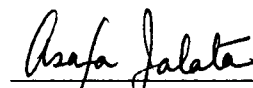


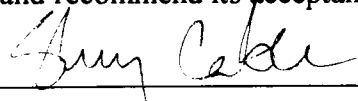
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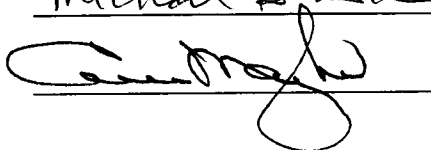


Asafa Jalata, Major Professor

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and recommend its acceptance:



 for John Gaventa



Accepted for the Council:



MEDIATED INEQUALITY:

**THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTAL, BUSINESS,
AND SCIENTIFIC ELITES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION**

**A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**Wanda Rushing Edwards
August 1998**

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Benjamin and William Edwards.

Also, it is dedicated to the memory of Ann O. White, an independent Southern woman.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank many people for supporting me in my graduate studies. At the University of Tennessee, Asafa Jalata's encouragement and suggestions have contributed a great deal to this project. He and other members of my committee, including Sherry Cable, John Gaventa, and Anne Mayhew helped me fulfill rigorous demands. As an unofficial committee member, Donald Hastings gave encouragement and support. I also thank the faculty and graduate students in the Department of Sociology for making the last four years memorable ones. At the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, many members of the Sociology Department encouraged me in this effort. I especially want to thank Julie Brown, David Mitchell, and William Markham.

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ABSTRACT

This study presents an historical sociological analysis of public education policy in three periods of United States history to show that patterns of educational inequality persist despite the expansion of mass public schooling and the recurrence of reform. It investigates the South, the last region of the United States to institutionalize public education. The specific focus of this study is North Carolina. This research explains how governmental, business, and scientific elites negotiate education settlements that help generate different race, class, gender, and regional outcomes.

PREFACE

This research places the analysis of public education in the context of the historical world system. It examines public policy in three historical periods -- the beginning of the twentieth century, when the US began its ascent in the world system; mid-century, when the US emerged from World War II as a hegemonic power in the world system; and the end of the twentieth century, when the US faces increased competition for hegemonic status in the world system. In each period, changes in the world system, and changes in the US position in the system, affect changes in the institution of education.

Chapter I -- Introduction -- provides an overview of the research problem. First, it explains the theoretical and methodological issues that guide this historical sociological analysis of 20th century public education: These issues include: the world-systems perspective, the sociological imagination, and Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Then, it lists 15 key propositions to clarify the relations between education and wider social structures in the context of the historical world-system.

Chapter II -- Education Reform and Inequality -- discusses the role of education in the historical world-system. It explains how education becomes the target of reform in crisis periods. It examines the role of education in a democratic society, and the connection between education reform and social inequality.

Chapter III -- Race and Inequality -- looks at the ideology of white supremacy and how it affects education reform. African Americans played a significant role in

establishing public education in the South at the end of the 19th century. But Southern elites and their philanthropic allies institutionalized an inherently unequal system.

Chapter IV -- Race, Reform, and Inequality -- reexamines *Brown v. Board of Education* in the context of the Cold War and international development. It shows how elites in Washington, DC and Raleigh, NC responded to international criticism of segregation and racial justice.

Chapter V -- Gender and Inequality -- focuses on the consequences of ideological domination and gender inequality. It demonstrates how ideologies of race, gender, and class affect educational access, content, and outcomes for women, especially Southern women.

Chapter VI -- Class and Inequality -- shows how education reforms expand access but limit mobility and deny equal opportunity. The ideology of equality of opportunity masks actual class biases affecting the distribution of knowledge, skills, and credentials required for access to professional, managerial, and technical occupations.

Chapter VII -- Conclusion -- reviews the study and the 15 key propositions. It discusses the role of education in a democratic society and the importance of studying education reform within an historical context.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The United States affirms formal educational knowledge as the preferred path to attain economic prosperity, social progress, and political stability. Developing nations and regions which aspire to achieve the western ideal of progress in pursuit of modernization model their school systems and curricula after those of the developed world. A century ago, efforts to cultivate educational knowledge and economic development to attain a progressive ideal intensified in the United States' most underdeveloped region, the South. In 1900 all Southern states lacked public school systems; but thirty years later, every Southern state had adopted the organizational model established a century before in New England (Maxcy 1981, 48-53). Regional reformers anticipated that industrialization combined with consolidated school districts, longer school terms, more rigorous teacher requirements, and standardized curricula modeled after Northern standards would uplift the South and extend the benefits of national prosperity to Southerners. Their expectations were shared by reformers throughout the developing world who also hoped to attain the benefits of education and economic development.

This study presents an historical sociological analysis of public education policy in three periods of United States history to show that patterns of educational inequality persist despite the expansion of mass public schooling and the recurrence of reform. It investigates the South, an underdeveloped region within a developed country (Amin 1974, 27), the last region of the United States to institutionalize public education. The specific

focus of this study is North Carolina. Political scientist V. O. Key regarded North Carolina as a distinctive Southern state in the late 1940s: "Many see in North Carolina a closer approximation to national norms, or national expectations of performance, than they find elsewhere in the south. In any competition for national judgment they deem the state far more 'presentable' than its Southern neighbors. It enjoys a reputation for progressive outlook and action in many phases of life, especially industrial development, education, and race relations" (Key 1949, 205). More recent scholars challenge the state's progressive reputation (Billings 1979; Chafe 1980; Kousser 1980; Wood 1986; Carlton 1990) and reveal "continuing paradoxes" in North Carolina's economic, educational, and social reality (Schulman and Leiter 1991, 5). These paradoxes defy easy explanation; hence, they create an opportunity to test the explanatory capacity of the theoretical historical model constructed in this project.

Statement of the Problem

At the end of the twentieth century, many dreams of progress and prosperity have been deferred or denied despite utopian promises of industrialization and mass education (Benavot et al. 1991). US governmental officials and social reformers once praised public schools for producing progress and prosperity, but now they criticize them for generating economic failure. In 1983 and 1984, national commissions, business groups, and political groups issued and disseminated more than a dozen reports on the education "crisis." The most widely circulated reports, *A Nation At Risk* (1983), by the National Commission on Excellence in Education for the US Secretary of Education, and *Action for Excellence*

(1983), by the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Education Commission of the States, blamed public education for the nation's lagging competitiveness in global markets. Criticizing schools and workers for failing to meet the increasing demands of a global economy, business and governmental leaders campaigned to reform and to restructure public schools. Many official reports recommended restructuring public education, reducing equity funding, and financing private schools through tuition vouchers and tax credits. They ignored the profile of low-skill, low-wage jobs available to youth and failed to acknowledge the role of business in eliminating and exporting jobs and creating a contingent work force (Borman et al. 1994, 70). In most cases, participation in these reform-minded groups was limited to white, male, professionals. There was little or no involvement from African American business leaders, the National Association of Women Business Owners, the US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, children's advocacy groups, or citizen groups. Many "scientific" studies, such as *The Bell Curve* (1994), shifted the blame for failure from schools to students, especially low-income and minority students deemed unteachable and unemployable. These provocative publications exacerbated deeply rooted tensions and conflicts about race, class, gender, and regional inequality in public schooling.

In the 1980s, the rhetoric of education reform sounded much like the rhetoric of economic restructuring and down-sizing. In both cases, the blame for economic and education problems seemed to be focused on racial minorities, women, poor people, and even the South. Subsequently, many scholars took the underlying assumptions of official reports for granted and began to investigate them: poor schools produce poor workers

and cause national economic failures; poor and minority children perform badly on standardized tests because they lack innate intelligence; female students are innately disadvantaged in math and science; and the South has always been a social problem, Southerners resist public education and efforts to improve it.

This research does not accept taken-for-granted assumptions. Instead, it asks a different set of questions. What are the more complex and controversial macro-sociological issues in education reform? What is the role of governmental, business, and scientific elites in education reform? How do popular demands for education reform conflict with elite demands? How are “educational settlements” negotiated within the framework of federal, state, and local governments? How do class, race, gender, and region affect educational settlements? How do educational settlements affect the structure of inequality? How does the US struggle for survival in global competition affect education reform in other time periods, not just the 1980s? What is the role of education in a democratic society?

Theoretical and Methodological Issues

An awareness of the politics of education reform in the context of domestic and international crises creates an opportunity to reexamine the history of education reform using “a quality of mind” defined by C. Wright Mills as “the sociological imagination” (Mills 1959, 5) and the world-systems perspective. “The sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society” (Mills

1959, 6)¹. The world-systems perspective expands the sociological imagination because it grasps history and biography and the relations between the two, not only for European and North American people, but also for people of the Third World. The world-systems perspective is “an alternative theoretical formulation that transforms conventional sociology” (McKelvey 1991, 164), by taking seriously the insights of subjected groups (McKelvey 1991, 166). For Wallerstein, “the politics of this world-system involves the efforts of these multiple groups (whose existence is the result of a combination of self-definition and other-definition) in struggles over benefits” (Wallerstein 1988, 9). These struggles occur in core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral regions of the world economy. They occur in underdeveloped regions within developed nations, i.e., the American South (Amin 1974, 27).

The application of Mills’ sociological approach and the world-system perspective broadens our understanding of public education in the world system and the relation between education reform and inequalities of class, race, gender, and region. In addition, this research uses Gramsci’s theory of hegemony (Gramsci 1971), and black feminist thought to help stimulate “the rethinking of basic social science concepts” (Collins 1990, 222) and to question utopian assumptions about education reform in the United States, the South, and in North Carolina. Together, these perspectives help “make” issues for analysis of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of education.

¹ Mills named many sociologists whose work represents this “quality of mind”: Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte, Émile Durkheim, Karl Mannheim, Karl Marx, Thorstein Veblen, Joseph Schumpeter, and Max Weber.

This research addresses three major issues. First, it examines public education and economic development from the perspective of the historical world-system (Wallerstein 1983) which relates the South's economic and educational differences to past and present patterns of global economic processes (Wallerstein 1979; Wallerstein 1988; Mann 1987). This approach is useful for analyzing current debates about education reform and economic development not only in North Carolina, the South, and the United States, but also in the world-system. Recent studies suggest that much of the world's educational content is "selected, organized, and transmitted by social forces" at the global level, yet little is known about the "emergent world cultural system" (Benavot et al. 1991, 85).

Second, this research analyzes the structure of inequalities of class, race, and gender that pervades education and the broader society in each of these historical periods. Many studies treat race and gender as appendages to class, instead of separate analytical categories, and fail to construct adequate explanations of inequality (McCarthy and Apple 1988). These distinctive, yet interlocking, systems are part of one overarching structure of inequality (Collins 1990, 222). Education is not a neutral institution, but one that functions in the context of political, cultural, and social inequalities and plays a role in maintaining and legitimating those inequalities. Schools mirror social inequality that exists within the broader society (Bowles and Gintis 1976) and the world-system.

Third, this project examines the role of national, state, and local elites in public education. In the United States, elites hold important institutional positions, take part in small groups of decision-makers, and exercise considerable power in "public" arenas (Domhoff 1983; Mills 1956). In the words of C. Wright Mills, "no one...can be truly

powerful unless he has access to the command of major institutions, for it is over these institutional means of power that the truly powerful are, in the first instance, powerful” (Mills 1956, 9). “To be celebrated, to be wealthy, to have power, requires access to major institutions, for the institutional positions men occupy determine in large part their chances to have and to hold these valued experiences” (Mills 1956, 9). Those who have access to the institutional means of power take an interest in shaping policies that limit or expand the access that others have to education and to positions of power (Jalata 1996, 96).

Schools, families, and churches -- the institutions of civil society -- are “intertwined” (Gramsci 1971, 52) with political society, i.e., the state. State political structures organize the use of coercion or force, the institutions of civil society produce consensus or ideological domination. Dominant interests rely on the coercion of the state as well as the consensus within civil society to maintain social control and to establish hegemony. In the Gramscian sense, hegemony is a social relation “in which one class or fraction of a class exercises leadership over other classes and strata by gaining their *active consent*” (Robinson 1996, 21). “Hegemony mediates relations between dominant and subordinate groups, and *also* relations among dominant groups” (Robinson 1996, 22). For subordinate groups, hegemony involves the internalization of the values, the codes of conduct, and the worldview of the dominant class (Gramsci 1971, 138). Among elites, hegemony binds together a “bloc” of diverse, competitive, and sometimes conflicting groups. It does not preclude conflict. Contradictions or conflicts can be resolved through the use of force or “compromise” (Gramsci 1971, 167). “Force can be employed against enemies, but not against a part of one’s own side which one wishes rapidly to assimilate,

and whose 'good will' and enthusiasm one needs" (Gramsci 1971, 168). In periods of change, new "historical blocs" can be created through the processes of consensus and compromise (Gramsci 1971, 167).

Schools play a vital role in creating the consensus needed to govern a divided society. Public education policy decisions, or settlements, are forged in a contested political arena. These settlements prove to be "highly unstable and deeply contradictory arrangements" which periodically develop into crises (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981, 32). The resolution of these crises establishes the groundwork for future political alliances and policy choices.

History shows that "educational reforms are intrinsically political in origin" (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 8), but the politics of reform is not conducted on a level playing field. Governmental, business, and scientific elites "gained a disproportionate authority over educational reform, especially during the first half of the twentieth century" (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 8). They continue to exercise great power, notwithstanding ideological divisions among elites, and despite the entry of many new groups in the politics of education in the second half of the 20th century. In addition, reform-minded US policy elites "stressed a struggle for national survival in international competition -- with the Germans (1890s), Soviets (1950s), and Japanese (1980s)" (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 44). Significantly, these periods of international crises also correspond to periods of domestic crises -- assimilating immigrants and Southerners (black and white) into an industrializing society (1890s), ending *de jure* segregation and expanding civil rights (1950s), and

defining educational and occupational goals for an increasingly diverse society in the midst of global economic restructuring (1980s).

Historically, US crises in public policy, particularly education policy, seem more severe in the South², the region most typically defined as being at odds with mainstream American values and behavior, i.e., a social problem (Griffith and Doyle 1995). The South has been seen as a social problem in all three periods examined in this study -- early, mid, and late 20th century. At the beginning of the 20th century, "the US federal state...pursued an economic and political policy geared to transforming the role of the United States in the world-economy" (Wallerstein 1988, 11). US policy elites, "people who managed the economy, who had privileged access to the media and to political officials, who controlled foundations, who were educational leaders ... and who redesigned and led organizations of many kinds," (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 8) reorganized public education according to their vision of "scientific management" to promote business efficiency. At that time, the South's lack of state systems of public schooling, its surplus of illiterate white and black inhabitants, and its political instability impeded regional "progress" and national efficiency, but the "federal state was not particularly anxious to change too much in how the South operated locally...(Wallerstein 1988, 11). Policy elites

² This study defines the South as the 11 states of the Confederacy and Kentucky (McKinney and Bourque 1971, 400), and notes exceptions in the text. The Confederate States include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia. Himes defines the "Old South" as the region sharing a cultural tradition that includes the 11 states of the Confederacy, minus Texas, and Kentucky (Himes 1991, xi). Since World War II, especially since 1960, migration from other states to the South has created demographic as well as cultural change, particularly in Virginia, Texas, and Florida. An alternate definition of the South, the Census South, places 17 states in 3 subregions. The South Atlantic region includes Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The East South Central region includes Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The West South Central region includes Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma (Himes 1991, xi).

outside the South formed alliances with Southern leaders to organize public schooling according to the Northeastern model. Subsequently, deficiencies in Southern education were attributed to the cultural and economic “backwardness” of the region.

In the second period, the post-World War II era, the United States “moved into its position as unquestioning world hegemonic power....It was no longer in the interest of the dominant political forces of the US federal state to have a ‘backward’ geographical zone, just as it was no longer in its interest to have the denial of political rights to minorities such as the blacks” (Wallerstein 1988, 11). The United States worked to expand its political and economic influence in the new world order, but found it increasingly difficult to defend white supremacy at home (Lyman 1991, 233), especially when American apartheid received international condemnation. Critics at home and abroad targeted the South, “chief custodian to the nation’s primal flaw of racial caste,” for reform (Graham 1995, 146). Following the US Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, and Southern resistance to desegregation, US leaders convinced foreign observers that problematic race relations were regional, not national. Legally ending US sanctioned support of segregation at the national level helped redefine race relations as a regional problem which persuaded developing nations to accept the legitimacy of US political and economic hegemony. Once again, the South was perceived as being at odds with mainstream American values and behavior.

In the third period, at the end of the 20th century, the United States “is entering its posthegemonic phase” (Wallerstein 1988, 12). Faced with increased competition for hegemonic status in the world-system and economic restructuring, the United States

manifests various internal struggles. The institutions of civil society -- families, churches, and schools--are under attack. Official reports blame US schools for the national "competitiveness" crisis and indicate that Southern schools are the least competitive schools in the nation, citing low college entrance exams and standardized test scores. High school drop-out rates in the South are at least one and one-half times the rates of the Northeast and the Midwest, and the South is the only region in the nation where the dropout rate for white students exceeds the national dropout rate for whites (NCES 1997). The National Center for Educational Statistics concludes that there are many challenges to lowering the US dropout rate, particularly race and income, but the nation's greatest challenge to lowering the white dropout rate is in the South.

Historical sociological analysis of these issues in these three periods offers a means to critique past, present, and future public education reform efforts in a global context. It allows us to step beyond the narrow parameters of education reform established by governmental and business policy elites, and "scientific" experts such as Herrnstein and Murray (1994), to open alternative areas of historical sociological inquiry for analyzing education reform. Historical sociological inquiry, established by Marx and Weber, celebrated by C. Wright Mills, and redefined by Immanuel Wallerstein, allows scholars to explore past and present institutional relations, and to critique social science. Gerald Grace explains the advantages of historical sociological inquiry for studies of education:

One of the most promising developments in contemporary sociology of education has been the re-discovery of the heuristic power of historically located inquiry. Such inquiry, the virtues of which were well known to the founding fathers of sociology and which were proclaimed in a later period by writers such as C. Wright Mills, has many advantages. It guards against... an unfortunate tendency towards a disembodied structuralism on the one hand or an unrelated world of consciousness on the other. More positively it has the advantage of sensitizing us to the principles and procedures which have been dominant in the past so that we are alert to the mode of their reproduction, reconstitution or change. It has the advantage also of concretely exemplifying and making visible the relations between educational structures and processes and wider structures of power, economy and control in particular periods of social change. Such exemplification and such making visible can provide us with suggestive hypotheses and useful models in our attempts to clarify the present form of those relations (Grace 1985, 4).

