is not limited to attacks on the arts and higher education. More recently, conservatives such as Diane Ravitch have attempted to counter attempts by educational reformers in New York, Oregon, and California to rewrite public school curricula to include the rich legacies, conflicts, and diverse struggles that characterize the history of the United States.

Ravitch's attempt to silence or marginalize the voices of those who have traditionally been excluded from the school curricula is indicative of how the language of liberalism and pluralism are increasingly being used to give credence to the new nativism and racism that has been resurgent in the last decade in the media, mass culture, and American schools.

Acknowledging the importance of the changing demographic and cultural character of the United States, Ravitch ("Multiculturalism") constructs her argument around a view of pluralism based on a notion of a "common culture" that serves as a referent to denounce any attempt by subordinate groups to challenge the narrow ideological and political parameters by which such a culture both defines and expresses itself.[7] Working as a paid consultant to various task forces that have undertaken curriculum reform, Ravitch has claimed that the language of the multiculturalists is consistently anti-Western and separatist. Arguing against the *Curriculum of Inclusion* report issued by New

York's state commissioner of education, Thomas Sobol, Ravitch wrote in the *New York Daily News:* "It sees nothing in Western culture but racism, greed and intolerance. The task force thinks that white children are too 'arrogant'"(qtd. in Hancock 3). Ravitch's argument is premised on the assumption that multiculturalism represents the equivalent of cultural separatism, ignores the importance of Western culture, and has no language for linking difference to the notion of "common culture."

While Ravitch is quick to recognize that the common culture of the United States is made up of diverse racial and ethnic groups, she glosses over any attempt to designate how dominant configurations of power privilege some cultures over others, or how power works to secure forms of domination that marginalize and silence subordinate groups. Since the notion of common culture is a central theoretical element used by conservatives in attacking multiculturalism, it is important to analyze some of the weaknesses of this position as it is expressed by Ravitch.

In the name of a common culture, Ravitch performs two hegemonic functions. First, she dehistoricizes and depoliticizes the idea of culture. Lost from her perspective is any account of how various social movements have struggled historically to transform a Eurocentric curriculum that, in part, has functioned to exclude or marginalize the voices of women, blacks, and other subordinate groups. For example, there is no mention of how various social movements struggled successfully in the late 1960s and early 1970s to add black, ethnic, and women's studies programs and curricula in both public schools and various institutions of higher learning. Nor does she examine how the relationship between culture and social identity is constituted "through hierarchical knowledge and power relations" within the curriculum (Mohanty 196). In this case, Ravitch erases through her insistence on a common culture the institutional, economic, and social parameters that actively construct deep structural inequalities and forms of domination that characterize relations between privileged and subordinate groups, as well as the challenges that have been waged against such practices.

In Ravitch's worldview, the common culture she constructs denies the necessity of either contesting existing configurations of power or transforming the deep-seated inequalities that charac-

terize institutional and everyday life in the United States. Of
course, this is precisely her point. Ravitch invokes pluralism, de-
mocracy, and consensus in order to defend a dominant order in
which the issues of power, politics, and struggle are coded as
forms of disruption and extremism. More importantly, by dis-
crediting the social criticisms and struggles waged by subordinate
groups against the dominant culture in the interest of cultural
democracy, Ravitch locates the source of oppression and change
in individual will and achievement. In this account, the social,
economic, cultural, and political centers of power in the United
States simply disappear. At the same time, broad-based struggle
and political action over the curriculum and related issues of so-
cial justice don't simply disappear in Ravitch's account; they are
pointedly discredited as a threat to a "sense of common nation-
hood" ("Diversity" 340).

Second, missing from Ravitch's discourse is a notion of dif-
ference and citizenship tied to a project of substantive critical
democracy, one which extends the principles of justice, liberty,
and equality to the widest possible set of economic and social
relations. Employing a comfortable set of oppositions in which
those who struggle over extending the meaning of cultural de-
mocracy are simply dismissed as particularists, Ravitch utilizes the
language of desperation and extremism to wipe out any attempt
on the part of subordinate groups to learn about how their iden-
tities have been forged in ongoing historical struggles for social
justice. For Ravitch, the history of the culture of Otherness should
be forged exclusively in positive images organized around events
like Black History Month, multicultural dinners, or events cele-
brating the achievements of women. While such images are ped-
agogically crucial to any form of critical pedagogy, they cannot be
expunged from an ongoing criticism of how the dominant culture
has created and sustains the very problems that provided the
conditions for such heroic struggles in the first place. Ravitch
recognizes that the curriculum needs to become more inclusive in
acknowledging the histories, cultures, and experiences of other
groups, but she doesn't want students to engage in forms of social
criticism aimed at calling into question the Eurocentric nature of
the dominant curriculum.

What is important here is not simply the issue of censorship,

but a benevolent form of neocolonialism that refuses to hold up to critical scrutiny its own complicity in producing and maintaining specific injustices, practices, and forms of oppression that deeply inscribe its legacy and heritage.

Multiculturalism and the New Politics of Difference

> The language of critique is effective . . . to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of "translation": a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, neither the one nor the Other, properly alienates our political expectations. (Bhabha, "Commitment to Theory" 10–11)

In opposition to the emerging neoconservative view that defines cultural democracy against difference as part of a politics of empowerment and struggle, I want to provide a rationale for developing a politics of difference and border pedagogy responsive to the imperatives of a critical democracy. In doing so, I want to formulate a nontotalizing response to the challenge that conservatives have raised around the relationship between culture and democracy, on the one hand, and schooling and the politics of difference on the other. In part, my response is formulated in an attempt to develop a theoretical discourse that serves neither to legitimate existing pedagogical practices nor to justify itself by positing some sort of correspondence to an objectively verifiable reality. Such claims for theory belong to paradigms derivative of positivist and empiricist considerations. Instead, I want to construct a theoretical discourse that Homi K. Bhabha calls a space of "negotiation and translation" ("Commitment to Theory" 6). Put another way, I want to develop a theoretical discourse that creates a cartography for creating new boundaries in order to explore, negotiate, and translate between new and old questions, problems, and objects of knowledge.

Creating a theoretical space for new forms of criticism and collective action not only means constructing a discourse that challenges the conservative assault on cultural democracy; it also means demystifying the liberal refusal to link cultural struggle to

forms of historical and institutional domination. Liberal no-
tions of multiculturalism affirm difference within a politics of
consensus that erases culture as a terrain of struggle constituted
within asymmetrical relations of power, knowledge, and experi-
ence. Wrapped in the discourse of accommodation, liberal
discourses of multiculturalism argue for extending the canon by
including minority voices, focusing on the limits of the prevailing
structure of the disciplines, and supporting a notion of common
culture which "has to be created anew by engaging the cultural
differences that are part of American life" (Erickson B3). Clearly
liberals offer a view of multiculturalism that challenges the
totalizing and often racist views of conservatives, but the central
thrust of many of these discourses is that they reproduce the
very problems that give rise to their own criticisms. Since the
critique of this view has been extensively developed elsewhere, I
only want to highlight a few considerations.[8] First, the liberal
multicultural position on the academic canon fails to question
how the very concept of the canon serves to secure particular
forms of cultural and political authority. Adding particular texts
or authors to the canon is not the same as analyzing how the
structure of the canon in both form and content promotes rather
than displaces the effects of the colonial gaze.[9] What is essen-
tial here is raising questions regarding how the canon emerged
as part of a larger crisis in European history to secure how
dominant and oppositional histories are written, produced, and
legitimized within the logic of colonization, privilege, and
resistance.

Second, the multicultural emphasis on engaging texts differ-
ently often ignores how "the ways in which issues of power, po-
litical struggle, and cultural identity are inscribed within the form,
structures, and content of texts and thereby misses the implicit
historical readings of the crisis that circumscribes the texts and to
which the texts inescapably and subtly respond" (West, "Minority"
199). To be sure, what is at stake here is not merely articulating
the study of texts to broader historical, cultural, and political
events, but recognizing that multiculturalism is also about a pol-
itics that is attentive to the material and human suffering exhib-
ited in forms of domestic colonialism expressed in racial violence,
shameful unemployment among black youth, and the growing

numbers of minorities who daily join the ranks of the hungry and the homeless.

Finally, the attempt to accommodate pluralism to a "common culture" rather than to a shared vision grounded in an ongoing struggle to expand the radical possibilities of democratic public life underestimates the legacy of the dominant culture to elimi-nate cultural differences, multiple literacies, and diverse commu-nities in the name of totalizing and one-dimensional master nar-ratives refigured around issues such as nationalism, citizenship, and patriotism. Furthermore, conservative and liberal discourses that conflate multiculturalism with the imperatives of a "common culture" generally suppress any attempts to call into question the norm of whiteness as an ethnic category that secures its domi-nance by appearing to be invisible. In this case, emancipatory interests in liberal approaches to multicultural education are gen-erally limited to the call for either assimilation or the demand to reverse negative images of blacks and other ethnic groups as they appear in various forms of texts and images. At work here is the liberal failure to address those post-colonial critiques which not only interrogate forms of European and American culture that situate difference in structures of domination but also analyze race and ethnicity in terms that highlight issues of inequality, injustice, and liberty as part of an ongoing colonial legacy and obstacle to realizing democratic public life.

Conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism merge in their refusal to locate cultural differences in a broader examination of how the boundaries of ethnicity, race, and power make visible how "whiteness" functions as a historical and social construction, "an unrecognized and unspoken racial category" that secures its power by refusing to identify culture as "a problem of politics, power, and pedagogy" (Carby 39). As a critical dis-course of race and pedagogy, multiculturalism needs to break out of its silence regarding the role it plays in masking how white domination colonizes definitions of the normal.[10] Hence, critical educators need to move their analyses and pedagogical practices away from an exotic or allegedly objective encounter with mar-ginal groups and raise more questions with respect to how their own subjectivities and practices are present in the construction of the margins. As Toni Morrison points out, the very issue of race

requires that the bases of Western civilization will require rethinking. This means that the central question may not be why Afro-Americans are absent from dominant narratives, but "What intellectual feats had to be performed by the author or his critic to erase [blacks] from a society seething with [their] presence, and what effect has that performance had on the work? What are the strategies of escape from knowledge?" (11).

I would argue that the issue is not to privilege difference through an appeal to a common culture, but to construct differences within social relations and a notion of public life that challenges networks of hierarchy, systemic injustice, and economic exploitation.

It is crucial for critical educators and cultural workers to link a politics and pedagogy of difference to a theory of social welfare and cultural democracy. At the very least, this means that educators can work to insert the idea of difference into the curriculum as part of an attempt to rearticulate the ideas of justice and equality. A politics of difference not only offers students the opportunity for raising questions about how the categories of race, class, and gender are shaped within the margins and center of power, but it also provides a new way of reading history as a way of reclaiming power and identity. This is no small matter for those students who have generally been either marginalized or silenced by the dominant ideologies and practices of public and higher education. This suggests that educators acknowledge that the radical responsibility of a politics of difference and public life necessitates an ongoing analysis by students of the contradictions in American society between the meaning of freedom, the demands of social justice, and the obligations of citizenship, on the one hand, and the accumulated suffering, domination, force, and violence that permeate all aspects of everyday life on the other. Such an analysis necessitates forms of learning grounded in the ethical imperative both to challenge the prevailing social order while simultaneously providing the basis for students to deepen the intellectual, civic, and moral understanding of their role as agents of public formation.