Key Propositions

The following 15 key propositions help clarify the role of elites in education reform and the relations between education and the wider social structure in the context of the historical world-system.

Proposition 1. *The position of the US in the world-system, and the position of the South in the world-system, affects education policy considerations.*

Proposition 2. *Alliances between elites in the Northeastern United States and elites in the South profoundly affect education policy.*

Proposition 3. *Among elites, hegemony binds together a "bloc" of diverse, competitive, and sometimes conflicting groups. Contradictions can be resolved and new "blocs" can be created through compromise and consensus.*

Proposition 4. *Public schools, along with families and churches, operate as agents of social control. Dominant groups use coercive and consensual means to maintain social control and to renegotiate educational settlements.*

Proposition 5. *Popular demands for education reform sometimes bridge race, class, and gender boundaries. These reform efforts help change policy, but may fail to make education more inclusive and tend to increase elite cohesion.*

Proposition 6. *Patterns of educational inequality occur throughout the 20th century. Schools play an important role in legitimating the structure of inequality which remains intact despite decades of reform.*

Proposition 7. *Ideological consensus is a mechanism for mediating inequality in public education.*

Proposition 8. *Discourse about education reform tends to stress the purpose of public education as employment, equity, or empowerment, not social justice.*

Proposition 9. *The rhetoric of education reform focuses on expansion and universal access which obscures the use of mechanisms to limit access and exclude people from educational opportunity. It also diverts attention from social, economic, and political inequalities.*

Proposition 10. *The decentralized "federalist" state structure in the United States mediates inequality. Education reform battles shift among nation, state, and local governments. These shifts often support the status quo and delay substantive reform.*

Proposition 11. *The rhetoric of "local control" obscures the role of elites at all levels of government and can be confused with the idea of popular democracy.*

Proposition 12. *The tax structure mediates inequality. Long used by governments to assist the process of accumulation of capital in favor of some groups more than others, the tax structure also operates to assist some groups more than others in the process of accumulating educational credentials.*

Proposition 13. *Knowledge is power. Fiske reminds us that "knowledge is never neutral, it never exists in an empiricist, objective relationship to the real. Knowledge is power, and the circulation of knowledge is part of the social distribution of power" (Fiske 1989, 149). All societies value knowledge and establish political systems to manage and control its production. In capitalism, knowledge, much like land and capital, is a source of wealth and power (Bell 1974, 20).*

Proposition 14. *Ideologies of race, class, and gender help legitimate the links between knowledge and power.*

Proposition 15. *Knowledge of the educational marketplace, or lack of knowledge, is a mechanism for mediating inequality.*

Sources

Much of the data for this investigation comes from secondary data sources, written by Southern historians, political scientists, historians of education, and sociologists.

Primary sources include newspapers and periodicals: the *Charlotte Observer*, the *Raleigh News and Observer*, the *Greensboro News and Record*, *Triad Business News*, *North Carolina Business*, *The Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, *Education Week*. It includes recent student data published by the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, the North Carolina Community College System, and the National Center for Education Statistics. The North Carolina Attorney General's Office provided copies of legal briefs filed in the *Leandro* lawsuit. Jackson Library Special Collections at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro provided early 20th century vocational education texts. The University of Tennessee provided access to the Proceedings of the Capon Springs Conferences on Education in the South. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill archives furnished Reports from the Committee on the Status of Women.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION REFORM AND INEQUALITY

Most public discourse addresses the role of schools in creating a prosperous, just, and democratic society (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 39), but reformers express different views of education's role as a means to attain employment, equity, or empowerment. Reformers who emphasize employment promote education to create human capital and to train productive workers. In the 1980s, the Reagan administration launched a wave of school reform based on conservative understandings of the competitive demands of capitalism. For more than a decade, the administration's definition of a crisis, which incorporated the themes of international competition, capital accumulation, standards, efficiency, and productivity dominated public discourse. These reforms linked competition and efficiency in the marketplace to competitive assessment in schools. Reformers endorsed standardization and testing, demanding that schools stringently evaluate students on their so-called ability to be productive and teach them accordingly. These procedures justified inequalities in expectations and resources invested in students in the name of excellence. Proponents of "excellence" abandon any notion of improving educational outcomes for all children, advocate developing efficient schools that compete for the "best" students, and discredit equity as impractical and inefficient (Bastian et al. 1986).

Reformers who stress equity view education as the means to expand economic, social and political opportunities for women, minorities and the disadvantaged. Protesting

that official reports, such as *A Nation At Risk*, have misconstrued the crisis, they see the education crisis as a failure to provide decent schools and adequate skills for low-income and minority students, and a failure to foster critical reasoning and citizenship skills among all students (Bastian et al. 1986, 7; Apple 1990, 157). Proponents of equity underscore the importance of equitable school finances across school district boundaries, and equal opportunities across gender, class, and racial boundaries (Kozol 1991; AAUW 1992). They want schools to teach skills that create human capital, to generate employment possibilities for all citizens, and to prepare all children for a life of work and worth. In other words, excellence cannot be attained without equity (Cookson 1994).

Reformers who stress empowerment, or social justice, view education as a means to develop capacities for praxis, i.e., social practice. Paulo Freire (1985) defines praxis as a combination of reflection and action designed to transform the world. Social practices include earning a living, developing a self-affirming identity, and attaining social power. The Australian Schools Commission goal statement for compensatory education sums up the empowerment perspective: "To ensure that students have systematic access to programs which will equip them with economic and political understanding so that they can act individually or together to improve their circumstances" (Connell 1994, 142).

The empowerment perspective openly challenges the divisive "excellence" position on the need for more competitive assessment in schools as a means to increase economic productivity. For Giroux and McLaren (1989), the term excellence is a code word for legitimating the interests and values of the privileged. Schools operating under the banner of excellence will multiply injustice and inequality. Connell agrees: "Policies to increase

competitive pressures within the school system ... have a transparent class meaning, reinforcing the advantages of the privileged and confirming the exclusion of the poor..."(Connell 1994, 136). Despite the salience of equity for empowerment, proponents of equity usually stop short of questioning assumptions about race, class, and gender that dominate school curricula and organizations. Equity demands for expanded opportunities usually occur along safe lines, those that are achievable within the existing social framework (Stromquist 1995, 453). Most proponents of equity emphasize expanding access to education as a means of making a greater contribution to the economy and the family as presently constructed. From the empowerment perspective, access is only part of the story. It asks questions about whose knowledge is important and who benefits from the organization and production of this knowledge. Connell refers to the organization of school knowledge as the hegemonic curriculum:

Distributing equal amounts of the hegemonic curriculum to girls and boys, to poor children and rich children, to Black children and White children, to immigrants and native-born, to indigenous people and their colonizers, does not do the same thing for them -- or to them. In education, the "how much" and the "who" cannot be separated from the "what."

Curriculum empowers and disempowers, authorizes and de-authorizes, recognizes and mis-recognizes different social groups and their knowledge and identities. For instance, curriculum developed from academic institutions controlled by men has, in a variety of ways, authorized the practices and experiences of men and marginalized those of women. Curriculum defined by representatives of a dominant ethnic group is liable to exclude or de-authorize the knowledge and experience of dominated groups, or to incorporate them on terms that suit the dominant group. Curricular justice concerns the organization of knowledge, and through it, the justice of the social relations being produced through education (Connell 1994, 140-141).

Mass Education and Inequality in the Historical World-System

The expansion of mass education during the last two centuries corresponds to a period of acceleration and intensification of capitalism in the world-system. Schools play a dual role in the expanding world-system. On one level, schools impart technical and social skills as well as the appropriate work ethic to young people. At another level, schools help defuse and depoliticize the potentially explosive class, race, and gender conflicts that may emerge with the intensification of the capitalist production process. In so doing, they neutralize political opposition to the increasing dominance of large scale commercial and industrial interests (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 11). The second role becomes especially important during periods of economic and political crises, but seldom becomes a subject of public discourse.

Structural changes increase pressures to expand access to public education, partly because citizens in a democratic society tend to express "faith in the redemptive qualities of the educational system and its capacities to influence positive changes in the job market and in the society" (McCarthy 1993, 292). When doubts arise about general economic and social well-being, parents as well as public officials question the education system and its ability to meet changing needs. When education is publicly defined as the institutional capacity to train skilled workers, and to make a contribution to the economy as presently constructed, the structure of education is more likely to become the target of reform efforts than the structure of the economy, i.e., its capacity to create jobs and a living wage for workers. Therefore, in periods of economic crisis, it is in the interest of capital to focus public attention on education reform, not economic reform.

Ideally, modern systems of mass education purport to deliver a universal, standardized, rationalized, and democratic education (Boli, Ramirez, and Meyer 1985). Practically, these goals are not accomplished. Periodically, education reformers propose to remedy problems within the system to achieve these goals. Despite their reform efforts, or perhaps because of them, systems of mass education do not eliminate inequalities of race, class, gender, or region. Social inequalities persist in education, as well as in the world-system. Ideological systems help legitimate these inequalities.

Wallerstein (1991) argues that the perpetuation of racist, sexist, and classist ideologies, not their elimination, works to maximize the accumulation of capital. Racism is needed to "ethnicize" incorporated parts of the labor force at low wages, to justify inequalities, and to socialize groups into their own role in the economy (Wallerstein 1983, 79); moreover, it is used to confer status and privilege on poor whites (Roediger 1991, 13). Sexism first relegated women to the realm of non-reproductive, or non-paid labor, intensifying their actual labor and denying them privileges conferred by wage labor. Later, sexism helped define a gendered division of labor for segmented labor markets (Wallerstein 1983, 103). Also, sexism provides a source of status and privilege for males.

Racism and sexism interact with class divisions to produce two immediate benefits for capital accumulation. First, they succeed in lowering the cost of labor and increasing surplus extraction beyond what can be obtained by the class structure alone. Second, racism and sexism divert attention from class divisions and thereby help maintain social control. Workers who have a heightened awareness of race and gender differences and are less likely to organize on the basis of class differences to demand increased wages or

benefits. It is no coincidence that the South has the lowest rate of unionization in the United States, the largest percentage of African Americans, the highest percentage of women in the workforce, the lowest manufacturing wage, and the lowest educational attainment.

Mass Education in the South: Inequality and Regional Underdevelopment

The South was the last region in the United States to implement systems of public education at the end of the 19th century. In 1890, Southern states reported the highest illiteracy rates and the lowest educational attainment levels in the United States. A century later, Southern states appear at the bottom of state rankings on college entrance exams and per pupil expenditures for education. This regional divergence persists despite decades of philanthropic support, state and regional reform campaigns, and federal intervention. Today, by most economic and educational measures, the South retains its position as the most disadvantaged region in the United States. At the close of the 20th century, dreams of regional convergence between the South and the rest of the nation have not been fully realized, despite recent “drumbeating” for the “Sunbelt” (Carlton 1995, 38).

Some scholars treat the South as the product of a distinctive regional economy, but the world-system perspective relates the South’s economic and educational differences to past and present patterns of global economic processes (Wallerstein 1979, 221; Mann 1987; Cobb 1988, 68). The antebellum South, like many “plantation” zones of the capitalist world-economy (Wallerstein 1988, 10), produced cotton for Europe, but did not

raise foodstuffs to meet its own needs (King 1980, 20). The continuation of slavery in the region, long after its “selective” abolition in the world-system (Wallerstein 1979, 216), and the exploitative and paternalistic sharecropping and tenancy labor systems which replaced slavery, provided cheap cotton for world markets prior to the mechanization of agriculture and other mid-20th century social changes. By then, the region’s status as “a low-wage region in a high-wage country” (Wright 1986, 12) was well-established. Agricultural elites, and many of the industrialists who succeeded them in decision-making roles, perceived little benefit to investing in public education for elementary and secondary students (Wright 1986, 79). Since World War II, the “de facto industrial policies” of Southern state and local governments have lured industry through the use of tax-exempt industrial revenue bonds, industrial site development, and tax abatements (Lyson 1989, 4-6). Efforts to “sell” the South’s abundant labor and rich natural resources to outside investors compromise the region’s ability to educate its citizens (Cobb 1993; Carlton 1990). It yields a large number of low-wage, labor-intensive jobs in “footloose” industries that are likely to leave the South, and the United States, in search of still cheaper labor. Through this process, the industrial tax base in many Southern communities generates low tax revenues that cripple their ability to support public education. Because of the South’s position as an underdeveloped region within the borders of a developed nation, it is an interesting site to examine the juxtaposition of economic and educational institutions within the framework of the world-system.

The world-system perspective challenges the mainstream “Northeasternization” model of educational theorizing which ignores the South or treats it as an exception

(Richardson 1984). This perspective also challenges one of the assumptions underlying the more historically specific and regionally informed work of Walters and James (1992) whose study of the early 20th century South connects a lack of educational opportunity in the region to the persistence of "plantation" values, in contrast to greater educational opportunity in the North associated with the dominance of "business" values.

The world-system perspective begins with the premise that business values influence the development of social institutions in both regions, an assumption shared by a number of scholars (Wright 1986; Cobb 1984, 1993). Historian C. Vann Woodward portrays turn-of-the-century New South leaders as "hard-nosed entrepreneurs bent on large profits" (Woodward 1986, 65). Malizia goes so far as to describe the South as "the most business-oriented region in the Western Hemisphere possibly rivaled only by Brazil and Chile" (Malizia 1978, 87). In the late 19th century, Southern industrialists and political leaders hoped to change their region's disadvantaged status in comparison to the rest of the nation by embracing business values in a manner not unlike leaders of developing nations in South America, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. Those who made decisions to build factories and schools to secure a place in the modern industrial order after the Civil War tried not to disrupt the antebellum social order. From the outset, leaders of the New South were mindful of existing race, class, and gender relations in creating new economic and educational institutions.

Late 19th century supporters of industrial development and public education recognized the value of traditional ideologies on race, class, gender, and religion. Significantly, the ideological foundations of the Old South that supported paternalism,

male dominance, and white supremacy formed the basis for an “organic ideology,” or a unified ideological system in the New South, based on the compatibility of these traditional ideologies with industrial capitalism’s hierarchical division of labor (Gramsci 1971). The ideological system enabled Southern leaders to establish political control, to pursue economic development, and to implement public education. Ideologies about race, class, and gender guided Southern development efforts in the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society and shaped emerging institutions of civil society, including education. In turn, these civil institutions helped maintain the ideological hegemony of New South political leaders by legitimating the emerging economic and educational opportunity structure at home and by increasing opportunities for alliances with groups and classes outside the South. Alliances between these state, national and global elites, fused with ideological consensus, succeeded in transforming the Old South and integrating New South regional institutions into the world system (Mouffe 1979, 188-192).

Selecting North Carolina as a Focal Point of the Study

The United States, unlike any other industrialized country, relies on state and local governments to finance and to regulate education. The Tenth Amendment of the US Constitution reserves the power of establishing education to the states (Karier 1986, 365). For the purposes of this study, it is necessary to examine policymaking at the state level within a Southern state. North Carolina meets all the criteria for this study, providing an excellent example of a Southern state often cited as an exemplar for state-directed

educational reform and economic development. Described as the “favorite state of Southern historians” (Kousser 1980, 171), North Carolina has attracted the interests of historians, political scientists, and other scholars who provide plentiful data sources for historically specific sociological analysis.

Political scientist V. O. Key asserts that in the antebellum period, North Carolina was “less dependent on plantation production and less imbued with its attitudes” than other Southern states (Key 1949, 207). “This allowed more political space for the indigenous growth of a modern industrial business class in nonplantation regions following World War II” (Tomaskovic-Devey and Roscigno 1996, 565). Beginning in 1900, the state emerged as a leader in the region’s development. Before and after the Civil War, the North Carolina elite included members with more diverse economic backgrounds than elites in most Southern states. Planters and a small but growing middle class consisting of merchants, industrialists, and professionals shared “a nascent entrepreneurial outlook,” especially those located in the center of the state, the Piedmont region (Bynum 1992, 8). In North Carolina, according to Escott:

What distinguished the gentry was wealth and position more than lineage, slaveholding, or landownership. North Carolina claimed relatively few genuine, old aristocratic families, and many middle-class people had risen into the elite. Similarly, wealth and certain attainments that went with it -- the gentry claimed superior education, character, and manners -- were more important than a particular form of wealth, such as a cotton plantation (Escott 1985, 4).

Members of the North Carolina gentry considered a small group of white merchants and professionals as middle class and viewed the rest -- about half the white citizens of the state -- as an unreliable lower class along with free blacks and slaves (Escott 1985, 7).

The members of North Carolina's relatively privileged class formed more diverse economic ties with capitalists outside the region. "After the end of the Civil War, Southerners, like developing countries many decades later, decided that they did not want to be only the suppliers of wood and raw materials to an industrial North. They wanted to have industry themselves" (Vogel and Larson 1985, 242). In the first half of the 20th century North Carolina showed a greater increase in manufacturing activity than any other state (Key 1949, 209-210). Many industrialists and merchants in the North Carolina Piedmont region dramatically increased their wealth and power during the 1890s. Washington Duke, a North Carolina tobacco farmer, founded the American Tobacco Company in Durham to manufacture cigarettes. Julian Carr, son of a Chapel Hill merchant, produced and marketed Bull Durham smoking tobacco (Ayers 1992, 105-106). Moses and Caesar Cone moved from Baltimore to build textile mills in Greensboro (Chafe 1980, 15). These men and other business, financial, and agricultural elites established enterprises that quickly rose to national and international prominence. For generations, these entrepreneurial families wielded significant political influence in the state and in the nation. At mid-century, Key described North Carolina's powerful state elite as an "economic oligarchy."

Industrialization has created a financial and business elite whose influence prevails in the state's political and economic life. An aggressive aristocracy of manufacturing and banking, centered around Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Durham, has had a tremendous stake in state policy and has not been remiss in protecting and advancing what it visualizes as its interests. Consequently a sympathetic respect for the problems of corporate capital and of large employers permeates the state's politics and government. For half a century an economic oligarchy has held sway (Key 1949, 211)

The state's "aggressive aristocracy of manufacturing and banking" could not have dominated state North Carolina politics and created policies sympathetic to the problems of corporate capital without the support of the local "county seat elite." At mid-century, another political scientist, Jasper Shannon identified the Southern county seat elite as the "banker-farmer-lawyer-doctor-governing-class" whose "fundamental ethic is pecuniary" (Shannon 1949, 42-65). Shannon remarks that the popular epitaph for these local elites is: "how much was he worth?" Typically, members of the county seat elite are more likely to perceive that their interests are compatible with those of all businessmen and antithetical to the interests of workers; consequently, they admire big business and defend anti-labor ideology. The local elites emphasize their skills in business and political affairs as indications of their superiority to poor whites and blacks in the local hierarchy. Early in the 20th century property ownership constituted not only measures of success, but also status symbols that differentiated local elites from their so-called inferiors (Roebuck and Hickson 1982, 68-69). Throughout the 20th century, educational attainment has become increasingly important to local elites as a means of status differentiation.

Local elites control significant political power through their domination of the election process, schools, and taxes. They dominate local boards of election, education, social services, and county commissions. Through their control of local newspapers, elites have been able to dominate local political discourse, often using newspapers to support the ideology of the dominant group. As local distributors of state political patronage, they supported Democratic party rule for most of the 20th century.

Education Reform and North Carolina Politics

Many North Carolina governors proposed economic development and educational reform in their campaigns for public office. Three Democratic governors, whose terms overlap with the three major periods of this study, stand out for their memorable appeals to education reform. They are Charles Brantley Aycock, elected to one four-year term in 1900; Luther Hodges, who acceded to office following the death of William Umstead in 1954 and was elected to one four-year-term in 1956; and Jim Hunt, elected to two consecutive terms in 1976 and 1980, and to two additional terms in 1992 and 1996.

Charles Brantley Aycock is remembered as the first Southern education governor (Woodward 1951, 405). "Aycock, in company with others, fought and won the battle for the general principle that the best investment a state can make is in the education of its children" (Key 1949, 208). Aycock and other New South leaders discussed investments in education and development in business terms, not only because of the prominence of businessmen in state government, but also because of their interest in recruiting business outside the state. Robert C. Ogden, a New York businessman, and John D. Rockefeller,

Jr., traveled by train to Winston-Salem, NC in 1901 to set in motion the Southern Education Movement. Aycock served on the state's central campaign committee and promoted "universal" education throughout the South (Grantham 1983, 246-250). In the 1950s, Governor Hodges, a former textile executive and self-described "businessman governor," played an instrumental role in connecting higher education to the state's economic development plans by locating the Research Triangle Park (RTP) between Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Durham -- the homes of the University of North Carolina, North Carolina State University, and Duke University. In his autobiography, Hodges describes the RTP as "the marriage of North Carolina's ideals for higher education and its hopes for material progress" (Hodges 1962, 203). Immediately after leaving the governor's office, Hodges served as Commerce Secretary in the Kennedy Administration where he influenced the administration's decision to locate the National Institute for Environmental Science in the RTP. IBM and other private corporations followed the federal institute (Luebke 1990, 72). Today the RTP ranks among the most successful research and development (R&D) centers in the world.

In the last decade of the 20th century, another education governor, Jim Hunt, now serves his fourth term as North Carolina's chief executive. Like Hodges and Aycock, Hunt emphasizes the importance of education and economic development. He, too, has powerful political allies. Hunt's former colleague, President Bill Clinton, another education governor from the South, occupies the White House. Erskine Bowles, a businessman from a powerful North Carolina family, serves as the President's Chief of Staff. Hunt chairs the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and met with

the President and a number of business elites at a 1996 Education Summit held in Palisades, NY (Mitchell 1996). Both North Carolina and its governor maintain a high political profile in public education matters, often bringing national attention to the state's successful Research Triangle Park and area universities. Hunt continues to support the economic recruitment practices begun by his predecessors. Recently, Hunt announced that Federal Express selected Greensboro, NC for its \$300 million packing sorting hub. The state offered \$272.3 million in state incentives, the largest economic recruitment package in North Carolina history. The governor posed for photographers wearing a purple FedEx cap (Thompson 1998, C1).

The state's successes with the RTP and area universities, and its boosterism about economic development, sometimes obscure the state's shortcomings in economic, educational, and social matters. Paradoxically, the RTP contains one of the largest concentrations of PhDs in the country, but one-third of adults in the state's rural areas never completed a high school diploma (Foust and Mallory 1993). In 1996, NC teacher salaries ranked 41st in the nation and per pupil expenditures for elementary and secondary education ranked 36th (Morgan and Morgan 1997, 130 & 142). In 1996, 70% of North Carolina fourth graders failed to score at the proficiency level for reading on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) (Lindsay 1997, 177). SchoolMatch, an Ohio company that "helps parents select the right schools for their children," recently completed a study of the nation's 13,927 public school districts (Hausman 1998, S4). According to its measures of school performance and school expenditures, SchoolMatch reported that 8 of the 10 worst schools in the Southeastern United States are located in North Carolina.

Racial conflicts belie the state's reputation for moderation in racial issues. In the 1950s Hodges, the businessman governor, received national praise for avoiding massive resistance to *Brown v. the Board of Education*, but under his leadership, elites "postponed meaningful desegregation for more than a decade" (Chafe 1980, 60), enabling business leaders to boost the state as a progressive one for Northern investors. The birth of the national sit-in movement occurred at Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro in 1960. Locally, the sit-ins began as a citizen response to Hodges' attempts to forestall compliance with *Brown v. the Board of Education*. In 1971, white-instigated violence occurred in Wilmington directed at undermining court-ordered school desegregation. Ben Chavis, and others who organized a non-violent boycott to respond to the crisis, became known as the "Wilmington Ten" when they were tried and found guilty of arson in a grocery store firebombing. Sentenced to a total of 282 years in prison, based on the testimony of three witnesses who later recanted, the "Wilmington Ten" received recognition from Amnesty International and CBS's "60 Minutes" (Luebke 1990, 112-113).

Failure to desegregate the University of North Carolina system of higher education brought federal authorities to North Carolina in the 1970s. The state's five traditionally black campuses maintain undergraduate enrollments ranging from 87%-92% black. Undergraduate enrollments at the other ten campuses range from 2% to 11% black. Federal intervention ended in 1981 when university officials, and a more sympathetic Office of Education in the Reagan administration, obtained a consent decree to protect the university's federal funding and to allow the state to set "flexible" enrollment goals (Dentler et al. 1983, 109-112; Marable 1983, 224). In 1997, a few months after beginning

her term as president of the University of North Carolina system, Molly Broad launched a systematic review of racial preferences in university programs. Her review “could lead to the abolition of race-based admission policies, racial preferences in scholarships and a mix of other affirmative action programs that have helped boost minority enrollments on a number of UNC campuses...” (Betts 1997, D1).

The state played a pivotal role in the women’s movement with the death of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1982 when ratification fell one vote short in the legislature and one state short in the nation. Although ERA supporters expected the “progressive” Southern state to support the amendment, the state legislature maintained its commitment to traditional gender values that it established sixty years before with failure to ratify the Woman’s Suffrage Amendment.¹ Traditional attitudes about women’s roles that surfaced in both constitutional debates either denied or patronized the public roles taken by women throughout the state’s economic, social, and political history. Despite the contributions of women to the Progressive Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and other reform efforts, public debates about the roles and rights of women, stirred by the ERA ratification process, relegated women to private roles associated with home and hearth and ignored their public roles (Mathews and DeHart 1990). Despite traditional ideologies about a woman’s place, North Carolina women entered the work force in larger numbers than women in other states. Early in the 20th century, they did so not only because of the textile industry’s preference for female workers, but also in response to family economic pressures. Seldom, if ever, have the state’s low-wage industries paid either male or female

¹ In a symbolic gesture North Carolina ratified the Nineteenth Amendment in 1971, fifty-one years after it became a part of the Constitution.

workers an adequate living wage. The state's average manufacturing wage ranked 43rd in the nation in 1996 (Morgan and Morgan 1997, 161). At present, North Carolina ranks 6th in the nation in percentage of the labor force comprised of women: 48% of the North Carolina civilian labor force, compared to 46% of the US labor force (Morgan and Morgan 1997, 173).

Education Reform and Social Control: The Consequences for Race, Class, and Gender

For Gramsci (1971), dominant groups and classes sustain power through two forms of social control -- coercion and consent. State political structures organize the use of coercion or force as a means of social control; the institutions of civil society -- families, churches, and schools -- produce consensus or ideological domination as a means of social control. These institutions rely on meanings, symbols and ideas to universalize dominant group ideologies while simultaneously shaping and limiting oppositional discourse.

Dominant interests rely on the coercion of the state as well as the consensus within civil society to maintain social control and to establish hegemony. This hegemony "involves securing both the conditions for future capitalist production and the consent of the subordinated population to the social and cultural implications of 'progress.' It is exercised not only through law and coercion, but also through 'educative' processes in a larger sense, including schooling, the media and, centrally, political parties" (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981, 32). This ideological consensus is more effective than any police force or lynch mob. It mystifies public issues and historical events, confuses private interests with public ones, encourages fatalism and passivity, and justifies

status inequalities (Boggs 1984, 158-161; Robinson 1996, 20-25). Ideas that associate educational and economic opportunities with racial, class, and gender "differences" become accepted as "common sense" and "natural."

An ominous confluence of events in the last decade of the 19th century demonstrate how these two forms of social control -- coercion and consensus -- profoundly affected the development of public education in the South. Between 1890 and 1900, a coalition of agrarian insurgents and enfranchised black voters won and lost state political power, southern race relations reached their nadir, the number of lynchings peaked (King 1980, 23-24), and state legislatures enacted disfranchisement amendments and segregation laws. Significantly, during this tumultuous decade, North Carolina created a state-supported institution of higher education for white women, an agricultural and mechanical college for white men, and an agricultural and mechanical college for black men and women. At the end of the decade, Democratic Party leaders who waged white supremacy campaigns to regain state political office, and disfranchised black voters to maintain power, promised "universal" education to win political consensus for one-party rule (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 528; Ayers 1992, 300).

Early in the decade, many small farmers in North Carolina, facing the prospects of tenancy, allied with black and white Republicans to create one of the most virulent strains of Populism in the nation. The "fusion" movement of the 1890s revived the Radical Reconstructionist vision of public "education as a device for transforming an inegalitarian social and economic system into one providing equal opportunity" (Kousser 1980, 173). The movement threatened business and financial elites in the state, as well as large-scale

manufacturing and agricultural interests outside the state, when it defeated Democratic party candidates to win two-thirds of the seats in the General Assembly in 1894 and the Governor's office in 1896 (Crow 1984). The Democrats waged a violent white supremacy campaign to regain control of the legislature in 1898 by a narrow 52.8% margin (Wood 1986, 115). A few days following the election, Democrats instigated the Wilmington Race Riot, the worst racial violence in North Carolina history, and seized control of the city's local government, then under the control of black and white Republicans. Challenged by egalitarian, inter-racial, consensus politics, Democratic party leaders "resorted to fraud and force to safeguard its power and then designed a final, undemocratic political and social solution. This solution -- segregation and disfranchisement -- eviscerated the coalition of poorer whites and blacks and insured that established interests would not be threatened in the future" (Escott 1985, 241).

Historians Lefler and Newsome (1963, 525) and political scientist Phillip Wood (1986, 115) give credit to private support from the state's business elite for the Democratic victory. The public issue of white supremacy cloaked business interests and obscured the active political role of business elites for most of the white electorate. Prior to the election, Democratic Party chairman Furnifold Simmons sent former Governor Jarvis on secret visits to bankers, railroad officials, and manufacturers to solicit funding and support in return for a promise of no tax increases on capital and no increased appropriations for higher education in the next session of the General Assembly. According to a post-election *Charlotte Observer* editorial:

The businessmen of the State are largely responsible for the victory. Not before in years have the bankmen, the millmen, and the businessmen in general--the backbone of the property interest of the state--taken such sincere interests. They worked from start to finish, and furthermore they spent large bits of money in behalf of the cause....When Democratic rallies were held, mills and shops were shut down so that the operatives could attend the meetings (Wood 1986, 115-116).

After the elections, the Democrats dismantled the business and political reforms enacted by the previous two "fusion" legislatures. They placated insurgent farmers by enacting a \$100,000 appropriation for public schools, and by changing the Commissioner of Agriculture from an appointive to an elective office (Wood 1986, 116). With the narrow margin of victory, "electoral manipulation² and white supremacy had been shown to be an unsure basis for control" (Wood 1986, 116-117). Democratic Party leaders recognized that a competitive political environment threatened their ability to maintain "the degree of political control necessary for continued capital accumulations." In the short-run, the surest and most efficient means to contain political insurgency and to make elections more stable, i.e., less competitive, was to disfranchise Populist and Republican voters. Long term success, however, demanded that the Democratic party find a way to build consensus for governing. The promise of universal education seized an important issue from the insurgents, undermined inter-racial political cooperation, and established a less coercive means of controlling black and white labor.

² The election law provided for separate boxes for each political office and prohibited the counting of wrongly distributed ballots. Illiterate voters typically had their ballots arranged in order by someone who could read, but election officials constantly reordered the boxes, making it impossible for illiterates to succeed in casting a valid ballot (Wood 1986, 117).

In 1900, the North Carolina legislature joined other Southern legislatures in adopting a constitutional amendment requiring that citizens pass a literacy test before registering to vote. The amendment's "grandfather clause" temporarily exempted illiterate whites by enfranchising all men who were entitled to vote on January 1, 1867 along with their sons and grandsons. Black North Carolinians, barred from registering before 1867, lost the right to vote if they could not pass the literacy test. The absence of disfranchised black voters boosted Democratic party chances for re-capturing the governor's office; but the prospects of disfranchised white voters, whose grandfather clause exemption expired after December 1, 1908, threatened long term Democratic party prospects. White concerns were justifiable, considering that at the turn of the century, North Carolina's white illiteracy rate ranked first among the states.

The Democratic party intended to repeat the coercive tactics of 1898 to regain control of the governor's office in 1900. Gubernatorial candidate Charles B. Aycock, who staged "White Supremacy Jubilees" to intimidate black and white voters in the 1898 legislative elections, campaigned as an advocate of white supremacy in 1900 (Woodward 1951, 350), but confrontations with white voters renewed fears that the populist insurgency of the 1890s had not abated. Vocal white farmers expressed apprehension that they would not be able to educate their sons to pass the literacy test after 1908 and spurred Aycock to shift his campaign focus from "the Negro question" to plans for "universal education." Aycock "turned the white supremacy campaign into a crusade for public education" (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 528). By coupling disfranchisement with "universal education," Aycock and the Democrats not only won the election, but also

discovered the means to maintain control of the state government for most of the 20th century -- the institutionalization of Jim Crow, segregation, and disfranchisement. The imposition of the poll tax and the literacy test disfranchised poor and working class whites along with blacks, but the pledge to expand educational facilities for whites helped create political consensus (Harlan 1958, 79; Billings 1979, 202-203).

In 1900, Democratic party leaders opportunistically supported universal education to strengthen the political goals of economic elites by taking a substantive issue away from Populists and Republicans. Further, they defused the threat of a growing class consciousness by making a call for racial solidarity based on white supremacy. The promise of universal education allowed the Democratic party, controlled by agricultural and industrial elites, to co-opt an emerging "progressive" middle class, further dividing them from poor whites and blacks (Wood 1986, 118-124). The emerging middle class publicly supported the state Democratic party's education reforms and forged links with "progressive" funding organizations outside the region, such as the General Education Board (GEB) (Wood 1986, 123-124). These alliances reassured investors outside the region of the state's "sensitivity" to race relations and its adherence to traditional ideas of racial and class subordination.

From the outset, Democratic party elites never intended for universal education to create universal benefits. Instead, they organized schools to create a less coercive more "democratic" means of social control; to build alliances with Northern industrialists; and, to reproduce unequal class, race, and gender relations. No other region in the United States implemented systems of public education under such extreme conditions of political

coercion -- disfranchisement, segregation, and violence. But elites in all regions recognized that public schools, and other institutions of civil society, produce consensus, or ideological domination as a means of social control. Building on existing social and political traditions of dominance and inequality allowed regional Southern leaders, in association with Northern investors, to structure cooperative economic and educational institutions. Providing the right kind of schooling -- vocational or industrial, not academic -- provided an acceptable "democratic" and non-coercive means for producing a stable, efficient, and competitive labor force; moreover, it established a socialization process to convince black and white children to accept the Southern racial, class, and gender hierarchy (Anderson 1988, 13-27).

CHAPTER III

RACE AND INEQUALITY

Superficially, education reformers appear concerned about social progress and educational improvement; underneath the rhetoric, however, they are engrossed with “the mobilization of publics and with power relations” (Popkewitz 1991, 1). The ideology of white supremacy always lingers below the surface in public education reform initiatives. Effective and expedient use of the ideology of white supremacy enables elites to mobilize public support for education reform and industrial development, and to divert attention from economic, political, and social conflicts. Education reformers exploit the ideology of white supremacy to build ideological consensus for economic development practices linked to the historical world system. This chapter shows how the ideology of white supremacy and the increasing demands of a global economy influenced education reform and economic development policies at the beginning of the 20th century when the United States ascended in the world system and the South struggled to industrialize.

The Ideology of White Supremacy

The ideology of white supremacy proved useful in winning support for public education years before Democratic party regained political power and supported the Southern Education Movement. In Fayetteville, NC in 1878, local people raised funds among themselves, then appealed to the Peabody Fund, to start a public school for white

children following a public dispute witnessed by six black boys and five white boys. When the court called on the witnesses to sign their names to their testimony, all of the black children signed their names, but none of the white children could do so. Local citizens attributed the superior skills of the black children to the strengths of philanthropic schools for blacks and the weaknesses of public schools for whites. Immediately following the incident, local leaders, "in humiliation and shame," decided to improve public schooling for white children. Three years later the Peabody Fund hired the Fayetteville school superintendent "to canvass the state in behalf of ...graded schools, using the school at Fayetteville as an illustration of what a good school meant to a town" (Noble 1930, 403).

Ideology and Infrastructure: The Origins of "Monolithic White Supremacy"¹

At the end of the 19th century, during a period of world-economic expansion, the United States began its ascent into a position of world military and industrial power. Business and political leaders urged educators to make schools more competitive and efficient to make the nation more competitive. They found the greatest barriers to national success among immigrants in the North and illiterate blacks and whites in the South.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Democrats in North Carolina and in other Southern states used coercive means, primarily racial violence and intimidation, to regain control of state governments and to eliminate a vibrant two-party system (Woodward 1951; Ayers 1992). Subsequently, they promoted "universal" education as the means to

¹ Winant (1997, 88) describes the first half of the twentieth century as a period of "monolithic white supremacy."

political stability and economic recovery in the region (see Chapter Two). Ensuing campaigns for universal, tax-supported schooling in the South reflected the economic, political, social, and ideological interests of competing groups who espoused universal schooling, but disputed its meaning.