I am suggesting that the debate over the politics of cultural difference and the curriculum might be reconstructed to engage the broader issue of how the learning that goes on in public and

higher education is truly attentive to the problems and histories that construct the actual experiences students face in their everyday lives. A pedagogy of difference is not based merely on providing students with conflicting paradigms or the dispassionate skills of rhetorical persuasion.[11] In fact, it is imperative that a pedagogy of difference move beyond forms of semiotic and deconstructive criticism that dismiss central concerns of power, politics, and ideology. A critical pedagogical approach might begin by both engaging "how the school functions as an institution to produce the available discourses and knowledge" and analyzing the "way students enter into textuality—the way discourse addresses, and, in Althusser's term, 'interpellates' students as subjects" (Clark 127). A pedagogy of difference points to pedagogical practices that offer students the knowledge, skills, and values they will need to negotiate critically and to transform the world in which they find themselves. The politics of cultural difference is not about a pluralism cleansed of the discourse of power, struggle, and equity; instead, it contains all of the problems that make democracy messy, vibrant, and dangerous to those who believe that social criticism and social justice are inimical to both the meaning of education and the lived experience of democratic public life. This is precisely why critical educators cannot let the politics and discourse of difference be subordinated to cleansing and comforting self-righteous appeals made in the name of a common culture or the false equality of a pluralism devoid of the trappings of struggle, empowerment, and possibility.

In what follows, I want to provide a brief analysis of some of the central theoretical assumptions that characterize the diverse work of a number of post-colonial theorists.[12] In doing so, my aim is to appropriate selectively a number of critical assumptions as part of an effort both to enter into dialogue with this body of work and to engage its criticisms as part of an attempt to challenge some of the primary categories that construct current forms of radical educational theory dealing with multiculturalism, race, and pedagogy. At the same time, I want to use some of the central insights of post-colonial theories to problematize and extend the possibilities for developing what I call the politics of border pedagogy. Finally, I want to develop an approach to anti-racist teach-

ing through some of the central categories that inform the theo-
retical boundaries and practices of a border pedagogy.

Post-Colonial Ruptures/Democratic Possibilities

> The choice of language and the use to which it is put is central
> to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their nat-
> ural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire
> universe. (Ngugi 4)

The challenge presented by Ngugi and other post-colonial
critics offers a new theoretical discourse to address the political
and pedagogical crises in culture, difference, and authority that
have beset many of the Western democracies in the 1990s. In part,
post-colonial critics challenge the authority and discourses of
those practices wedded to the legacy of a colonialism that either
directly constructs or is implicated in social relations that keep
privilege and oppression alive as active constituting forces of daily
life within the centers and margins of power. Most specifically,
post-colonial discourses have pushed against the boundaries of
the liberal and conservative debate on multiculturalism by assert-
ing that politics and struggle are central to the discourse of dif-
ference. That is, they scan the surface language that constructs
the alleged crisis of multiculturalism and ask: which crisis, for
whom is there a crisis, and who speaks in the name of such a
crisis?
        Post-colonial discourses have also made clear that the old
legacies of the political Left, Center, and Right can no longer be
so easily defined. Indeed, post-colonial critics have gone further
and provided important theoretical insights into how such dis-
courses either actively construct colonial relations or are impli-
cated in their construction. From this perspective Robert Young
argues that post-colonialism is a dislocating discourse that raises
theoretical questions regarding how dominant and radical theo-
ries "have themselves been implicated in the long history of Eu-
ropean colonialism—and, above all, the extent to which [they]
continue to determine both the institutional conditions of knowl-
edge as well as the terms of contemporary institutional practices—

practices which extend beyond the limits of the academic institu-
tion" (viii). This is especially true for many of the theorists in a
variety of social movements who have taken up the language of
difference and a concern with the politics of the Other. In many
instances, theorists within these new social movements have ad-
dressed political and pedagogical issues through the construction
of binary oppositions that not only contain traces of theoretical
vanguardism but also fall into the trap of simply reversing the old
colonial legacy and problematic of oppressed vs. oppressor. In
doing so, they have often unwittingly imitated the colonial model
of erasing the complexity, complicity, diverse agents, and multiple
situations that constitute the enclaves of colonial/hegemonic dis-
course and practice.[13]

Post-colonial discourses have both extended and moved be-
yond the parameters of this debate in a number of ways. First,
post-colonial critics have made it clear that the history and politics
of difference are often informed by a legacy of colonialism that
warrants analyzing the exclusions and repressions that allow spe-
cific forms of privilege to remain unacknowledged in the lan-
guage of Western educators and cultural workers. At stake here is
deconstructing forms of privilege that benefit males, whiteness,
and property as well as those conditions that have disabled others
to speak in places where those who are privileged by virtue of the
legacy of colonial power assume authority and the conditions for
human agency. This suggests, as Gayatri Spivak has pointed out,
that more is at stake than problematizing discourse; more impor-
tantly, educators and cultural workers must be engaged in "the
unlearning of one's own privilege. So that, not only does one
become able to listen to that other constituency, but one learns to
speak in such a way that one will be taken seriously by that other
constituency" (41). In this instance, post-colonial discourse ex-
tends the radical implications of difference and location by mak-
ing such concepts attentive to providing the grounds for forms of
self-representation and collective knowledge in which the subject
and object of European culture are problematized, though in ways
radically different from those taken up by Western radicals and
conservatives (Tiffin, "Post-Colonialism").

Second, post-colonial discourse rewrites the relationship be-
tween the margin and the center by deconstructing the colonialist

and imperialist ideologies that structure Western knowledge, texts, and social practices. In this case, there is an attempt to demonstrate how European culture and colonialism "are deeply implicated in each other" (R. Young 119). This suggests more than rewriting or recovering the repressed stories and social memories of the Other; it means understanding and rendering visible how Western knowledge is encased in historical and institutional structures that both privilege and exclude particular readings, specific voices, certain aesthetics, forms of authority, specific representations, and forms of sociality. The West and Otherness relate not as polarities or binarisms in post-colonial discourse but in ways in which both are complicitous and resistant, victim and accomplice. In this instance, criticism of the dominating Other returns as a form of self-criticism. Linda Hutcheon captures the importance of this issue with her question: "How do we construct a discourse which displaces the effects of the colonizing gaze while we are still under its influence?" ("Circling" 176). While it cannot be forgotten that the legacy of colonialism has meant large-scale death and destruction as well as cultural imperialism for the Other, the Other is not merely the opposite of Western colonialism, nor is the West a homogeneous trope of imperialism.