Philanthropists and industrialists viewed education as a means to reduce inter-regional inequality and intra-regional racial conflict. Perhaps egalitarian ideals motivated some reformers, but pecuniary motives prompted many of them to uphold regional constraints of caste and class to stabilize class and race relations for a more propitious business climate. "New South" leaders within the region, a corps of commercial and industrial "modern" elites, lobbied state governments to support public education for empowering a rising white middle class to guide economic development along national norms; but many believed that low wages and low taxes, and a docile workforce, not an educated one, strengthened their ties to capitalists outside the region. "Traditional" planter elites, committed to maintaining an abundance of cheap labor to support an agricultural economy, opposed and delayed governmental efforts to expand public schools. Poor whites who feared competition with educated black workers acted against their own interests and resisted public school reforms (Wright 1986; Anderson 1988).

Struggling white farmers who attributed their declining fortunes to capitalist exploitation joined the Farmers' Alliance and the Populist party during the depression of the 1870s and 1880s to demand economic justice. North Carolina Populists advocated a tax increase to build elementary and secondary schools, and urged the state to support higher education for women as well as for men. African Americans expressed the greatest

hope for education as a means to restructure their lives. A tradition of black self-help established before the Civil War fused the struggle for freedom with the struggle for education. The Freedmen's Bureau, along with philanthropies and missionary societies, built on the tradition of self-help to expand educational opportunities during Reconstruction (Anderson 1988, 5-6).

W. E. B. Du Bois credited African Americans with the idea of publicly supported schooling, saying that "public education for all at public expense was, in the South, a Negro idea" (Du Bois 1969, 641-649; Anderson 1988, 6). After the Civil War, the South lagged behind the rest of the nation in establishing tax-supported public schooling. The ex-slaves emerged as the leading challengers to the region's long-standing resistance to free public schooling and "laid a significantly larger foundation for universal education than is accounted for in official reports and in the histories of southern education" (Anderson 1988, 13). Black leaders and educators embraced the New England classical curriculum as a model, inculcated literacy and citizenship skills, and pursued leadership training. The educational gains made by African-Americans in the 1860s and 1870s inspired Populist demands for free schooling in the 1880s and 1890s. Together, Populist and African American demands for universal education challenged traditional expectations of "who" should be taught, despite the opposition of white agricultural elites who favored a repressive system of agricultural labor and discouraged mass literacy. The "fusion" politics of white populists and black Republicans won significant electoral victories in North Carolina in the 1890s and pressed for public education and economic reform.

New South proponents of industrialization endorsed the idea of universal education supported by black Republicans and white Populists. For them, the important question asked not “who” should be taught, but “what” should be taught. In their view, mass public schooling provided an acceptable “democratic” and non-coercive method to produce a stable, efficient, and competitive labor force; moreover, it established a socialization process to convince black and white children to accept the Southern racial, class, and gender hierarchy (Anderson 1988, 13-27). The right kind of schooling, housed within segregated facilities and controlled by white elites, could help achieve these goals.

The Ideology of Industrial Education

In a speech before the American Social Science Association in 1877 on the question of southern education, industrialist and former Confederate General, Thomas Muldrop Logan articulated the views of many white elites who directed their attention to economic competitiveness in world markets. His philosophy dominated education discourse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries: “Wherever public schools have been established...the industrial classes, becoming more intelligent, have proved more skillful and efficient; and all competing countries must likewise establish public schools, or be supplanted in the markets of the world” (Anderson 1988, 27). To maintain racial caste distinctions in the emerging industrial society, Logan endorsed the industrial or vocational curriculum taught at the Hampton Agricultural and Normal Institute of Virginia. Hampton adapted black education to the needs of the South’s dominant-class whites. Pedagogically, Hampton affirmed traditional ideologies of wealth and power.

The Hampton Institute profoundly influenced Booker T. Washington, born into slavery, then educated at Hampton, who founded Alabama's Tuskegee Institute in 1881. At the turn-of-the-century "the 'Hampton-Tuskegee Idea' represented the ideological antithesis of the educational and social movement begun by the ex-slaves" (Anderson 1988, 27-33). It no longer advanced the goals of freedom and education; instead, it subordinated economic and political freedom to vocational training. Rhetorically, the Hampton-Tuskegee model conformed with efforts to make US labor more competitive and efficient in world markets; but practically, it strengthened attempts by white elites within the region and the nation to control black education and to re-direct its purpose. Ultimately, elite support for vocational education enabled them to reduce the political risks of obstructing black and populist demands for public education, to convert popular support for universal education into a political asset, and to mobilize white political support for disfranchisement.

Many African Americans shared similar dreams for educational attainment and occupational success, but they did not endorse the Hampton-Tuskegee educational model. The Washington-Du Bois controversy illustrates the ideological divide over appropriate education strategies for African Americans. Booker T. Washington, educated at the Hampton Institute and President of the Tuskegee Institute,² attained national recognition with a speech he presented to the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition in 1895. His speech, known as "the Atlanta Compromise" assured his audience that black

² Mrs. Washington directed the Department of Domestic Science suggesting that the Washingtons stood for traditional gender roles as well as racial roles (Booker T. Washington. 1901. *Famous Men of the Negro Race.*)

Southerners were more interested in industrial (i.e., vocational) education and economic opportunity than in political rights and privileges (Woodward 1951, 356-358). Not only did he renounce the centrality of newly won citizenship rights for African Americans, he discounted the importance of a classical liberal arts education.

National newspapers immediately acclaimed Washington's speech at the Atlanta Exposition, but quickly forgot a North Carolina speaker who strongly believed in the importance of a classical education. Charles Petty, an A.M.E. Zion Church Bishop, addressed the Atlanta Exposition and offered a rebuttal to Washington (Gilmore 1992, 46). But Washington's philosophies of industrial education, racial segregation, and political accommodation were more compatible with the social agenda of the most powerful white elites of the time. Ironically, "the man who disparaged the importance of political power for his race came to exercise political power such as few if any Southern white men of his time enjoyed" (Woodward 1951, 359). A guest of H. H. Rogers of Standard Oil and of Andrew Carnegie, a friend of Southern Railway President William Baldwin, and a consultant to Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft, Washington influenced political patronage decisions and played a major role in the distribution of Northern philanthropy for education (Woodward 1951, 358-360). Washington died in 1915, but the views he shared with prominent white industrialists on race, labor, and education issues dominated education discourse and policy for the first half of the 20th century.

Despite Washington's personal success, "the fact remains that Washington's training school and the many schools he inspired, taught crafts and attitudes more

congenial to the premachine age than to the 20th century; that his labor doctrine was a compound of individualism, paternalism, and antiunionism in an age of collective labor action; and his business philosophy was an anachronism" (Woodward 1951, 367). Partly because of Washington's appeal to white Southern elites, as well as his appeal to national elites, the legacy of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education remains in public education.

White elites recognized Booker T. Washington as the official spokesman for African American education policy, but W. E. B. Du Bois emerged as a spokesman for the opposition. In 1865, the same year of Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech, Du Bois became the first African American to earn a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Harvard University. Born in Massachusetts, educated at Fisk, Harvard, and Berlin, Du Bois envisioned a qualitatively different future for African Americans. In 1896, he started "a school for the scientific study of the Negro in the South" at Atlanta University, then moved to New York in 1910 (Woodward 1951, 368). His essay, "On Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," (Du Bois 1994, 25-35) acknowledged the existence of opposition to vocational education among black people. "There is a feeling of deep regret, sorrow, and apprehension at the wide currency and ascendancy which some of Mr. Washington's theories have gained" (Du Bois 1994, 27). Du Bois challenged the Atlanta Compromise if reconciliation were to be based on "the industrial slavery and civic death" of black men (Du Bois 1994, 33). Instead of vocational education based on the Tuskegee model, Du Bois recommended building common schools, based on the New England model, offering supplementary industrial training. He also insisted on building well-

equipped colleges and universities to train the best black youth as teachers, professionals, and leaders (Du Bois 1994, 55-65). Du Bois supported a classical model of education to prepare the "talented tenth" of black intellectuals to assume positions of academic and professional leadership in the nation. Further, Du Bois maintained, "If ... the American people are sincerely anxious that the Negro shall put forth his best effort to help himself, they must see to it that he is not deprived of the freedom and power to strive" (Lageman 1989, 126). He warned that unless industrial education were liberally conceived as a means "to strengthen the intellectual power, fortify character, and facilitate the transmission from age to age of the stores of the world's knowledge," it would result in "blind leaders for the blind" and "men to be thought for, but not to think; to be led, but not to lead themselves" (Lageman 1989, 126).

Du Bois's views found support in the black community. The Niagara Movement, forerunner of the NAACP, passed a resolution in 1906 stating that members would "fight for all time against any proposal to educate black boys and girls as servants and underlings" (Pincus 1980, 336). Their philosophy concurred with the thinking of many progressive educators, but had little impact within white centers of power. Washington's Hampton-Tuskegee model prevailed, not because it was the best model, not because it utilized the strategies and traditions of black self-help, but because it fit the agenda of state and federal lawmakers, regional and national business elites, and Northern philanthropists. Espousing "universal" education, regional recovery, and economic competition, these institutional elites established a bureaucratic and financial infrastructure of separate and unequal systems of elementary and secondary education, and higher education. The policy

decisions they made at the turn-of-the-century affected the distribution of educational and economic opportunities then and now.

The Ideology of White Supremacy and the Infrastructure of Inequality

In 1898, a Massachusetts minister and the president of Hampton Institute organized a meeting at Capon Springs, West Virginia with the intent of aiding black education. The educators who attended the First Conference for Education in the South changed its goal to aid the education of whites, hoping to use the conference to unite white Northerners and white Southerners. They excluded blacks from the Conference (Harlan 1958, 78-79). By 1901, when the group created the Southern Education Board (SEB), clearly, the reformers had endorsed white supremacy (Ayers 1992, 418).

At annual meetings in Capon Springs, and through “universal education” campaigns launched by the SEB, Southern education movement crusaders defined public education as a catalyst for the region’s economic recovery, and a cure for its cultural crisis. Fearful of disorderly white populists and black freedmen whom they characterized as a “mobocracy” (Curry 1899, 31), movement leaders stressed the need for white leaders to direct change from above to stabilize class and race relations and to improve the business climate. Despite the rhetoric of “universal education,” their campaigns to cultivate favorable public opinion for tax-supported schools endorsed the ideology of white supremacy and advocated exclusionary caste practices.

Addressing the Second Conference for Education in the South in 1899, J. L. M.

Curry conceded the benefits of education for both races, but stressed the greater importance of education for whites:

The white people are to be the leaders, to take the initiative, to have the directive control in all matters pertaining to civilization and the highest interests of our beloved land. History demonstrates that the Caucasian will rule. He ought to rule. He made our Constitution; he achieved our independence; he is identified with all true progress, all high civilization.... This white supremacy does not mean hostility to the negro [sic], but friendship for him. On the intelligent and more refined class of the white people the negroes [sic] have been compelled to rely heretofore for the educational advantages which they possess, and on them in the future they must depend to prevent a widening of the breach between the races and to bring about their higher advancement (Curry 1899, 28).

Another speaker at the Second Conference for Education in the South, William H. Baldwin, Jr., president of the Long Island Railroad, an employer of black labor, and a trustee of Tuskegee Institute, explained that blacks “will willingly fill the more menial positions, and do the heavy work, at less wages,” leaving “the more expert labor” to whites. In his view, African Americans were to be taught to “avoid social questions, leave politics alone; continue to be patient; live moral lives; live simply; learn to work...” (Anderson 1988, 82). He added a warning that sounded reminiscent of slavery’s system of “compulsory ignorance” (Du Bois 1994, 5): “know that it is a crime for any teacher, white or black, to educate the negro [sic] for positions which are not open to him” (Harlan 1958, 78-79; Anderson 1988, 82).

Attempting to tailor education for Southern whites according to the best practices of the North, the Conference for Education in the South created the Southern Education Board (SEB), following a train trip to Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1901. Operating until 1915, the SEB worked to change public opinion among “the ignorant educated of the North” as well as the public school opponents of the South. The board controlled no funds, but it acted as a clearinghouse for philanthropic contributions and a steering committee for the Southern Education Movement. The SEB accepted the necessity of segregation, endorsed the desirability of white supremacy, and supported public schooling which conformed to white, elite expectations (Ayers 1992, 419; Link 1988). In other words, the SEB viewed education in connection with economic development needs and within established patterns of social relations.

The Conference for Education in the South and the SEB enabled dominant political and economic interests to control and to re-direct the popular demand for public education. The Southern Education Movement, organized from the top-down, succeeded in re-directing the movement from its black self-help origins and white populist demands. These efforts weakened the potential for public education to expand horizontal networks among black Republicans and white populists. Instead, movement leaders used public education as an institutional means to develop vertical networks between white Southern political leaders and Northern industrialists. Alliances between state, national and global elites, fused with a white supremacist ideological consensus, transformed the Old South and integrated New South regional institutions into the world system (Mouffe 1979, 188-192). They adopted Washington’s model of vocational education first to define the

“place” of African Americans in the emerging industrial order, then to define the “place” of women and working class whites. As industrialization intensified, the rhetoric of “universal” education won consensus for disfranchisement, segregation, and discrimination and obscured the emerging infrastructure of class, race, and gender inequality.

State Infrastructure: North Carolina’s Dual Education System

Following the Civil War, North Carolina’s 1868 Constitutional Convention drafted a new constitution containing a formal provision “for free public schools for all children,” regardless of race; yet from the outset, the state implemented racial segregation and discrimination. The 1868 Constitutional Convention stopped short of requiring racially segregated schools; instead, it adopted a non-binding resolution stating: “The interests and happiness of the two races would be best promoted by the establishment of separate schools.” Subsequently, the 1869 General Assembly enacted a statute mandating separate schools for white and black children. In 1875, another Constitutional Convention added this requirement: “The children of the white race and the children of the colored race shall be taught in separate public schools.” With adoption of the 1875 Constitution, North Carolina became one of the first Southern states to establish a constitutional requirement for segregated schools (Douglas 1995, 7).

Notwithstanding constitutional requirements for a four-month mandatory school term, the state legislature failed to appropriate sufficient funds to operate the schools at minimal levels until early in the 20th century when the Southern Education Movement got underway. Consequently, total enrollments in the 1870s never exceeded more than one-

fifth to one-seventh of school-aged children, and already high illiteracy rates actually increased in the 1870s (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 503). Larger towns, such as Charlotte, obtained legislative approval to levy local school taxes to supplement state school funding and to provide better schooling than the state minimum standard (Douglas 1995, 8). This practice of raising local school funding in wealthier school districts to supplement state financing continues at the present time.

The state's financial woes created intense competition for scarce resources. White attitudes toward black education, ranging from indifference to overt hostility, imposed additional limitations on black schools. Lawmakers ignored the constitutional mandate forbidding racial discrimination; therefore, the modest differences between black and white schools that existed in 1870 increased over time. In this highly regressive system of school financing, blacks paid higher taxes for education than whites, poor whites paid higher taxes than rich whites, and the law prevented any redistribution between "rich" and "poor" counties (Wood 1986, 124). In the 1880s the General Assembly permitted towns to tax themselves solely for the support of white schools. Additional legislation provided for the appointment of local school boards by local justices of the peace and county commissioners. The legislature appointed these county officials and were unlikely to appoint African Americans. Local boards exercised broad discretion in the disbursement of school funds obtained from state and local sources, creating additional discrimination against black schools. By the end of the 19th century, North Carolina's white schools were substantially better financed than black schools. Many districts supported no black schools, and no district provided schooling beyond the elementary level for black children.

By 1900, nearly half of the black population in North Carolina was illiterate, whereas the white illiteracy rate was 19.5%. Although North Carolina's white illiteracy rate was the highest in the South and the nation, it was only half that of blacks (Woodward 1951, 400).

As education expanded, racial inequalities increased. Wood suggests that business elites viewed education primarily as a mechanism of labor discipline and social control. For black and white agricultural workers, as well as white industrial workers, education beyond the inculcation of basic values of discipline and obedience threatened to undermine social control and the requirements of capital accumulation. As disciplinarians, not pedagogues, teachers were neither well-trained nor highly paid, and the quality of public school education remained low throughout the state (Wood 1986, 124).

In 1886, the North Carolina Supreme Court decision, *Puitt v. Commissioners of Gaston County*, struck down separate taxation schemes to support white schools, but upheld segregation and left the discretionary powers of local school boards intact; consequently, the system of separate and unequal education remained. Additional support for dual school systems came in 1896 when the US Supreme Court found in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that racial separation did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. After receiving federal judicial sanctions, North Carolina's dual system of education was not challenged again in court until the middle of the 20th century (Douglas 1995, 9-11).

The Federal Government and the Infrastructure of Inequality

Federal financial support for Southern primary education ended with Reconstruction. Overburdened Southern state governments, including North Carolina's,

failed to maintain financial support for public schools at Reconstruction levels and illiteracy increased. Responding to reports of rising illiteracy rates in the South, and appealing to humanitarian concerns, Senator Henry Blair of New Hampshire introduced legislation to assist the states for ten years. His formula for awarding funds to states in proportion to illiteracy rates assured the South of the lion's share of funds, approximately two-thirds of the proposed \$105 million over ten years. The Blair Bill, approved by the Senate three times between 1882 and 1890, never came up for a vote in the House. The federal government's failure to intervene in public education occurred at a critical juncture in the history of the South and of the United States (Woodward 1951, 63-63; Going 1957, 267-272).

Southerners disagreed over the bill's merits, citing old arguments defending states' rights and finding new ones supporting segregation. Racial arguments dominated both popular and professional discourse, and continued long after the Blair bill's defeat. In the South, Blair supporters tended to be allied with business and industrial development interests, opponents represented more traditional agrarian interests. Southerners qualified their support. They preferred to de-emphasize their region's general educational deficits; instead, they urged the federal government to shoulder responsibility for the burden of educating African Americans. One North Carolina educator, Robert Bingham, whose speech to the National Educational Association received widespread attention, suggested that states could manage financial responsibility for white schools if black schools received federal funds. He said: "the two races in the South must be dealt with separately.... We could educate our own people with our own means, we cannot educate

our own children even, when three-sevenths of the money raised in North Carolina must be used to educate the blacks whom the United States Government armed with the ballot without making any provision for giving them the intelligence to use it" (Gatewood 1963, 469-478). Bingham's argument not only classifies white children as "our own people" and denies that black children are "ours," it also implies that education offers a method of social control for those who are "armed" with the ballot. Both North Carolina Senators, Zebulon B. Vance and Matt Ranson, supported the Blair Bill, but denied its utility for anyone but illiterate blacks. Curiously, both Senators voted against amendments that would have divided federal funds between the races on the basis of the illiteracy of each, no doubt anticipating later efforts to "economize" at the expense of black children by avoiding a just and equitable distribution (Harlan 1958).