   This perspective suggests a third rupture provided by post-colonial discourses. The current concern with the "death of the subject" cannot be confused with the necessity of affirming the complex and contradictory character of human agency. Post-colonial discourse reminds us that it is ideologically convenient and politically suspect for Western intellectuals to talk about the disappearance of the speaking subject from within institutions of privilege and power. This is not meant to suggest that post-colonial theorists accept the humanist notion of the subject as a unified and static identity. On the contrary, post-colonial discourse agrees that the speaking subject must be decentered, but this does not mean that all notions of human agency and social change must be dismissed. Understood in these terms, the post-modernist notion of the subject must be accepted and modified in order to extend rather than erase the possibility for creating the enabling conditions for human agency. At the very least, this would mean coming to understand the strengths and limits of

practical reason, the importance of affective investments, the discourse of ethics as a resource for social vision, and the availability of multiple discourses and cultural resources that provide the very grounds and necessity for agency (Giroux, *Border*).

What do post-colonial discourses suggest for the ways in which educators and other cultural workers take up the issue of race and difference? In part, they provide a theoretical foundation for deconstructing the master narratives of white supremacist logic and for redrawing the boundaries between the construction of experience and power. In the first instance, by challenging the concept of master narratives, post-colonial discourses have opened up the possibility for launching a renewed attack on the underlying assumptions that have allowed the dominant culture to enforce its own authority and racist practices through an unproblematic appeal to the virtues of Western civilization. In challenging the notions of universal reason, the construction of a white, humanist subject, and the selective legitimation of high culture as the standard for cultural practice, post-colonial criticism has illuminated how Eurocentric-American discourses of identity suppress difference, heterogeneity, and multiplicity in their efforts to maintain racist hegemonic relations of power. Not only do post-colonial theorists offer new ways to understand how power works in constructing racist identities and subjectivities, but they redefine culture and experience within multiple relations of difference that propose a range of subject-positions from which people can struggle against racist ideologies and practices. By calling into question the themes of "degraded Otherness and subaltern marginality" post-colonial discourses suggest new theoretical tools for attacking "notions of exclusionary identity, dominating heterogeneity, and universality—or in more blunt language, White supremacy" (West, "Black" 90).

Rather than either celebrate or dismiss the master narratives of the West, post-colonial theorists raise important questions about how such narratives are constructed, what they mean, how they regulate particular forms of moral and social experience, and how they affirm or transgress particular discourses of ethnicity, community, and cultural democracy. Similarly, post-colonial theorists not only delineate how borders are named and constructed as sites of terror, resistance, and possibility, but they also

attempt to redraw the very maps of meaning, desire, and differ-
ence, inscribing the social and individual body with new intellec-
tual and emotional investments, and calling into question tradi-
tional forms of power and their accompanying modes of
legitimation. For educators interested in developing an anti-racist
pedagogy, post-colonialism offers new epistemologies for re-
thinking the broader and specific contexts in which democratic
authority is defined; it offers a healthy skepticism not only toward
all forms of boundary-fixing but also regarding existing defini-
tions of what is central and what is marginal, what is included and
what is excluded, particularly in dominant discourses of ethnicity
and difference. Isaac Julien and Kobena Mercer state the issue
well:

> One issue at stake . . . we suggest, is the potential break-up or
> deconstruction of structures that determine what is regarded
> as culturally central and what is regarded as culturally mar-
> ginal. . . . Rather than attempt to compensate the "structured
> absences" of previous paradigms, it would be useful to iden-
> tify the relations of power/knowledge that determine which
> cultural issues are intellectually prioritized in the first place.
> The initial stage in any deconstructive project must be to
> examine and undermine the force of the binary relation that
> produces the marginal as a consequence of the authority in-
> vested in the centre. (3)

All of these developments redefine theory by moving it far be-
yond—and in opposition to—the concerns embodied in the ide-
ologies and questions that have defined the underlying racist
principles which have remained unchallenged as a central aspect
of conservative and liberal educational discourses.

Post-colonial discourses represent a space in which to rethe-
orize, locate, and address the possibilities for a new politics based
on the construction of new identities, zones of cultural difference,
and forms of ethical address that allow cultural workers and ed-
ucators alike to transform the languages, social practices, and his-
tories that are part of the colonial inheritance. This position offers
new hope for expanding both the practice of cultural work and
the liberatory possibilities of crossing borders that open up new

political and pedagogical possibilities. It is to these issues that I will now turn.

Border Pedagogy and the Politics of Anti-Racist Teaching

> [T]he border is not an abyss that will have to save us from threatening otherness, but a place where the so-called other-ness yields, becomes us, and therefore comprehensible. (Gómez-Peña qtd. in Joselit 122)

Central to the notion of border pedagogy is the political project that informs it. In this case, the concept of border peda-gogy is grounded in the imperatives of a radical public philosophy that respects the notion of difference as part of a common strug-gle to extend the quality of democratic public life (Laclau and Mouffe 114–93). In short, the notion of border pedagogy pre-supposes an acknowledgment of the shifting borders that both undermine and reterritorialize different configurations of cul-ture, power, and knowledge.

I believe that the concept of border pedagogy has important implications for redefining radical educational theory and prac-tice. The category of border signals in the metaphorical and literal sense how power is inscribed differently on the body, culture, history, space, land, and psyche. Borders elicit a recognition of those epistemological, political, cultural, and social margins that distinguish between "us and them," delineate zones of terror from locations that are safe, and create new cartographies of identity and difference.[14] The concept of borders when defined as part of a politics of cultural difference can be used heuristically to make problematic specific authorial positions secured in monolithic views of culture, nationalism, and difference.