Southern opponents, allied with traditional agrarian interests, debated the bill's constitutionality on the grounds of states' rights and the separation of powers between state and federal governments. Despite provisions for local administration of funds, the bill provoked opponents who detected a first step toward "federal domination" of education in the states (Going 1957, 285; Tiedt 1966, 21). Alabama Senator J. L. M. Curry suspected that "race prejudice... and a fear that the education of the negroes [sic] would make them less easily manipulated in elections had more influence in the adverse reaction than constitutional scruples" (Woodward 1951, 64).

Despite opposition, Southerners, both Republicans and Democrats, supported Blair more strongly than representatives from any other region. It appeared to be a Northern Republican bill, but it never received the support of Northern Republican

politicians or the Northern press. The New York *Evening Post* and the *Nation* led the opposition. Opponents of "protective tariffs" also opposed the Blair bill which planned to spend the treasury surplus generated by tariffs (Harlan 1958, 6). Northern capitalists worked to abolish the tariff. If the nation relied on the tariff to finance public education, it would complicate efforts to abolish it; consequently, Northern capitalists opposed the Blair Bill.

The majority of blacks continued to vote Republican or to express a preference to vote Republican until disfranchisement took effect, although a number of disaffected black leaders criticized the Republican party's claim as the party of liberation. In Richmond, the chairman of an 1890 Colored People's Convention asserted that the Republicans had deserted blacks and "undertaken to protect the capitalist and manufacturer of the North" (Woodward 1951, 218-219). A black editor wrote: "Neither of these parties...cares a tink snap for the poor man. They are run in the interest of capital, monopoly and repression" (Woodward 1951, 218-219). Disillusioned about the defeat of the Blair bill, Professor J. C. Price, editor of an African American journal in Salisbury, NC wrote that despite the Republican party's commitment to national legislation for mass education, the Blair Bill had been "voted down and owed its death in the Senate to Republican opposition" (Woodward 1951, 218-219).

Failure to ratify the Blair education bill did more than affirm constitutional distinctions between state and federal powers. By leaving the South's problems of illiteracy and insufficient public education in the hands of impoverished Southern state governments, it committed the reunited nation to continue a course of regional

underdevelopment and racial subordination established before the Civil War. Convinced that Northern politicians had lost interest in the fate of newly franchised blacks, Southern white elites proceeded to implement Jim Crow laws and to disfranchise poor blacks and poor whites. At the time of the Blair bill debates, Farmers Alliances and black Republicans sought mass education as a means to obtain economic and social justice. Congress rejected these appeals as well as Blair's humanitarian concerns. Later, when Democratic party elites regained control of Southern state governments from white populist and black Republican reformers, and the Southern Education Movement had redefined the goals of education to the fit labor market needs of an expanding industrial society, the federal government intervened in public education (primary and secondary) with the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. By then, however, the federal government had played a significant role in public higher education for more than a half-century.

Segregation, Inequality, and Higher Education

The federal government intervened in public higher education with passage of the Morrill Act in 1862 and expanded its role with the second Morrill Act of 1890. The first act supported establishing a land-grant college in each state. The second act set a precedent for on-going federal involvement in state systems of higher education and sanctioned racially separate institutions of higher education six years before the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling (Preer 1990).

According to the provisions of the 1862 land-grant college legislation, each state received 30,000 acres of public lands for each Senator and each representative

apportioned by the 1860 census. Proceeds from the sale of the land or land script were to be used to support "at least one college where the object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts...in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life" (Preer 1990, 324). Supporters emphasized the purpose of land-grants to establish centers for scientific, agricultural and industrial training, in contrast to the classical liberal arts curriculum at existing colleges, but the federal government did not limit the 1862 land-grant college curriculum to agricultural and industrial education.

Owing to secession, North Carolina and other Southern states did not receive any Morrill funds until after the Civil War. For a time, the state designated UNC, the official state university at Chapel Hill, to receive Morrill funds, although UNC did not fulfill the letter of the law, failing to teach agricultural science. Massachusetts, Wisconsin, California, and Tennessee also designated the official state university as their land-grant college (Barrow 1990, 54). Leonidas Polk, editor of the *Progressive Farmer* in Raleigh who became President of the National Farmers' Alliance, accused University officials of perverting the land-grant act (Eaton 1946, 217). Polk and the Populists pushed the legislature to establish a separate agricultural college as the federal land-grant.

Middle-class progressives in Raleigh, led by Walter Hines Page, then editor of the *State Chronicle*, urged the state to establish industrial colleges to train young men in the "wealth-producing" arts and sciences. In the 1880s, Page and the young "progressives" organized the Watauga Club to promote the state's educational and industrial interests.

Unlike the Populists who represented the interests of small farmers, the Watauga Club represented the state's business interests. The Wataugans intended to omit agriculture in their proposal for an industrial college, but political expediency dictated that they include "some agriculture in it somewhere" to win legislative approval (Billings 1979, 207). In 1885, the General Assembly ratified industrial school legislation, then in 1887 they amended it to create an Agricultural and Mechanical College. In 1889, acquiescing to pressure from the Farmer's Alliance, the state transferred the Morrill allotment to the new school in Raleigh, now North Carolina State University.³ Not coincidentally, in 1887 and in 1889, black legislators introduced legislation to create an agricultural and mechanical college for blacks. White legislators soundly defeated those bills; nonetheless, African American community leaders and educators pressed the state to admit blacks to public institutions of higher education or to build a school for blacks (Dabney 1936, 182; Logan 1958).

At the same time, members of the National Grange and agricultural educators lobbied Congress to expand federal support for land-grant colleges. In 1890, Congress passed the second Morrill Act, ostensibly to benefit farmers. Ironically, the 1890 land-grant act, still in effect, is best known for the black land-grant colleges established by the states to comply with a federally mandated provision for a "just and equitable" distribution of funds by race. Paradoxically, "in seeking to protect a share of funds for blacks,

³ Most states founded a separate land-grant college that competed with the state university for prestige and funds. Typically, states located the land-grant in an agricultural region and the state university in an urban area, often the state capital, but North Carolina reversed the pattern. It established the land-grant in Raleigh, the state capital. The flagship state university campus is nearby in Chapel Hill, once a rural area.

Congress had also lent its authority to racial segregation. In seeking to assure a just and equitable division of funds between the races, the Bureau of Education had given its imprimatur to separate and unequal land-grant colleges” (Preer 1990, 336). The law required states to admit blacks to an existing land-grant college, to create a new state-supported institution for blacks, or to designate a private black college as the state's black land-grant institution. For the first time, Congress demanded that state governments report to the federal government whether or not land-grant act colleges discriminated on the basis of race or color in student admissions. Because North Carolina denied admission to blacks and refused to create a separate school, the US Secretary of the Interior withheld federal funds until the state complied. Unwilling to jeopardize funds for the newly established agricultural school for whites in Raleigh, the General Assembly ratified legislation creating “the A. and M. College for the Colored Race” in 1891.

Initially the state attached the school to Shaw University in Raleigh, then, following a bidding process, in 1892 the state selected Greensboro as the home of the college, now North Carolina A&T University. Unlike its white counterpart in Raleigh, the black school admitted women (Logan 1958; Preer 1990). But in 1900, North Carolina A&M (now A&T) discontinued female enrollments because state officials refused to appropriate the necessary funds to accommodate them. Women did not return to the campus until 1924 (Jenkins 1991, 66).

The 1890 Second Morrill Act paved the way for states to create and operate legal systems of separate and unequal public institutions of higher education. Between 1890 and 1899, each of the Southern and border states either planned or established a black

land-grant college.⁴ States established black land-grants to continue to receive federal funds for white land-grants, to exclude blacks from white land-grants, and to limit educational and occupational opportunities for blacks (Roebuck and Murty 1993, 27). Philosophically and ideologically, the 1890 Morrill Act coincided with the white supremacist view that industrial education best suited the intellectual capabilities of African Americans (Jenkins 1991, 67). “Although these institutions were set up to train black students in mechanical and agricultural vocations, the Southern states, when they actually responded to the federal guidelines, designed programs that corresponded closely to the industrial education model of Hampton and Tuskegee” (Anderson 1982, 191). A few students at the black land-grants learned skilled trades, such as carpentry and brick-laying at a time when white land-grants abandoned teacher training and manual labor for scientific agriculture, engineering, medicine, law and business. The white colleges became full-fledged academically respectable universities. The black land-grants established in effect boarding schools for primary and secondary students. Black students and administrators in private colleges looked down on the land-grants as two-year high schools for training agricultural and industrial teachers. President Bumstead of Atlanta University described the black land-grants as “institutions with high sounding names” (Wennersten 1991, 57). Eventually, as high schools became more widely available, the

⁴ The 1890 land-grant institutions include: Alcorn State University (MS), South Carolina State College, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Alabama A&M, Prairie View A&M (TX), Southern University (LA), Virginia State College, Kentucky State University, University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, Florida A&M, Delaware State College, North Carolina A& T, Fort Valley State College (GA), Langston University (OK), Lincoln University (MO), Tennessee State University, and Tuskegee University (AL). West Virginia State College lost its land-grant status in 1957 (Jaschik 1987, A31-A32).

land-grants dropped the lower divisions to expand teacher training for vocational schools (Bowles and DeCosta 1971, 37; Anderson 1982, 194).

Black hopes for high quality mechanical and technical schools to prepare youth for skilled and semi-skilled positions in the rapidly expanding industrial economy were never realized. Federal and state governments, as well as philanthropies, refused to foot the bill for quality schools; consequently, black industrial schools found themselves limited to two options -- training teachers for segregated elementary and secondary schools, and preparing blacks for manual labor as agricultural and domestic workers. Thus "vocational education" in the black land-grants reproduced "the mostly unskilled, dead-end occupational structure that locked blacks in poverty" (Anderson 1982, 195-197).

These separate and unequal schools could not award baccalaureate degrees. In the early 20th century, only one of the 1890 land-grants offered a curriculum beyond the two-year normal course. Florida A&M offered the first baccalaureate degree. In 1916, the black land-grants enrolled 4,875 students, but only 12 students were enrolled in a baccalaureate program. All 12 of them were in Florida (Anderson 1982, 195; Jenkins 1991, 72).

North Carolina created its "colored A. and M." during the same period it funded one normal school for white women (now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro) and three normal schools for black men and women. In the 1880s, the legislature closed the "normal" at Chapel Hill and opened one and two year institutes for whites in Boone and Asheville. Although supporting a single powerful "technical" school for whites in Raleigh (NCSU), a single powerful liberal arts and teacher school for white

women (UNCG) and a single liberal arts university for white men at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), lawmakers refused to support a single, model school for blacks. "The faculty of such a powerful institution they feared, would surely manipulate teacher training for unacceptable 'political' purposes" (Leloudis 1996, 192-193).

Although federal law required a distribution of funds based on the percentage of school age population by race, the black land-grants, or "1890s colleges," seldom received a "just and equitable" distribution of funds. Between 1890 and 1917, the black land-grants rarely received more than 50% of their allotted appropriation. Even as late as 1930, North Carolina A&T received only 33.3% of its allotment (Davis 1933, 316). White legislators justified financial discrimination by arguing that the type of education needed by blacks was less complex and less expensive than that needed by whites (Wennersten 1991, 56-61). In deference to the ideology of white supremacy, administrators at black land-grant colleges acknowledged that "their fate was in the hands of white state legislatures" and often accepted less than their pro rata share to preserve a working relationship with white state officials. In some cases school administrators asked federal officials to refrain from enforcing provisions for equitable distribution. In other cases, North Carolina, Maryland, and Tennessee circumvented the requirements by making the new colleges a part of the state university. The new status of the agricultural and mechanical schools exempted state leaders from reporting the amount of funds allocated to black schools to federal officials (Preer 1990, 330-331). Recognizing that black schools depended on white legislative support for their continued existence, African

American administrators often struggled to reconcile the demand of accommodating to white power with the desire of increasing black educational opportunity.⁵

The curriculum of the 1890s colleges, like that of the 1862 land-grants, deviated from the strict requirements of agricultural and mechanical training and offered a much broader curriculum. The first commissioner of education appointed to oversee the schools cautioned them against setting narrow curricular limits, claiming that blacks would not always be relegated to agricultural labor. The first federal inspection of the 1890s schools occurred in 1911 under the direction of a new commissioner and within a climate of increasing racial tension. The report criticized the 1890s schools for misapplying funds to classical studies, but failed to mention that the 1862 schools had done the same thing (Preer 1990, 332).

Despite financial limitations, the students and faculty of the black land-grants resisted white attempts to control the curriculum and to perpetuate black educational and occupational inferiority. Given the history of slavery and black educational self-help, it was difficult to convince black parents to educate their children for lives of agricultural and domestic work (Wennersten 1991). Although black land-grant administrators did not oppose "education in the agricultural and mechanical arts, they refused to allow their institutions to be straitjacketed into an area of education that did not emphasize development of the intellect" (Jenkins 1991, 64). At some land-grant schools, industrial

⁵ Dr. F. D. Bluford, President of A&T from 1925-1955, was described as willing to go to Raleigh and suffer indignities if necessary to ensure continued funding. Following an episode when Governor Hodges insulted NAACP leaders while addressing students at A&T Founder's Day, and students protested by scraping their feet and coughing in protest to his remarks, Bluford could no longer balance cautiously between state-required accommodationism and student demands for assertiveness. Two days later he entered the hospital. He died a few weeks later (Chafe 1980).

courses developed into profitable campus industries. Student earnings in campus blacksmith shops, carpentry sheds, and farms helped finance liberal arts courses (Wennersten 1991, 58).

The 1890 Second Morrill Act is a landmark in federal education policy. It set a precedent for ongoing federal involvement in state systems of higher education, defined the federal government's role in racial issues related to education, and fostered institutional segregation in the formative years of Jim Crow. "Thus, six years before the Supreme Court upheld racially separate but equal public transportation in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), Congress in the Morrill Act of 1890 sanctioned racially separate institutions of higher education" (Preer 1990, 326-327). It imposed academic limitations on the 1890 colleges that had not applied to the original, mostly white, land-grant colleges and institutionalized the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education. Federal involvement also re-directed education for Native Americans toward vocational education (Wright and Tierney 1995, 161).

Du Bois pronounced the death of the black industrial education idea in a 1923 letter to Walter White saying he found no reason for "retaining much of Mr. Washington's philosophy except as an interesting historical fact" (Wennerstein 1991, 61-62). The obituary for industrial education was premature. Although the 1890 land-grants offered more than vocational education to their students, the idea of industrial education never died. It remained "an attractive white supremacy notion that had little to do with black progress or economic reality" (Wennerstein 1991, 61-62). After World War I, the idea of black industrial education was exported to Liberia and to the British colonies in Africa. Its

effects linger in the United States as well as in the decolonized African nations (Wennersten 1991, 61-62).

The Contribution of Historically Black Colleges

Despite institutional barriers to quality education, the black public colleges, including the land-grants, have played an important role in the education of African Americans. During the Progressive Era, 1890-1920, when states neglected primary and secondary education, the black colleges filled the void. Because most of their students arrived unprepared for college work, it was up to these colleges to prepare them (Jenkins 1991, 71). Throughout the period of legal segregation, the schools played an important role in grooming students for productive roles in American society. "They created the intellectual and social space necessary for the development of militant political reformers, dedicated public school teachers, physicians, and other skilled professionals within the Black community. Without such institutions, the nightmare of Jim Crow might still exist, and the material conditions of the Black ghetto and working class would unquestionably be worse" (Marable 1983, 217).

Inspired by the history and literature of protest and resistance, and supported by the local black community, it is not surprising that in February 1960 four North Carolina A&T students sat down at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, thus beginning the national sit-in movement. In 1963, Greensboro's massive demonstrations helped to propel a young A&T student named Jesse Jackson into national prominence (Chafe 1982,

42). North Carolina A&T, along with many other black colleges, decisively influenced the course of the civil rights movement, a watershed in American history (Chafe 1980, 71).

Issues concerning racial identity and the academic mission of the nation's 35 historically black public colleges, including the land-grants, have been debated throughout the 20th century. With African American students making significant gains in enrollments in white colleges and universities, historically black colleges now enroll a smaller proportion of all black students in higher education. Prior to 1970, historically black campuses enrolled 90% of black students. By the late 1970s, they enrolled more than 60% of black students. By 1980, black public colleges enrolled less than 25% of all black students in higher education (Stuart 1981, B15).

Despite significant gains for black enrollments in traditionally white schools, desegregation has fallen short of expectations. Overall, the pattern of segregated institutions within state systems of higher education remains intact (Marable 1983, 223). North Carolina's state university system includes five predominantly black campuses among its sixteen campuses. One campus, the North Carolina School for the Arts, is a programmatically unique school for the performing arts. The other fifteen campuses, consisting of the flagship institution at Chapel Hill and fourteen others, offer baccalaureate degrees, four offer some graduate degrees, and five offer doctorates and professional degrees. These fifteen institutions currently maintain a pattern of racial segregation similar to 19th century patterns. The five traditionally black campuses -- North Carolina A&T, Winston-Salem State, Elizabeth City State, Fayetteville State, and North Carolina Central

-- have undergraduate enrollments ranging from 87%-92% black (Dentler et al. 1983, 139). Undergraduate enrollments at the other ten campuses range from 2% to 11% black.

In 1973, a US District court judge ruled that the UNC system and nine other state systems were racially segregated and violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. At that time North Carolina's traditionally white campuses were 99% white and the traditionally black campuses were 99.9% black. In the *Adams v. Richardson* decision, the court ordered the ten states to comply. In a 1977 ruling, *Adams v. Califano*, the court rejected desegregation plans submitted by North Carolina and five other states.

In 1981, shortly after the Reagan administration took office, university officials and the Office of Education reached a consent decree that protected the university's \$100 million in federal funds and allowed the university to set flexible goals to alter racial enrollment patterns and to eliminate program duplication (Dentler et al. 1983, 109-112). It committed the state to upgrade physical plants and academic programs at black universities. The plan kept the dual system intact by making no provision to eliminate duplicate programs, did not expand graduate programs beyond the master's level at black universities, and ignored quotas for hiring minority faculty at white universities (Marable 1983, 224; Stuart 1981, B15).

The NAACP Legal Defense Fund quickly denounced the North Carolina plan as a return to "separate but equal." North Carolina black alumni organizations and other critics denounced the plan. All five black chancellors of the state universities unanimously endorsed the plan. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, then the Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, defended the agreement. With the North

Carolina plan, “the road toward desegregation, initiated by the 1954 Brown decision, returned full circle to the Tuskegee-inspired dual educational structure” (Marable 1983, 224).

For more than 100 years, a state and federally supported dual system of public higher education has remained intact. The history of the land-grants and the vocational curriculum show that a federally supported structure of segregation, discrimination, and inequality in public higher education was in place before 1900. More recent events, associated with Office of Civil Rights activities, indicate that a dual system remains intact more than a century later. Note that this dual system served as a model for Southern states where primary and secondary public education was implemented in the first decades of the 20th century. The states, assisted by the federal government and corporate philanthropies, proceeded to build a public school system founded on the ideology of white supremacy and an infrastructure of segregation, discrimination, and inequality.

Corporate Philanthropy and the Ideology of Progressivism

The Southern Education Movement brought together regional reformers, transplanted Southerners, such as North Carolina native and journalist Walter Hines Page, and the scions of America’s Eastern Establishment, including John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to support public education in the South. Organizers hoped to build on the earlier successes of the Peabody Education Fund, established in 1868 to support both black and white schools in the “suffering South,” and the John F. Slater Fund, started in 1882 to assist African American education.

Significantly, movement leaders not only focused on the South's status as the most economically and educationally underdeveloped region in the United States, but also on the region's widespread support of militant populism which threatened the plans of Southern reformers and Northern businessmen who hoped to "modernize" and industrialize the region (Brown 1979, 44). Billings contends that "the southern education movement served the needs of the South's developing industrial system, just as progressivism generally contributed to the development of the American corporate economy" (Billings 1979, 208). In both cases, reformers "sought not so much to democratize the industrial system as to make it run more efficiently" (Lasch 1969, 10). "Universal" education furnished a substitute for older and cruder methods of social control that were coercive, hence undemocratic, as well as inefficient. "Even when they originated in humanitarian impulses, progressive ideals led not to a philosophy of liberation but to a blueprint for control" (Lasch 1969, 10).

In the North, school administrators and industrialists adopted the factory model of production as a blueprint for school organization. Ellwood Cubberley's (1916) influential publication, *Public School Administration*, described schools as factories:

"Our schools are, in a sense, factories in which the raw products (children) are to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the various demands of life. The specifications for manufacturing come from the demands of the twentieth-century civilization, and it is the business of the school to build its pupils to the specifications laid down. This demands good tools, specialized machinery, continuous measurement of production to see if it is according to specifications, the elimination of waste in manufacture, and a large variety in the output" (quoted in Persell 1977, 41).

The idea of shaping human raw materials to meet the demands of 20th century life, or of producing human capital through education, appealed to Southern reformers. The factory model of schooling, as defined by the industrial Northeast, offered Southern elites a “progressive” substitute for the plantation model of social control and the tenancy system which replaced it. North Carolina Governor Charles B. Aycock, the South’s first education governor, explained the value of schooling that trained students for their “life work.”

I find in the State men who think that the negro [sic] has gone backward rather than forward and that education is injurious to him. Have these men forgotten that the negro [sic] was well educated before the War? Do they not recall that he was trained in those things essential for his life work? He has been less educated since the War than before. It is true that he has been sent to school, but his contact with the old planter and with the accomplished and elegant wife of that planter has been broken. This contact was in itself a better education than he can receive from the public schools, but shall we, for this reason, say that he is incapable of training? Ought we not, on the contrary, to study the conditions and realize that the training which he needs has not been given to him since the War in like manner that it was before (Connor and Poe 1912, 132)?

Southern Education Movement reformers embraced the philosophy of education as a blueprint for social control during a period of economic restructuring and political upheaval. Their ideology of “progressive” education appealed to investors outside the region and diminished political opposition within the region. Additionally, it established a basis for organizing popular consent among rural whites, many of whom joined the Southern Farmers’ Alliance and the Populist movement in the 1880s and 1890s. Small

farmers joined these uprisings to protest the increasing dominance of large-scale agricultural, commercial, and industrial interests and the concomitant growth of social, economic, and political inequities. In the short run, a flurry of successes, notably in North Carolina, suggested the potential for democratic reform; in the long run, the Populist movement, and its prospects of "excessive democracy" increased the cohesion of the elites and solidified the one-party South (Cobb 1988, 57; Billings 1979, 208; Jeffrey 1975).

Charles W. Dabney, SEB member and President of the University of Tennessee, spoke to philanthropists at the Fourth Conference for Education in the South's 1901 meeting in Winston-Salem, NC. He glossed over the causes of Southern poverty which, from the populist perspective, implicated the Northern capitalists in his audience. "The southern people are poor -- many of them extremely poor. Their schools are poor because they are poor; but the converse is equally true -- the people are poor because the schools are poor...we can measure the wealth-earning power of a people by the school privileges which they enjoy" (Harlan 1958, 84).

Corporate philanthropy, in the form of foundations established and controlled by members of the corporate class, funded the Southern Education Movement and provided a means for industrialists to shape and guide policymaking in Southern political and social institutions. "The position taken toward white supremacy by these Northern capitalists, who may have been genuinely concerned about the social and economic constraints placed on blacks by Southern whites, was completely consistent with their views on white racial and ethnic superiority as practiced in the North" (Carnoy 1974, 292). Involvement in the transformation of education and health care provided the best opportunities for corporate

philanthropy to rationalize and systematize social institutions to make them better serve the needs of corporate capitalism and to ameliorate intolerable conditions of illiteracy and illness (Brown 1979, 58). Thus, the blueprint for social control was designed in the boardrooms of major corporations. Despite official foundation reports that portray their benefactors as passive gatekeepers who objectively selected their beneficiaries from applicant pools and reluctantly accepted "local" Southern racial norms in pursuit of humanitarian goals, financiers pursued their own agenda (Stanfield 1985, 185). Then, and now, these agenda focus on the primacy of sociopolitical control issues, not the search for objective truth or the pursuit of social justice.

Corporate philanthropy allows financiers and industrialists to play a role in the production of knowledge, and in the implementation of education policy. The knowledge they produce is socially constructed, and not a value-free intellectual product. Stanfield argues that "more often than not...philanthropists and foundation officers had their own ideas about the world and sought accommodating beneficiaries to carry them out" (Stanfield 1985, 10). They supported social science research as well as school policies to justify the subordination of eastern and Southern European immigrants in the urban North and to rationalize racial caste arrangements in the rural South. The research agenda and education reform efforts focused on maintaining a consensual social system through accommodation (in the case of Southern blacks) and assimilation (urban Eastern Europeans). But these efforts used the language of positivistic science and "progressivism" to standardize procedures and philosophies and to create formal criteria. Stanfield (1985, 187) claims that official histories and published annual reports mystify

their contributions with expressions of bureaucratic, rational, and formal criteria. In reality, their culture of giving is organized to coordinate information, exchange personnel, and award funds to "trustworthy" individuals, not to impersonal institutions.

General Education Board

Rockefeller's General Education Board (GEB), officially sanctioned by a 1903 Congressional Charter as a general education agency, became the main avenue for Rockefeller involvement in national education policy, both public and private, and at all levels. By 1909, the GEB had contributed more than \$53 million to education, primarily in the South. Although the GEB contributed more to the Southern Education Board than other philanthropies and foundations, it was not the only contributor. The families of Rockefeller, Rosenwald, Carnegie and other financiers formed a network of "giving" institutional elites whose "culture of giving" influenced education policy and defined social scientific research agenda for the first half of the 20th century (Stanfield 1985, 187). Among these corporate elites, the GEB acquired "virtually monopolistic control of educational philanthropy for the South and the Negro" (Harlan 1958, 87).

Unlike the loosely organized SEB, the GEB operations conformed to norms of organizational efficiency. In the spirit of "progressivism," the board established "rational" policies tying funding decisions to more "efficient" and "businesslike" methods of school administration. The GEB established alliances with state boards of education as well as state and local officials to replace non-professional reformers with professional educators. In the spirit of universalism, the GEB stated its purpose -- "the promotion of education

within the United States without distinction of race, sex or creed" (Gatewood 1960). Despite their stated progressive and universalistic criteria, the GEB funding for Southern schools never challenged the caste-like requirements that assigned inferior occupations and schooling to blacks (Gatewood 1960, 36). In fact, the GEB used its tremendous influence to promote industrial education for blacks, and to assure white control of black institutions, thus fitting African Americans for a secure, stable, and subordinate economic position (Ayers 1992, 419).

The GEB may have claimed to promote education without distinction of race, sex, or creed, but like most foundations, its board consisted exclusively of white males. In more than a half-century of operation, only one woman ever served as a trustee. Between 1928 and 1948, the Rosenwald Fund board included one black male and a few women, including the Rosenwald daughters and Eleanor Roosevelt. But Administrator Edwin R. Embree, who supported those appointments, hesitated to appoint more women, asserting that women lacked qualifications. He explained the value of women for perpetuating the species and for providing accurate and devoted "service" at less cost than men, but concluded that women were incapable of providing leadership (Stanfield 1985, 111-118). Until 1970, all trustees of the Carnegie Corporation were white, Protestant, and male, with the exception of Mrs. Andrew Carnegie and her daughter (Lagemann 1989, 219).

The membership of the corporate philanthropies was open to only a very limited number of white men. The close association between the GEB and the SEB, as well as other foundations and philanthropies such as the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the Peabody Fund, resulted in the creation of interlocking directorates and the exchange of personnel

(Stanfield 1985, 187). "In fact, a more interlocking directorate could not be found, even among the Standard Oil Companies" (Brown 1979, 46). The existence of interlocking trustees resulted from explicit agreements between the GEB and the other organizations to secure "harmony of purpose and unity" (Barrow 1990, 63).

These associations permitted a small number of people to control the disbursal of a large amount of funds and to wield extraordinary power as education policymakers. Board members regularly discussed their problems at each other's meetings (Barrow 1990, 63). Former Confederate officer and Alabama Senator J. L. M. Curry served as a member of the SEB, the GEB, the Peabody Fund, and the Slater Fund. Philanthropist George F. Peabody served as treasurer for both the SEB and the GEB (Woodward 1951, 403). UNC President Edwin Alderman served as a GEB trustee. Abraham Flexner, first hired to write a report on medical education funded by the Carnegie Foundation and the American Medical Association, was later hired to implement the AMA recommendations, then served as a GEB trustee. Similar patterns occurred within foundations and social science research institutes. Howard W. Odum, who became chairman of the UNC Chapel Hill Sociology Department in 1921 and who founded the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, received financial support from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the GEB. Odum served as a trustee on the Rosenwald Fund and on the "kitchen cabinets" of all the other foundations. It is noteworthy that the SEB adopted the Hampton-Tuskegee model of black industrial education and hired Booker T. Washington as its agent, but did not permit him to attend board meetings (Brown 1979, 45).

Despite its “special interest” in southern education, the GEB operated as a national organization. By 1964, when funds were exhausted, the GEB had spent more than \$300 million on education throughout the United States, awarding grants to public and private schools, from grade school through graduate and professional school. Its practice of connecting funding decisions to “rational,” “scientific” standards played a central role in closing medical schools and restructuring medical education. A disproportionate number of “substandard” and “inefficient” schools which closed were those attended by poor and working class men, African Americans, and women (Link 1992, 124-130; Hine 1985). As a result of the efforts of the “Rockefeller Medicine Men” all three medical colleges for women and all but two medical colleges for African Americans closed (Brown 1979, 149).

Objections to Corporate Philanthropy

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) criticized the “educational trust” and complained that the nation’s education was becoming “Rockefellerized.” Not only did the GEB subsidize state and local school operations, it subsidized the US Bureau of Education at the national level. AFL leader Samuel Gompers cited a US Senate report showing that one hundred and fifty-two US education officials received only one dollar of their salary from the government and the remainder of their paycheck from the Rockefeller Foundation. Referring to these employees as “dollar people,” whose work carried the prestige of government authorization but represented private interests, Gompers discerned a conflict of interest. Not only did he criticize Rockefeller and Standard Oil for “ruthless

and discreditable” methods of accumulating wealth, he also objected to private control of public education. He recommended:

If the Rockefellers really wish to serve the cause of education, let them turn the Foundation over to the nation to be used and controlled by representatives responsible to the people. Let the people determine what kind of education is best for them and determine to what agencies educational affairs shall be entrusted (Gompers 1917, 207).

Gompers persisted with his criticism, challenging the Rockefeller Foundation’s “humanitarian” interests throughout the world, and describing Rockefeller interests as international. “Power can be entrenched by acquiring control of the sources of information in all countries,” Gompers wrote, citing medical information campaigns in China, the Southern States, Egypt, and Latin America. “If freedom is to be maintained in this and other lands private enterprise must not be permitted to control sources of information...or the avenues of education” (Gompers 1917, 207-208).

In a similar vein, Stanfield argues that corporate philanthropies carefully selected “safe” black scholars to conduct race-relations research. Those who expressed “blatant integrationist, nationalist, culturally pluralistic, or Marxist perspectives were seldom considered for funding” (Stanfield 1985, 194). During the first half of the century, W. E. B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, and Carter G. Woodson seldom received foundation support because their views were considered too radical. Although Du Bois portrayed himself as a foe of philanthropists, and periodically lashed out at them from the NAACP’s *Crisis*, he sometimes needed and received foundation support for his research and

foundations occasionally needed him for political reasons.⁶ The Slater Fund contributed to his "Negro in America" research project at Atlanta University in the 1900s. The Carnegie Foundation urged Jackson Davis of the General Education Board not to support Du Bois, not only because he was perceived as a radical, but also because it appeared that his efforts to produce a Negro Encyclopedia would interfere with the Carnegie publication, Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma* (1944). Du Bois and his co-editor's encyclopedia project never produced anything more substantial than publication of a preliminary volume (Stanfield 1985, 194-195).

The GEB, like the SEB, accepted the constraints of white supremacy, supporting schooling which conformed to Southern white expectations -- separate and unequal funding for primary and secondary education, "industrial education" for blacks, and a more traditional liberal-arts college education for a few whites. The GEB ignored financial appeals from private black colleges which offered the traditional academic curriculum, and responded to requests from industrial schools. Nonetheless, these concessions to white supremacy provoked dissatisfaction from Southern traditionalists such as Mississippi Senator James K. Vardaman. "What the North is sending the South is not money," he said, "but dynamite; this education is ruining our Negroes. They're demanding equality" (Fosdick 1962, 3). The movement's acquiescence to racism alienated others, including hopeful African Americans, who saw the racial distribution of funds to

⁶ In 1944 Du Bois lost his job as chairman of the sociology department at Atlanta University following a ten-year battle with a Rockefeller representative. Florence Matilda Read, described by black faculty members as Rockefeller's white "overseer," served as President of Spelman, treasurer of Atlanta University, and a Morehouse board member. Read, neither a scholar nor an educator, signed Atlanta University's checks. Du Bois failed to appear on the faculty payroll in the fall of 1944 (Branch 1988, 56-60).

black industrial schools and white colleges as a means of perpetuating injustice (Harlan 1958, 8, 94; Tindall 1967, 268; Tyack and Cuban 1995, 18). Du Bois critiqued the role of white corporate philanthropy in his remarks on the death of SEB president Robert C. Ogden. Du Bois wrote that “a self-conscious, self-helping Negro was beyond Mr. Ogden’s conception,” adding that Ogden wished for blacks to do well but only in positions “he was sure...they ought to occupy” (Kluger 1976, 100).

The Rosenwald Fund

The Rosenwald Fund, conceived by Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee staff in 1910, began operating in 1914, and represented a massive effort to improve black rural schooling in the South through a public-private partnership. Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and a Tuskegee trustee, offered matching grants to rural communities interested in building black schools. Washington and Rosenwald hoped to improve black school facilities, to promote black and white cooperation during the days of Jim Crow, and to spur local communities to support black education (Hanchett 1988, 387). Because the Great Migration of rural blacks away from the South started in full force at the same time, many national and regional leaders supported building schools in rural black communities as a means to retain black labor (Anderson 1988, 152). NC School Superintendent J. Y. Joyner addressed the importance of black education to curtail black migration and to maintain white economic interests in his biennial report for 1908-09 and 1909-10: “It is manifest to me that if the Negroes become convinced that they are to be deprived of their schools and of the opportunities of an education, most of the wisest

and most self-respecting Negroes will leave the state and eventually there will be left here only the indolent, worthless and criminal part of the Negro population” (Du Bois 1927a, 79). In addition to such appeals to white self-interest, and to reassure white employers, the Rosenwald program emphasized education only through the eighth grade, supplemented by “industrial” classes in farming and home economics. Rosenwald schools educated black students to be good farmers and did not equip them with the skills to leave rural life (Hanchett 1988, 427).

When the Rosenwald program ended in 1932, more than 5,300 Rosenwald Buildings existed in 15 Southern states. As a result of the program, black elementary schools were not excellent, but for the first time, the rural South had a viable system of universal education (Anderson 1988, 152), if only through the eighth grade. North Carolina constructed 813 Rosenwald buildings, including 787 school-houses, 18 teachers’ residences, and 8 industrial education shops. These projects exceeded the number built in any other state (Hanchett 1988, 408). Eventually, all but 7 of North Carolina’s 100 counties built at least one Rosenwald School, but the highest concentration of fund-raising and school construction occurred in “black-belt” tobacco growing counties in the East and cotton-growing counties in the southern piedmont region (Hanchett 1988, 416).

During the 1920s, the Rosenwald Fund distributed blueprints for school buildings that clearly emphasized their vocational purpose. Each Rosenwald school contained an “industrial room” where girls could be taught cooking and sewing and the boys could learn farming and working with tools. Also, buildings were designed to be used as community meeting centers (Hanchett 1988, 401-405).

The Rosenwald Fund specified that state departments of public education disburse funds, building on GEB financial support for Southern states to hire professional administrators to deal with rural education. North Carolina's administrator for black schools from 1913 to 1950, N. C. Newbold, assembled one of the largest black education staffs in the South and led the region in black school construction. In 1921, the North Carolina General Assembly created the Division of Negro Education within the State Department of Public Instruction. The staff consisted of Director Newbold, three black and two white administrators, and a secretarial staff. The Division of Negro Education directed the Rosenwald Program, supervised black state colleges and teacher training activities, oversaw black high schools and elementary schools, and administered the Anna T. Jeanes⁷ program (Hanchett 1988, 406-408). During the 1920s, the number of black schools offering secondary level instruction increased from 28 to 111, the number of accredited black secondary schools increased from 8 to 54. No other Southern state developed public secondary schools for African Americans as rapidly, owing to the efforts of the Division staff (Hudson 1976, 55).