The category of border also prefigures cultural criticism and pedagogical processes as a form of border crossing. That is, it signals forms of entrance and transgression in which existing bor-ders forged in domination can be challenged and redefined, while borders that offer humane and democratic possibilities can be secured. It also speaks to the need to create pedagogical condi-tions in which students become border crossers in order to un-

derstand Otherness in its own terms, and further to create bor-
derlands in which diverse cultural resources allow for the
fashioning of new identities within existing configurations of
power. In this sense, border crossing becomes a metaphor for
inviting students and teachers to cross over into different cultural
zones in order to "map the politics of their forays into other
cultures" (JanMohamed, "Worldliness" 3). This type of pedagog-
ical cartography can illuminate and make problematic the histor-
ically and socially constructed strengths and limitations of those
places and borders we inherit and which frame our discourses
and social relations as intellectuals, students, and citizens. More-
over, as part of a broader politics of difference, border pedagogy
makes primary the language of the political and ethical. It stresses
the political by examining how institutions, knowledge, and social
relations are inscribed differently in power; it highlights the eth-
ical by examining how the shifting relations of knowing, acting,
and subjectivity are constructed in spaces and social relationships
based on judgments which demand and frame "different modes
of response to the other; that is, between those that transfigure
and those that disfigure, those that care for the other in his/her
otherness and those that do not" (Kearney 369).

    As part of a radical pedagogical practice, border pedagogy
points to the need for conditions that allow students to write,
speak, and listen in a language in which meaning becomes multi-
accentual and dispersed, and resists permanent closure. This is a
language in which one speaks with rather than exclusively for
others. Border pedagogy necessitates combining an emphasis on
the capacity of individuals to use critical reason to address the
issue of public life with a concern with how we might experience
agency in a world constituted in differences unsupported by tran-
scendent phenomena or metaphysical guarantees.

    In opposition to conservative and liberal pedagogical prac-
tices, border pedagogy does not refuse to call into question the
dominating aspects of white culture or to engage the oppositional
potential of difference as a site of struggle. This becomes more
clear in moving from an analysis of the general attributes of bor-
der pedagogy to analyzing how it might be taken up or developed
as an approach to anti-racist teaching.

    Central to an anti-racist notion of border pedagogy is the

need to provide a language and set of pedagogical practices that offer educators the opportunity to rethink the relations between the centers and the margins of power. That is, such a pedagogy must address the issue of racism as one that calls into question not only forms of subordination that create inequities among different groups as they live out their lives, but, as I have mentioned previously, also challenges those institutional and ideological boundaries that have historically masked their own relations of power behind complex forms of distinction and privilege. What does this suggest for the way we develop the basic elements of an anti-racist pedagogy?

First, the notion of border pedagogy offers students the opportunity to engage the multiple references that constitute different cultural codes, experiences, and languages. This means providing learning opportunities for students not only to analyze how cultural texts produce and are produced by various discursive racial codes, but also how students "read" themselves intellectually and affectively into those cultural identities and subject-positions offered by dominant and oppositional representations. This suggests developing pedagogical practices that address texts as social and historical constructions which presuppose particular cultural identities; it also suggests developing pedagogical practices that allow students to analyze texts in terms of their presences and absences; and most importantly, such practices should provide students with the opportunity to read texts dialogically through a configuration of many voices, some of which offer up resistance, some of which provide support.

Within this discourse, students engage knowledge as border crossers, by moving in and out of borders constructed around coordinates of difference and power (Hicks). These are not only physical borders; they are ideological, psychological, and cultural borders historically constructed and socially organized within maps of rules and regulations that serve to either limit or enable particular identities, individual capacities, and social forms. In this case, students cross over into borders of meaning, maps of knowledge, social relations, and values that are increasingly being negotiated and rewritten as the codes and regulations which organize them become destabilized and reshaped. Border pedagogy decenters as it remaps.

At one level this means giving students the opportunity to speak, to locate themselves in history, and to become subjects in the construction of their identities and the wider society. It also means defining voice not merely as an opportunity to speak, but to engage critically with the ideology and substance of speech, writing, and other forms of cultural production. In this case, "coming to voice" for students from both dominant and subordinate cultures means engaging in rigorous discussions of various cultural texts, drawing upon one's personal experience, and confronting the process through which ethnicity and power can be rethought as a political narrative that challenges racism as part of a broader struggle to democratize social, political, and economic life. In part, this means looking at the various ways in which race implicates relations of domination, resistance, suffering, and power within various social practices and how these are taken up in multiple ways by students who occupy different ethnic, social, and gender locations. In this way, race is never discussed outside of broader articulations nor is it merely about people of color.

Second, an anti-racist border pedagogy needs to do more than educate students to perform ideological surgery on master narratives based on white, patriarchal, and class-specific interests. If the master narratives of domination are to be deterritorialized effectively, it is important for educators to understand how such narratives are taken up as part of an investment of feeling, pleasure, and desire. There is a need to rethink the syntax of learning and behavior outside of the geography of rationality and reason. For example, this means that racism cannot be dealt with in a purely limited, analytical way. An anti-racist pedagogy must engage how and why students make particular ideological and affective investments and occupy particular subject-positions that give students a sense of meaning, purpose, and delight. As Stuart Hall argues, this means uncovering both for ourselves as teachers as well as for the students we are teaching "the deep structural factors which have a tendency persistently not only to generate racial practices and structures but to reproduce them through time which therefore account for their extraordinarily immovable character" (61). In addition to engaging racism within a politics of representation, ideology, and pleasure, it is also important to stress that any serious analysis of racism also has to be historical

and structural. It has to chart out how racist practices develop, where they come from, how they are sustained, how they affect dominant and subordinate groups, and how they can be challenged. This is not a discourse about personal preferences or dominant tastes but a discourse about economics, culture, politics, and power.