The Rosenwald Fund for school construction required each local community to raise money to match foundation grants. The fund set maximum amounts it would contribute to any building. Generally, state funds paid approximately half of the construction costs; local black private contributions and the Rosenwald Fund split the other half, but funding ratios varied by state. In North Carolina, the state contributed 64% of the building costs, but in Mississippi the state contributed only 10% (Du Bois 1927b,

⁷ The Anna T. Jeanes Foundation sent trained African American teachers throughout the South to provide demonstration lessons to rural black teachers in home economics and agriculture (Allison 1995, 150).

117). Still, the requirements for local black support imposed a double tax on the black community. But this tradition of “self-help” or double taxation developed among African-Americans before the Rosenwald Fund. Rural black Southerners, “living in a cash short economy and virtually disfranchised by public school authorities, paid from their limited resources a tremendous private cost for their ‘public’ education” (Anderson 1988, 161). Black sharecroppers usually received their pay as a share of the crop at harvest, but communities gathered money for Rosenwald schoolhouses a penny and a nickel at a time. Sometimes a “Snuff Box Brigade,” consisting of children who carried snuff boxes to collect pennies, nickels and dimes, helped raise money. But their donations came from a poor working class of women who washed and ironed clothes for white families, children who chopped cotton, and men who worked at hard labor (Anderson 1988, 162).

One North Carolinian observed the practice of “box parties” in 1924:

“Box parties” are often given to raise money for a school building. An acre of cotton may be planted and the profits from the sale of it applied on the school. In many sections hogs and chickens are raised by the community to obtain money for buildings. At Lumber Ridge, in Robeson County, the people gave seventy thousand feet of lumber for framing and sheathing. This was cut from their own lands, hauled by their own teams to a saw mill owned by themselves, sawed by bill, and laid down on a school lot purchased with their own funds (Hanchett 1988, 415).

These accounts of “snuff box brigades” and “box parties” suggest that whites benignly accepted black self-help efforts to build schools. The *Crisis* reported an account of one black man in Columbus County, NC who led the fundraising in his community in 1922. At first black residents were asked to give \$250, but gradually the amount was

raised until they actually gave \$1,630. Meanwhile, the local leader suffered complaints from white neighbors that his wife did not take in washing and he received harassment from the KKK. One night a mob took him into the woods and horsewhipped him (Du Bois 1927a, 80). The *Crisis* also noted that between 1917 and 1927 ten lynchings occurred in North Carolina. Despite these acts of violence, the *Crisis* concluded: "North Carolina is not out of the shadows, but she is one hundred years ahead of Georgia" (Du Bois 1927a, 80).

Anderson attributes the success of the Rosenwald building program to "black southerners' enduring beliefs in universal schooling and their collective social actions to achieve it" (Anderson 1988, 153). Rural blacks absorbed the contributions of these funds into the long-standing tradition of "self-help" or double taxation that developed among African-Americans long before the Rosenwald Fund. "Southern state school officials recognized that black citizens were willing to tax themselves voluntarily to obtain school buildings, equipment, and teachers, and officials encouraged this voluntary action." In some states, including North Carolina, "school authorities viewed double taxation as a necessary and just burden to be borne by black citizens." Newbold expected black citizens to rely on their meager private resources to build "public" schools while the school tax, paid by black and white citizens, was used disproportionately to build schools for white children (Anderson 1988, 183).

Spurred by the Rosenwald program, North Carolina dramatically increased its investment in black schools. Between 1919-1920 and 1927-1928 North Carolina black schools increased in value from \$1.28 million to \$4.53 million. But white school boards

upgraded white facilities even faster. In the same time period the appraised value of rural white schools rose from \$10.69 million to \$50.05 million, nearly a fivefold increase. In fact, the ratio between spending for white students and spending for blacks continued to widen. In 1914-1915, North Carolina spent \$2.77 per white pupil for every \$1.00 per black student, but in 1932 the state spent \$3.11 per white pupil for every \$1.00 per black pupil (Hanchett 1988, 423).

From Anderson's point of view, "when the Rosenwald school building program ended in the early 1930s, rural black southerners had much to be proud of and much to regret" (Rosenwald 1988, 179). In 1932, more than one-fourth of all black schoolchildren in the South attended Rosenwald schools. The process of double taxation and collective social action enabled rural communities to improve their schools; however, this same process was unjust and oppressive. "Their accommodation to double taxation helped extend over them the power of their oppressors" (Rosenwald 1988, 179), and made state and local policies that denied black children the benefits of tax-supported public education easier and more tolerable for both whites and blacks (Anderson 1988, 179-185).

On a more positive note, the Rosenwald fund produced a much more developed elementary school system for black children. By 1935, enough elementary schools had been built to permit the majority of black children to enroll in school. Remarkable differences in black enrollment patterns occurred between 1900 and 1940. During earlier decades African Americans valued schooling, but frequently could not act on their values because they lacked the opportunity to attend school. In 1900, the proportion of black children of elementary school age who attended school was significantly lower than the

corresponding proportion of white children. Of black children aged 5 to 14, only 36% were in school but 55% of white children attended. The school attendance rate of black children 5 to 14 years of age increased from 36% in 1900 to 78% in 1940, and the corresponding rate for whites went from 55% in 1900 to 79% in 1940. "The remarkable transformation of black school attendance behavior reflected the intersection of enduring educational values with changing educational opportunities" (Anderson 1988, 179-181).

The experiences of double taxation, harassment, and violence indicate a strong desire among Southern blacks to educate their children and a willingness to sacrifice for it. But these experiences also say a great deal about racism, powerlessness, taxation without representation, and oppression. African Americans submitted to the process because they believed that it was the only way to obtain any education for their children, a way to improve their economic circumstances, and a means to develop their communities. Like previous self-help efforts, these strategies provided a means to sustain passageways to better times (Anderson 1988, 185).

The Rosenwald Fund discontinued its school-building program in the early 1930s. Edwin R. Embree, then director, recommended federal aid to education. In a Rosenwald publication entitled *School Money in Black and White*, Embree wrote: "A national equalization of school expenditures would greatly benefit the poorer states... Federal Funds which are or may be made available for public education should be so distributed so as to guarantee equity and to correct the present glaring inequalities in the use of school funds between the children of different races" (Hanchett 1988, 425). Later, in *Investment in People*, Embree and Waxman wrote that equality of opportunity can be realized only

when segregation is outlawed (Hanchett 1988, 425). Despite these recommendations, the pattern of separate and unequal education continued. The task of overturning segregation remained for the next generation. Not until the Supreme Court's *Sweatt v. Painter* decision in 1950 did state officials make serious efforts to upgrade black education.

Smith-Hughes: Vocational Education and the Compromised Curriculum

Vocational education received federal support with passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. The purpose of federal intervention at this time was not to correct inequities of race, class or region. Ostensibly, the federal government hoped to augment the growth of industrialization and to make the United States more competitive in world markets. American business leaders who feared Germany's activities in world markets and admired its educational system urged Congress to intervene in primary and secondary education to prepare students for their "life work." Larabee (1987) maintains that the problem facing the United States at this time was not industrialization *per se* but the structural transition to corporate capitalism and the threat it posed to the existing social order. The structural tension between participatory democracy and the impetus toward increasing inequality associated with the intensification of capitalism had a substantial impact on public education early in the 20th century. As a result of this structural transition, public schools adopted a curricular compromise to provide open access to schools in return for differentiated instruction (Larabee 1987, 489).

The Smith-Hughes legislation clearly separated vocational training from academic training, established the need for a differentiated curriculum, and provided federal money

to support it (Spring 1986, 208-212). The act “gave legitimacy to task- and role-oriented education and staked out a political role for the central government in the education of its citizens” (Mink 1995, 87). It legitimated the idea of class-based education which assumed that children of the masses of the population were best served by vocational programs and children from families of greater means were suited for academic programs (Krug 1964, 243-244). It also legitimated the practice of race-based vocational education for agricultural and domestic workers, and the practice of gender-based education.

Northern schools focused on creating an industrial workforce, not only among European immigrants, but also among African Americans who left the South in The Great Migration. Southern schools used the program and the ideology of vocational education to support agricultural and domestic education. Both regions geared training to maintaining gender, race, ethnic and class inequalities in the occupational structure, thereby turning schools into “nurseries of inequality” (Mink 1995, 109; Urban 1981, 126).

Although supporters of the Smith-Hughes Act claimed to promote the spread of democracy through vocational education, in their view, democratization was less “a matter of opening opportunities than of reconstructing individuals to fit labor market needs” (Mink 1995, 85-85). The process of selecting individuals for appropriate “life work” and meeting labor market needs was institutionalized through vocational guidance. Early on, vocational guidance counselors were defined as part labor specialist, part educator, and part psychologist, but ultimately the role of psychologist became the most important one. Vocational guidance counselors used aptitude tests to assess occupational abilities and

intelligence testing to classify students by ability. These so-called scientific measures were used to promote “efficiency” and “progress.”

The US Army used intelligence testing during World War I to place nearly two million recruits in jobs suited to their abilities. With the expansion of public schools that followed the War, interest grew in using the tests to sort students by ability. Edward Lee Thorndike, a noted educational psychologist, interpreted intelligence test scores to indicate that a person’s native ability could not be improved by education; therefore, the best use of testing was to place students into an appropriate course of study for their life’s work (Thorndike 1924). But the scientific categorization of students by ability led to sifting students on the basis of a priori assumptions about their roles in life based on class, gender, race, ethnicity, and region.

Thorndike and other psychologists received philanthropic support for their research. Thorndike received \$325,000 from the Carnegie Foundation from 1918 to 1934. Thorndike, as well as Terman and Goddard, promoted theories of genetically inherited intelligence and claimed to offer “scientific proof” of the superiority of some races and the inferiority of others. Not coincidentally the psychologists found that the inferior peoples included people of color in the United States and overseas as well as recent immigrants employed by the industrial philanthropists including Poles, Slavs, Italians, and others. Scientific elites simply documented that the hierarchy of class and race was as it should be. The United States was indeed the land of opportunity where those at the top and at the bottom deserved to be there (Kushnick 1996, 61).

As with most reforms, vocational guidance acquired vastly different meanings among different groups. One professional psychologist, Margaret Cobb, writing in a 1922 issue of the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, observed vast IQ differences between Southern states and the other states in the nation. She concluded that 75% or more of Southern children lacked the ability for an academic high school education. Obviously this number included both black and white students who shared a similar socioeconomic status. With a pointed reference to Smith-Hughes funds, i.e., “federal aid which is coming,” she suggested the need to create a differentiated curriculum for regions:

There is here a fertile field for pioneer work in originating a curriculum which will fit their needs, for discovering what these children can and should be taught and what methods of presentation best reach them. What can best replace the academic curriculum for these children, to yield satisfaction in their own lives and enable them to become satisfactory citizens of a democracy? When educational authorities in the South see this as peculiarly *their* problem, and, with the increased federal aid which is coming, direct their efforts to solving it in their own way for their own region, rather than adopting the solutions of progressive western states where the proportions if not the conditions of the problem are quite different, we may expect new developments in secondary education which will command the attention of all (Cobb 1922, 553-554).

Apparently, Cobb viewed the education of all Southern children, white and black, as problematic. Southern white elites interpreted vocational testing and guidance somewhat differently. These “modern” methods could be used to sustain existing economic and social arrangements. Standardized tests granted an air of objectivity to the process of sorting, selecting, and assigning students, both black and white, to their proper

place. The guidance component, focusing on student adjustment, provided the means to teach black students to accept their caste status as natural, logical, and morally right (Thomas 1981, 182). The same can be said for the use of guidance to teach lower status white students to accept their class status and to teach young women to accept a subordinate status. Although professional educators promoted vocational guidance and testing as democratic, these "school practices were in fact leading to an intellectual aristocracy..." (Thomas 1981, 184). Within this aristocracy, "intelligence testing was effectively fitting black students to what they were to continue to be in light of what other groups wanted them to remain" (Thomas 1981, 184).

Vocational education, including guidance and testing, originated as part of the progressive agenda for modernization, democratization, and efficiency. But according to the terms of this agenda, social boundaries between black and white, rich and poor, male and female, and even North and South became more rigid than before. Du Bois contested claims that vocational education promoted democracy. In his view, only education that universalized opportunity could be an ally of democracy. Public schools in the North as well as those in the South failed to do so. In the 1920s Du Bois wrote:

Education in the public schools by races or by classes means the perpetuation of race and class feeling throughout the land. It means the establishment of group hostility in those tender years of development when prejudices tend to become "natural" and "instinctive"....It is the plain duty of all true Americans who believe in democracy and broad human development to oppose this spread of segregation in the public schools (quoted in Mink 1995, 110).

Larabee refers to the early 20th century differentiated curriculum as a compromise between equality and inequality that undergirds public education today (Larabee 1987, 491). Democratic ideology compelled politicians and educators to offer universal primary and secondary education. Both the Southern tradition of private education for white elites, and the Northern practice of common elementary schools but exclusive public high schools, failed to meet demands for expanded public schooling for all. Open access threatened the process whereby the minority who graduated from high school and college achieved a competitive advantage when they joined the white middle class labor force. The use of testing for sorting and the implementation of the differentiated curriculum provided the means to mold people to fit existing social and occupational roles (National Education Association 1990, 28). Testing enabled the white middle class to maintain their social and occupational roles without barring the doors to poor whites, immigrants, and African Americans. It served the interests of business elites and established a competitive advantage for the white middle class, while it maintained ideological consistency with the tenets of democracy. The compromise that offered open access in return for differentiated instruction at the beginning of the century became more important after mid-century when legally sanctioned segregation began to break down. This compromise was uneasy from the beginning, but the recent *Bell Curve* debates have renewed interest, debate, and conflict about the terms of the compromise.

Professional Education

Corporate philanthropy played a prominent role in restructuring American medical education at the turn-of-the-century. Efforts to improve scientific “standards” and “efficiency” in medical education, ostensibly to upgrade the profession, severely restricted educational and occupational opportunities for minorities and women. The AMA’s Council on Medical Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching jointly sponsored a critical evaluation of 155 medical schools, published in 1910 as Abraham Flexner’s *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*. Known as the “Flexner Report,” this penetrating critique of the low-level of medical training in the United States provided the AMA with the means to achieve ideological domination in the field of medicine. It suggested improving the quality of health care and the socioeconomic status of physicians by significantly reducing the number of undertrained professionals. This reduction was accomplished by simultaneously closing inadequate medical schools and adopting higher admission standards for the remaining ones. Although closings did not reach Flexner’s recommended reduction from 155 to 31 schools, the total number of medical schools did fall to 79 by 1920 (Schudson 1974; Savitt 1987; Walsh 1977).

Flexner selected the Johns Hopkins Medical School, established in 1893, as a model for medical education reform. Hopkins implemented a four year curriculum, emphasized high entrance requirements including pre-medical studies in the sciences, and affiliated with a university and a hospital to emphasize laboratory and clinical work. Most importantly, it employed a full-time faculty of research scientists and clinical instructors. Predictably, the consequences of implementing these changes had their greatest impact on

“less competitive, academically inferior, and unendowed medical schools -- precisely those institutions which attracted lower-class white males, blacks, and women” (Hine 1985, 514). All three women’s medical colleges closed.

Flexner recommended closing all but two black medical schools, Howard in Washington, DC and Meharry in Nashville, TN. His accurate but damning portrayal of facilities and resources at six lesser known schools, including the Leonard Medical School of Shaw University in Raleigh, NC, impeded their fundraising efforts. Flexner’s appointment to the Rockefeller Foundation’s General Education Board (GEB) in 1912 ended their chances for additional GEB funding. From his position as general secretary and trustee of the board, from 1912 to 1928, Flexner controlled disbursement of millions of dollars to shape his vision of medical education.

Flexner, and the foundations, exercised pervasive influence in Southern education through the US Bureau of Education (USBE). P. P. Claxton, University of Tennessee educator and member of the SEB, headed the USBE 1911-1921. He, like his predecessors, relied on foundations and the GEB to conduct and support specialized studies in lieu of the USBE doing its own work. When North Carolina requested a survey of its institutions of higher education, Claxton advised USBE employee Samuel Capen that he needed to be “Carnegieized” and “to go see Flexner” (Barrow 1990, 109-112).

The Flexner Report on medical education not only passed judgment on training provided at black medical schools, but also assessed the fitness of women and minority students for the profession. In Flexner’s medical hierarchy women made better patients than doctors (Brown 1979, 149), and blacks made better sanitarians than surgeons.

Flexner belittled the intellectual capabilities of blacks, assumed that black doctors and nurses would serve only their own race, and recommended training black sanitarians, not surgeons. Partly Flexner's interest in well-trained black sanitarians reflected his concern for protecting the health of whites who might be infected by their black neighbors and employees. He contended that "a well-taught Negro sanitarian will be immensely useful" but "an essentially untrained Negro wearing an MD degree is dangerous" (Hine 1978, 177).

The Flexner report and the AMA's efforts to reform medical education severely restricted opportunities for African Americans and limited the number of black physicians. Whereas the number of practicing physicians increased dramatically between 1890 and 1910 -- from 900 to 3400, growth stopped after 1910 and did not resume until the 1960s. Meharry was the only medical school in the South that admitted black students until Arkansas admitted Edith Mae Irby in 1948. North Carolina medical examiners prohibited Meharry graduates from taking the state licensing exam during years when the school received a "B" rating. The University of North Carolina and most Southern schools began admitting blacks on a token basis in the 1950s, but continued to deny internships and residencies to them. The AMA refused membership to African American physicians until 1964 (Hine 1985, 525; Schudson 1974; Sullivan 1977, 185).

In Flexner's view, 20th century medicine had become a science. Education reform, based on scientific "standards" and "efficiency," would upgrade the profession. Flexner acknowledged criticism that raising "standards" would close the profession to the poor, but he analyzed financial data to show that medical colleges having the lowest

standards cost the most to operate. He failed to consider the costs of prerequisite undergraduate education. Schools that served less affluent and minority students typically offered an extra year of training for remediation, an expense that elite schools did not incur (Schudson 1974; Hine 1985).

Flexner disagreed with critics who feared that a fewer number of physicians with more credentials would prefer more lucrative practices in urban areas to small town and rural areas; but critics's fears were realized in the second half of the 20th century with evidence of a maldistribution of physicians. Flexner claimed that better trained physicians constituted a greater public good: "Reorganization along rational lines involves the strengthening, not the weakening, of democratic principle, because it tends to provide the conditions upon which well-being and effectual liberty depend" (Flexner 1910, 155; Schudson 1974, 359).