Third, a border pedagogy offers the opportunity for students to air their feelings about race from the perspective of the subject-positions they experience as constitutive of their own identities. Ideology in this sense is treated not merely as an abstraction but as part of the student's lived experience. This does not mean that teachers reduce their role to that of an intellectual voyeur or collapse their authority into a shabby form of relativism. Nor does it suggest that students merely express or assess their own experiences. Rather, it points to a particular form of teacher authority grounded in a respect for a radically decentered notion of democratic public life. This is a view of authority that rejects the notion that all forms of authority are expressions of unwarranted power and oppression. Instead, it argues for forms of authority that are rooted in democratic interests and emancipatory social relations, forms of authority that, in this case, begin from a standpoint from which to develop an educational project that rejects politics as aesthetics, that retains instead the significance of the knowledge/power relationship as a discourse of criticism and politics necessary for the achievement of equality, freedom, and struggle. This is not a form of authority based on an appeal to universal truths; it is a form of authority that recognizes its own partiality while simultaneously asserting a standpoint from which to engage the discourses and practices of democracy, freedom, and domination. Put another way, this is a notion of authority rooted in a political project that ties education to the broader struggle for public life in which dialogue, vision, and compassion remain critically attentive to the liberating and dominating relations that organize various aspects of everyday life.[15]

This suggests that educators and other cultural workers use their authority to establish pedagogical conditions in which different views about race can be aired but not treated as simply an expression of individual views or feelings (Mohanty 194–95). Andrew Hannan rightly points out that educators must refuse to

treat racism as a matter of individual prejudice and counter such a position by addressing the "structural foundations of [the] culture of racism" (127). An anti-racist pedagogy must demonstrate that the views we hold about race have different historical and ideological weight, forged in asymmetrical relations of power, and that they always embody interests that shape social practices in particular ways. In other words, an anti-racist pedagogy cannot treat ideologies as simply individual expressions of feeling, but as historical, cultural, and social practices that serve to either undermine or reconstruct democratic public life. These views must be engaged without silencing students, but they must also be interrogated next to a public philosophy that names racism for what it is and calls racist ideologies and practices into account on political and ethical terms.

Fourth, educators need to understand how the experience of marginality at the level of everyday life lends itself to forms of oppositional and transformative consciousness. For both privileged and subordinate students, this suggests the ethical and political imperative to both reclaim and remake their histories, voices, and visions as part of a wider struggle to change those material and social relations that deny radical pluralism as the basis of democratic political community. It is only through such an understanding that teachers can develop a border pedagogy which opens up the possibility for students to reclaim their voices as part of a process of empowerment and not merely what some educators have called an initiation into the culture of power (Delpit 282–83). It is not enough for students to learn how to resist power which is oppressive, which names them in a way that undermines their ability to govern rather than serve, and prevents them from struggling against forms of power that subjugate and exploit. For example, Lisa Delpit's call for educators to integrate black students into what she unproblematically addresses as "the culture of power" appears to be linked to how such power is constructed in opposition to democratic values and used as a force for domination (292). This is not to suggest the authority of white dominant culture is all of one piece, nor is this meant to imply that it should not be the object of study. What is at stake here is forgoing a notion of power that does not collapse into a form of domination but rather is critical and emancipatory, one that al-

lows students both to locate themselves in history and to appropriate critically, not slavishly, the cultural and political codes of their own and other traditions. Moreover, students who have to disavow their own racial heritage in order to succeed are not becoming "raceless," as Signithia Fordham has argued; they are being positioned to accept subject-positions that are the source of power for a white, dominant culture (57–58). The ability of white, male, Eurocentric culture to normalize and universalize its own interests works so well, in this case, that Fordham underemphasizes how whiteness as a cultural and historical construction, as a site of dominant narratives, exercises the form of authority which prevents black students from speaking through their own memories, histories, and experiences. Delpit and Fordham are right in attempting to focus on issues of powerlessness as they relate to pedagogy and race, but they both obscure this relation by not illuminating more clearly how power works in this society within the schools to secure and conceal various forms of racism and subjugation. Power is multifaceted and we need a better understanding of how it works not simply as a force for oppression but also as a basis for resistance and self and social empowerment. Educators need to fashion a critical and democratic notion of authority, one that decenters essentialist claims to power while simultaneously fighting for relations of authority and power that allow many voices to speak so as to initiate students into a culture that multiplies rather than restricts democratic practices and social relations as part of a wider struggle for democratic public life.

Fifth, educators need to analyze racism not only as a structural and ideological force, but also in the diverse and historically specific ways in which it emerges. This is particularly true of the most recent and newest expressions of racism developing in the United States and abroad among youth, in popular culture, and in its resurgence in the highest reaches of the American government. This also suggests that any notion of anti-racist pedagogy must arise out of specific settings and contexts. Such a pedagogy must allow its own character to be defined, in part, by the historically specific and contextual boundaries in which it emerges. At the same time, such a pedagogy must disavow all claims to scientific method or for that matter to any objective or transhistorical claims. As a political practice, an anti-racist pedagogy has to be

constructed not on the basis of essentialist or universal claims but on the concreteness of its specific encounters, struggles, and engagements. Roger Simon outlines some of the issues involved here in his discussion of critical pedagogy:

> Such a form of educational work is at root contextual and conditional. A critical pedagogy can only be concretely discussed from within a particular "point of practice"; from within a specific time and place and within a particular theme. This means doing critical pedagogy is a strategic, practical task, not a scientific one. It arises not against a background of psychological, sociological, or anthropological universals—as does much educational theory related to pedagogy—but from such questions as: "How is human possibility being diminished here?" (2)

Sixth, an anti-racist border pedagogy must redefine how the circuits of power move in a dialectical fashion among various sites of cultural production.[16] That is, we need a deeper understanding of how ideologies and other social practices which bear down on classroom relations emerge from and articulate with other spheres of social life. As educators, we need a clearer understanding of how the grounds for the production and organization of knowledge are related to forms of authority situated in political economy, the state, and other material practices. We also need to understand how circuits of power produce forms of textual authority that offer readers particular subject-positions, that is, ideological references that provide but do not rigidly determine particular views of the world.[17] In addition, educators need to explore how the readings of texts are linked to the forms of knowledge and social relations that students bring into the classroom. In other words, we need to understand in terms of function and substance those social and cultural forms outside of the classroom that produce the multiple and often contradictory subject-positions that students learn and express in their interaction with the dominant cultural capital of American schools.

Finally, central to the notion of border pedagogy are a number of important pedagogical issues regarding the role that teachers might take up in making a commitment to fight racism in their classrooms, schools, communities, and the wider society. The con-

cept of border pedagogy also helps to locate teachers within social, political, and cultural boundaries that define and mediate in complex ways how they function as intellectuals who exercise particular forms of moral and social regulation. Border pedagogy calls attention to both the ideological and the partial as central elements in the construction of teacher discourse and practice. In part, this suggests that to the degree that teachers make the construction of their own voices, histories, and ideologies problematic they become more attentive to Otherness as a deeply political and pedagogical issue. By deconstructing the underlying principles which inform their own lives and pedagogy, educators can begin to recognize the limits underlying the partiality of their own views. They can interrogate Otherness as a set of practices and relationships which, from different vantage points and positions of power, inscribe their own identity rather than unproblematically point to individuals or groups that appear remote and removed from a sense of place, identity, and authority that secures their own identity, comfort, and authority, especially if one is white, male, and middle-class. Such a recognition offers the promise of allowing teachers to restructure their pedagogical relations in order to engage in an open and critical fashion fundamental questions about the knowledge they teach, how it relates to students' lives, how students can engage with such knowledge, and how such practices actually relate to empowering both teachers and students.

Within dominant models of pedagogy, teachers are often silenced through a refusal or inability to problematize for students the values that inform how they teach and engage the multifaceted relationship between knowledge and power. Without the benefit of dialogue and understanding of the partiality of their own beliefs, they are cut off from any understanding of the effects their pedagogies have on students. In effect, their infatuation with certainty and control serves to limit the possibilities inherent in their own voices and visions. In this case, dominant pedagogy serves not only to disable students, but teachers as well. In short, teachers need to take up a pedagogy that provides a more dialectical understanding of their own politics and values; they need to break down pedagogical boundaries that silence them in the name of methodological rigor or pedagogical abso-

lutes; more importantly, they need to develop a power-sensitive discourse that allows them to open up their interactions with the discourses of various Others so that their classrooms can engage rather than negate the multiple positions and experiences that allow teachers and students to speak in and with many complex and different voices.

What border pedagogy makes undeniable is the relational nature of one's own politics and personal investments. But at the same time, border pedagogy emphasizes the primacy of a politics in which teachers assert rather than retreat from the pedagogies they utilize in dealing with the various differences represented by the students who come into their classes. For example, it is not enough for teachers merely to affirm uncritically their students' histories, experiences, and stories. To take student voices at face value is to run the risk of idealizing and romanticizing them. It is equally important for teachers to help students find a language for critically examining the historically and socially constructed forms by which they live. Such a process involves more than allowing students to speak from their own histories and social formations; it also raises questions about how teachers use power to cross over borders that are culturally strange and alien to them.

At issue here is not a patronizing notion of understanding the Other, but a sense of how the self is implicated in the construction of Otherness, how exercising critical attention to such a relationship might allow educators to move out of the center of the dominant culture to its margins in order to analyze critically the political, social, and cultural lineaments of their own values and voices as viewed from different ideological and cultural spaces. It is important for teachers to understand both how they wield power and authority and how particular forms of authority are sedimented in the construction of their own needs along with the limited subject-positions offered them in schools. Border pedagogy is not about engaging just the positionality of our students but the nature of our own identities as they have and are emerging within and between various circuits of power. If students are going to learn how to take risks, to develop a healthy skepticism toward all master narratives, to recognize the power relations that offer them the opportunity to speak in particular ways, and to be willing to confront critically their role as critical citizens who can

animate a democratic culture, they need to see such behavior demonstrated in the social practices and subject-positions that teachers live out and not merely propose.

If an anti-racist pedagogy is to have any meaning as a force for creating a democratic society, teachers and students must be given the opportunity to put into effect what they learn outside of the school. In other words, they must be given the opportunity to engage in anti-racist struggles in their effort to link schooling to real life, ethical discourse to political action, and classroom relations to a broader notion of cultural politics. The school curriculum should make anti-racist pedagogies central to the task of educating students to animate a wider and more critically engaged public culture; it should not merely allow them to take risks but also to push against the boundaries of an oppressive social order. Such projects can be used to address the relevance of the school curriculum and its role as a significant public force for linking learning and social justice to the daily institutional and cultural traditions of society and reshaping them in the process. All schools should have teachers and students participate in anti-racist curricula that in some way link up with projects in the wider society. This approach redefines not only teacher authority and student responsibility, but places the school as a major force in the struggle for social, economic, and cultural justice. In this case, a post-colonial pedagogy points to challenging not only the oppressive boundaries of racism, but all of those barriers that undermine and subvert the construction of a democratic society.

In short, border pedagogy is grounded in a politics of difference that moves beyond the colonizing discourse of the "common culture" that is so central to conservative discourses; at the same time, it rejects the appeal to a facile pluralism that is at the heart of liberal approaches to multiculturalism. Neither approach engages how the legacy of colonialism is produced and rewritten in the texts, institutions, and social practices that contextualize relations between and within the margins of American society. A border pedagogy formed in post-colonial ruptures and democratic possibilities must rethink the relationship between power and culture. This suggests making the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical. This means that cultural workers and educators need to work to provide the condi-

tions for students and others to develop the knowledge and skills that enable them as collective agents to recognize not only their own historical locations and subject-positions, but also to shape history within rather than outside of a political imaginary in which differences are both affirmed and transformed as part of a broader struggle for a radical, cultural democracy.

Notes

1. This section draws on a number of ideas in Giroux (1991).

2. In both cases, right-wing critics ignored the contexts of the photographs in question and selectively read them as an attack on the issues of moral decency and Christianity. Serrano's photograph is especially relevant here since it was accompanied by a text in which he points out that the photo represents a critique of evangelical media ministers who debase (piss on) the figure of Christ through the processes of commodification and sensationalism. In effect, Serrano's work celebrated rather than debased Christianity. Serrano's text was generally ignored by the major mass media.

3. For two excellent commentaries on this issue, see Wallis and Mattick.

4. Of course the most prominent group that has taken up this position is the National Association of Scholars, bankrolled by corporate foundations such as Coors, Mobil, Smith-Richardson, Earhart, and Scaife and Olin. For an analysis which historically contextualizes the various groups that set the ideological and political groundwork for the emergence of the NAS, see Diamond and Soley. Some of the most public spokespersons for this position include Bloom, Hirsch, and Ravitch.

5. The outright lies, distortions, and misrepresentations produced by conservatives such as D'Souza, the National Association of Scholars, and other George Will "wannabees" have been well documented. For instance, see Beers's account of the alleged disruption by left-wing students at the State University of New York at Binghamton on 14 March 1991 (35, 64). Furthermore, the conservative claim that 1960s radicals have taken over university faculty is a rather egregious overstatement considering that a "recent poll of 35,478 professors at 392 institutions nationwide, conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA" indicated that only "4.9 percent of all college instructors rate themselves 'far left,' while the vast majority, 94.8 percent, call themselves 'liberal,' (38.8 percent), 'moderate' (40.2 percent), or 'conservative' (17.8 percent)" (Duster 63). Conservative academic journals, such as the *Partisan Review*, have attempted to interrogate these issues concerning the canon, radical social theory, etc., with a bit more care, but the endless claims to objectivity, timeless truths, and universal standards invoked in the defense of conservative positions are not only ideological but politically self-serving. See especially the special issue of the *Partisan Review* (1991) on the changing culture of the university.

6. Outside of the arts community, the Left has not responded with the degree of urgency that is warranted to the attacks on multiculturalism waged by the Right. Some exceptions include Jay, Mohanty, Giroux and Trend, Aronowitz

and Giroux, Giroux, Erickson, Hancock, and Martínez. For an exceptional text that addresses the relationship between multiculturalism and the politics of representation, see Lippard.

7. In his own attack on multiculturalism, Roger Kimball cites and elaborates Ravitch's notion of common culture as a basis for dismissing any criticism of Western culture. He is worth quoting at length:

> Implicit in the politicizing mandate of multiculturalism is an attack on the idea of common culture, the idea that, despite our many differences, we hold in common an intellectual, artistic, and moral legacy, descending largely from the Greeks and the Bible, supplemented and modified over centuries by innumerable contributions from diverse hands and peoples. It is this legacy that has given us our science, our political institutions, and the monuments of artistic and cultural achievement that define us as a civilization. Indeed, it is this legacy, insofar as we live up to it, that preserves us from chaos and barbarism. And it is precisely this legacy that the multiculturalist wishes to dispense with. ("Postscript" 6)

8. For examples of the liberal approach to multiculturalism in education, see Jeffcoate; Glazer and Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot* and *Ethnicity*; Banks; and Treuba. For a radical critique of conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism, see Trend; McCarthy, esp. ch. 3; Sleeter; Jon Young; Simonson and Walker; Wallace, esp. chs. 21 and 22; and Sivandan, esp. chs. 3–5.

9. For an elaboration of this position, see Spivak, "The Making of Americans," and West, "Minority Discourse."

10. On the radical imperative to engage whiteness as a central racial category in the construction of moral power and political/cultural domination, see Dyer, West ("New Cultural Politics" 105), and Ferguson.

11. The chief proponent of this position is Graff. As Bruce Henricksen points out, Graff does not sufficiently "contextualize his model as a class and power-allocating activity"; nor does he move beyond the relativism of a dialogic model in which there is "no firm ground, nothing to believe in but the conversation itself" (31, 35).

12. The literature on anti-colonialism and post-colonialism is far too vast to cite here, but it would include some of the following: Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, Nkrumah; Memmi; Freire; Ngugi Wa Thiong'O; JanMohamed, "The Economy of Manichean Allegory"; Carew; Said; Guha and Spivak; Clifford; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin; Adams; Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic*; Adam and Tiffin; Torgovnick; and Robert Young.

13. For an excellent discussion of these issues as they specifically relate to post-colonial theory, see Parry; JanMohamed, *Manichean Aesthetics*; and Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic*. For a particularly revealing demonstration of how polarizing binarisms can undermine a text that calls for openness, partiality, and multiple perspectives, see Lather, esp. 41–49. For an example of how the legacy of colonialism has influenced the ways in which North American scholars treat the work of Paulo Freire, see Giroux, "Paulo Freire."

14. This theme is developed in Anzaldúa; Rosaldo; and JanMohamed, "Worldliness."

15. I have taken up this issue in *Schooling*, esp. chs. 2 and 3; also see two excellent pieces on authority and pedagogy by Bizzell, "Classroom" and

"Power." For an insightful analysis of the dialectics of authority and its impor-
tance to feminist and radical social practice, see Jones.

16. For thorough analyses of the discourse of cultural politics and its relation-
ship to various circuits of power, see Johnson and Grossberg.

17. These issues are taken up in Belsey; Bennett; and Aronowitz and Giroux.

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