The Flexner report established a "rational" basis for the professionalization of medicine in the United States. The reorganization of medicine as a monopoly of university-trained white men which excluded blacks and women did not strengthen democracy. The professionalization of medicine empowered universities to train and to credential a professional elite and institutionalized the "reproduction of a stratified class structure in American society based on both race and class" (Takaki 1993, 207). Further, it became part of an emerging "culture of professionalism" whereby a hegemony of experts acquired control of specialized knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

RACE, REFORM, AND INEQUALITY

Periodically, changes in the world-system, and changes in the US position in the system, produce a shift in the structures that mediate inequality. In the post-World War II era, the United States emerged as the dominant power in a world-system that experienced vast political and economic reorganization. US hegemony was built on a strong economic base and military power (Wallerstein 1992, 10-11). "The only serious obstacle the United States perceived in the world political arena was the Soviet Union, ...the only other significant military power in the post-1945 world and the political center of the world Communist movement..." (Wallerstein 1992, 5). The Soviet Union posed its greatest challenge to the United States in the ideological sphere, not the economic one. Despite many ideological debates throughout the postwar period about socialism vs. capitalism, both US and Soviet "political leaders perceived a *shared* cultural rule let loose in the world: humans of all races were of equal worth and equal dignity. They saw this rule being stringently applied to any country claiming a leadership role..." (Skrentny 1998, 242).

As the White House and the State Department worked to expand US political and economic influence in the new world order, they found it increasingly difficult to defend white supremacy at home (Lyman 1991, 233). International media attention consisting of accounts of discrimination against non-white visiting dignitaries as well as against African

Americans tarnished the image of American democracy. School segregation was “singled out for hostile foreign comment” (Dudziak 1988, 111). The persistence of segregation raised questions about the US ability “to maintain its role as a leader of the free world, and to govern peacefully at home” (Dudziak 1988, 108). Global political pressure, as well as pressure from the US civil rights movement, helped define school desegregation as a Cold War imperative (Dudziak 1988, 62). Prior to the 1954 US Supreme Court ruling on five cases collectively known as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, world criticism of American race relations intensified. The *Brown* decision played an important role in defusing Cold War criticism of American race relations long before it desegregated any public schools; nonetheless, the *Brown* decision raised hopes for education equity. Celebrated as a change in ideology and practice, despite its failures, the *Brown* decision raises important questions about the US commitment to racial equality (Dudziak 1988, 120).

Much of the literature on desegregation, and the American civil rights movement in the 1940s and 1950s, fails to consider these subjects within the context of other important postwar events (Dudziak 1988, 63; Skrentny 1998, 237). Horne writes that “the fact that the *Brown* ruling came in the midst of a concerted governmental campaign against international and domestic communism is one of the most overlooked aspects of the decision” (Horne 1986, 227). A richness and variety of perspectives on school desegregation typically analyze the moral, economic, and political factors shaping court decisions and social activism, but most of them ignore the anti-Communist rhetoric and concern for international opinion that appears in primary historical documents relating to

desegregation (Dudziak 1988, 63). Some of the best studies of the US civil rights movement ignore the Cold War and the international context of development (Skrentny 1998, 237).¹ Also, scholars differ in their views of elite efforts to support civil rights, debating whether elites are motivated by political considerations or moral commitments to social equality (Dudziak 1988, 65). It cannot be disputed that moral considerations and political pressure from African Americans critically influenced policy decisions; but Dudziak (1988), Skrentny (1998), and Horne (1996) suggest that Cold War foreign policy imperatives significantly affected the Civil Rights movement and the *Brown* decision. These scholars reexamine desegregation in the context of the Cold War. Dudziak concludes that this reexamination may “cause us to recast our interpretations of the factors motivating the critical legal and cultural transformation that *Brown* has come to represent” (Dudziak 1988, 64).

Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal’s 1944 study, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy*, discussed racism not only in moral terms, but also in an international political context. He saw racial discrimination as always being at odds with the “American creed” and the tenets of American democracy, but emphasized that the dilemma “acquired tremendous international implications” in World War II. Myrdal wrote that “America, for its international prestige, power, and future security, needs to demonstrate to the world that American Negroes can be satisfactorily integrated

¹ Literature on the civil rights movement includes: R. Kluger. 1975. *Simple Justice*; M. Tushnet. 1987. *The NAACP’s Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education, 1925-1950*; D. Kirp. 1982. *Just Schools: The Idea of Racial Equality in American Education*; J. Bass. 1981. *Unlikely Heroes*; R. Wolters. 1984. *The Burden of Brown: Thirty Years of School Desegregation*; A. Morris. 1984. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*; P. Burstein. 1985. *Discrimination, Jobs and Politics*, and many others.

into its democracy” (Myrdal 1944, 1016). After World War II, the world audience became a significant factor in US civil rights decisions made by the White House, and supported by the State Department in the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations (Skrentny 1998, 245-249).²

This chapter shows that a number of US governmental policy elites who were engaged with the world audience (and not all of them were engaged with a world audience) supported school desegregation at mid-century as a pragmatic response to Cold War imperatives. Previously, historians have documented that many US officials in the late 1940s and 1950s were personally committed to racial justice (Dudziak 1988, 65). Recently, scholars have suggested that policymakers who may or may not have been committed to social justice responded to the international condemnation of segregation. At times, pragmatic political interests “converged” with humanitarian interests and bolstered the efforts of civil rights activists (Bell 1980); at other times, the pragmatic response delayed social justice. The Eisenhower Justice Department’s *amicus* briefs, for example, pragmatically supported the NAACP’s US Supreme Court case in *Brown v. Board of Education* (Dudziak 1988; Skrentny 1998), but the Eisenhower White House pragmatically refused to lobby Congress for Civil Rights legislation. Subsequently, most African American students, the intended beneficiaries of *Brown*, waited many years to attend desegregated schools. But officials realized immediate foreign policy benefits.

² These administrations employed various cabinet-level strategies. Truman created a Psychological Strategy Board which brought “the race problem” in international propaganda to his attention (Skrentny 1998, 252). Communications to Eisenhower cabinet members showed a sensitivity to international concerns for the racial “double-standard” in US and foreign policy. Vice-President Johnson spoke to the President’s Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity about “the genuineness of our democracy” following a trip to Africa. Kennedy called for regular meetings of a Civil Rights Subcabinet where assistant secretaries met to coordinate policy (Skrentny 1998, 250).

They used the *Brown* decision as an impression management strategy in their attempts to convince the world that problematic race relations were regional, not national. Legally ending US sanctioned support of segregation at the national level helped redefine race relations as a regional problem. Resistance at the state level occurred in part because state governors were less concerned with an international audience (Skrentny 1998, 246).

North Carolina's Governor Hodges, previously involved with the US State Department and with international business, was more sensitive to international press than most Southern governors, but no more committed to ending segregation.

Despite the *Brown* mandate, Hodges and other pragmatic Southern politicians, forestalled desegregation and strengthened their own state economic development efforts. "Moderate" Southern political leaders used impression management strategies to de-emphasize local resistance and to persuade potential national and international investors that moderation would prevail in race relations and thereby guarantee stable economic relations. The success of "moderate" states in delaying desegregation and promoting economic development then became an impression management strategy in the hands of corporate and government elites to temper resistance in more reactionary Southern states, including Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

In the 1950s, complex domestic and international events affected decisions made by national and state elites to support or to impede school desegregation. This chapter questions whether executive branch support for school reform at mid-century, as defined by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision to end *de jure* segregation, was a substantive commitment to improve education for African American citizens, or a

symbolic act and a pragmatic strategy to help legitimate the US position in the world-system. This research shows that Cold War public officials were not the first to use education reform as an impression management strategy or to benefit from it. It raises questions about the intended and unintended beneficiaries of all education reform strategies, and the role of impression management in education reform.

Impression Management

Impression management, a process defined by Erving Goffman (1959), consists of an individual's attempts to influence others' ideas about himself or herself to produce advantageous outcomes for the individual in social interaction. In ordinary social life, individuals tailor their "presentations of self" to different audiences and "define the situation" by generating cues that lead others to act according to their plans. In national political life, public officials engage in impression management. They try to cultivate the "right image" of themselves to legitimate their actions and their policies and to gain control over the conduct of others for their interests. They gain control by getting others to accept their proffered definitions of the situation (Hall 1979, 284; Goffman 1959, 3-4).

Impression management in political settings "tends to be more explicitly designed and controlled than in ordinary day-to-day activity, but the basic mechanisms are the same" (Giddens 1991, 408). Political actors engage in impression management, i.e., the manipulation of verbal and nonverbal symbols and the control of "public" information, to mobilize power relations. In the American political system elected officials are obliged, at least theoretically, to seek support from the people and to inform the people. Practically,

however, formal US constitutional requirements for a representative government conflict with elite efforts to win majority political support among competing group interests. Successful politicians utilize impression management as a pragmatic means of managing these conflicts while maintaining or strengthening their power (Hall 1979, 285).

Pragmatic political and economic elites also rely on impression management to strengthen the US position in international affairs. At mid-century, the United States emerged from World War II as a powerful economic and military leader; but social injustice at home, namely discriminatory race relations, compromised US moral leadership (Dudziak 1988, 101-102). Despite its willingness to take tough military stances with the Soviet Union, and its economic dominance, the United States failed to convince newly decolonized peoples of its legitimacy as a world power while it supported undemocratic social institutions at home (Hall 1979, 293; Lyman 1991). Public school desegregation litigation, already a national civil rights issue, arose as an international one. The watchful eyes of US allies in Western Europe, ideologues in the Soviet Bloc, and newly decolonized governments in the Third World, pressured the United States to confront racial segregation and discrimination as an image problem, to take corrective action to improve its "democratic" image, and to strengthen its foreign policy efforts. When Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles complained to Eisenhower's Attorney General that "this situation [in Little Rock] was ruining our foreign policy" and that "in Asia and Africa [it] will be worse for us than Hungary was for the Russians" (Skrentny 1998, 262).

Impression Management and Education Policy

Global impression management intensified with the spread of mass media in the second half of the end of the 20th century; nonetheless, it existed decades and centuries before the age of television and electronic media. In 1937, Albert L. Turner of the Tuskegee Institute viewed Southern state "commitments" to improve education for black students with suspicion (Thomas 1981, 185; Turner 1937). He knew that state educational bureaucracies operated to maintain caste and class distinctions and served dominant interests, yet he heard reformers campaign for the adoption of standards and the implementation of "scientific" guidance and testing programs to expand opportunities for black students. Turner speculated that the rhetoric of 20th century reformers concealed less democratic motives. He compared 20th century Southern reformers to the eighteenth century Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great:

When Catherine the Great of Russia, who professed to be an enlightened despot, ordered schools built for the education of the common people of Russia, one of her ministers complained that she was doing a dangerous thing to educate her subjects. Catherine replied that the schools were not being built for Russia, but for the rest of Europe. In other words, establishing schools was considered an enlightened thing to do by the European countries, and Catherine wished to appear well in the eyes of her fellow sovereigns. She did not intend to educate the Russians.

So it is with our improved standards for Negro teachers in the South. Many of them were instituted to avoid embarrassment on the part of the Southern states in the face of more progressive policies of other sections generated by the successive wave of educational reform which swept the country a few years ago. Many officials of the State Department of Education in the southern states do not have a genuine interest in these higher standards for Negro teachers (Thomas 1981, 185).

Turner's description of Catherine the Great's education reform fits Goffman's definition of impression management. Catherine's plans to build schools for Russian peasants, like her "Potemkin Villages,"³ fostered a favorable image for Catherine among the European aristocracy as an "enlightened despot" committed to "progress." She hoped to build European alliances with her plans to expand education for Russian peasants. "She did not intend to educate the Russians." At the beginning of the 20th century, and in the 1930s, Southern education reformers hoped to improve their image outside the South as a means of building national political and economic alliances. By mid-century, Southern leaders became more sensitive to improving their international image. They did not intend to create equal educational and occupational opportunities for African Americans.

The previous chapter shows that the early 20th century education reform efforts of the Southern Education Board, the General Education Board, and education governors, including North Carolina's Charles B. Aycock, promoted a "progressive" image, implemented social control, and created popular consensus for universal education and Democratic party rule in the South. These efforts to achieve social stability and to pursue economic development impressed a national audience, including corporate investors willing to expand their investments in the South and to contribute philanthropic support to education.

Significantly, at the turn-of-the-century, Southern elites succeeded not only in building consensus for public education within the region and the nation, but also in

³ Potemkin villages, refers to Minister Potemkin's preparations for visits by European officials to newly acquired Russian territories. Riasanovksy (1977, 294) describes them as "pieces of stage decor" which at a distance, appeared to be real buildings and communities.

winning national acceptance for racial segregation and disfranchisement. Some observers examined “Southern racial policy for national guidance in the new problems of imperialism resulting from the Spanish War” (Woodward 1951, 324). Referring to the 1898 Supreme Court decision to uphold disfranchisement in Mississippi, *Williams v. Mississippi*, the *Nation* found it “an interesting coincidence that this important decision is rendered at a time when we are considering the idea of taking in a varied assortment of inferior races in different parts of the world” (Woodward 1951, 324). The ideology of white supremacy and the practice of discrimination characterized US relations with indigenous peoples in the Philippines, Hawaii, and other territories.

For half a century, the US government endorsed racial segregation in public institutions in the states and its territories. Segregation, in ideology and practice, conformed to the 19th century Western model of colonialism and imperialism in the world system. But two world wars, growth of a black national consciousness in America, and nationalist struggles among previously colonized people throughout the world challenged “America’s domestic praxis of white supremacy” (Lyman 1991, 233). At mid-century, when the US emerged as a world leader, “desegregation and the extension of civil rights became not only the single most important domestic event in postwar America, but also an important feature of American international impression management during the entire era of the Cold War” (Lyman 1991, 233). Ironically, “imperialistic requirements which had in one era helped return blacks to servitude thus helped in another era to release them from servitude” (Piven and Cloward 1977, 193). The postwar politicization of race, by

resistance on the part of racially defined minorities in the US and throughout the world, focused global attention on systematic inequality and exclusion (Winant 1994, 38).

Cold War Imperatives and Education Reform

Racial segregation in the United States obstructed the nation's "efforts to shape the world order after World War II, a world in which two-thirds of the people were not white" (Kushnick, 1996, 64). International newspapers printed stories about US discrimination against non-white visiting dignitaries as well as African Americans (Dudziak 1988, 62). Embarrassing media attention on the contradictions between American political ideology and practice created foreign policy dilemmas with countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. US officials realized that continuing racial injustice at home compromised their ability to "sell" democracy to the Third World (Dudziak 1988, 62-63). Nationalist critics in Third World nations and Communist critics in the Soviet Union challenged US domestic apartheid and the nation's claims to international moral leadership. Tensions increased between the United States and the Soviet Union as the Soviets effectively used racial incidents in anti-US propaganda (Dudziak 1988, 80). Cold War concerns about the effect of US race discrimination on American foreign policy led the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations to consider taking a domestic pro-civil rights stance to benefit foreign policy initiatives.⁴

⁴ In *Promoting Polyarchy*, William I. Robinson argues that US "democracy promotion" in the postwar era constituted an attempt to secure US access to the raw materials, markets, and labor power of the Third World. Democratization struggles throughout the world, moreso than the so-called Communist threat, endangered US dominance in the world. US policies addressed that threat under the rubric of "democracy promotion" (pp. 15-16). Nasaw (1979) concludes that "the Cold War was waged not to defend the American way as much as to extend it.

At mid-century the US hegemonic position in a post-colonial world, global media attention concerning the contradictions between American political ideology and practice, and the rise of black nationalism in the United States and throughout the world disturbed the infrastructure of “monolithic white supremacy” (Winant 1997, 88). National political leaders considered the benefits of a “pragmatic liberalism” approach to race relations which led to the abandonment of legally sanctioned segregation and the inclusion of African Americans in occupational, political, and educational opportunities (Marable and Mullings 1995, 209). Pragmatic US leaders, “particularly those engaged with the world audience,” (Skrentny 1998, 246) supported eliminating overt, legal racial discrimination in social institutions in hopes of limiting black radicalism at home and of expanding US influence in the world.

The Eisenhower administration filed a series of *amicus* briefs to support the NAACP in the *Brown* case. While the NAACP’s arguments stressed the inhumane consequences of segregation for American citizens as well as its implications for international relations (Kluger 1975), the Justice Department’s *amicus* briefs detailed the consequences of racial segregation for US foreign policy interests (Bell 1980; Dudziak 1988).⁵ The administration urged the Court to uphold Civil Rights at home in the interests of world peace and national security, suggesting that the United States needed the *Brown* decision (Carnoy 1994, 180). The *amicus* brief argued that “the United States is trying to prove to the people of the world, of every nationality, race and color, that a free

⁵ Dudziak (1988) reviews *amicus* briefs filed by Justice Department officials in the Truman and Eisenhower administrations and state department records to establish the importance of international impression management in US desegregation decisions.

democracy is the most civilized and most secure form of government yet devised by man” (Bell 1980, 65). Within an hour after the Court announced the *Brown* decision, the Voice of America broadcast the news to Eastern Europe (Dudziak 1988, 113; Wallerstein 1992, 8). *Time* magazine equated the international impact of *Brown* with its impact on the education of African Americans: “In many countries where US prestige and leadership have been damaged by the fact of US segregation, it will come as a timely reassertion of the basic American principle that ‘all men are created equal’” (Bell 1980, 96).

Paradoxically, Eisenhower’s international policy on US school desegregation was inconsistent with his domestic policy. Historian Robert Burk points out that Eisenhower concentrated civil rights progress in areas of maximum value for international propaganda and foreign policy (Skrentny 1998, 252-253). In his memoirs, Eisenhower explained why he submitted a reorganization plan to create and to consolidate a US Information Agency (USIA) from existing informational services to counter Soviet propaganda. Domestically, however, Eisenhower saw it as wrong and politically risky to publicly support *Brown*.

Following *Brown*, State Department officials characterized American racism as an antiquated regional problem, not an ongoing national problem. “If the Supreme Court had ruled in favor of the defendants...the court would have reaffirmed the idea that the American Constitution accommodated the racist practices challenged in those cases” (Dudziak 1988, 118). But the Court’s ruling in favor of the plaintiffs laundered the principles of democracy in the eyes of the world, making it less difficult for American Embassy officials in Third World nations to counter arguments that the Communist Party was more committed to their interests. After *Brown*, the State Department blamed racism

on the Klan and the crazies, not the constitution. Symbolically, the *Brown* decision, as well as the Civil Rights Act for the District of Columbia, impressed a world audience (Skrentny 1998, 253). *Brown* permitted the federal government to reduce the “American Dilemma” to a regional relic. Substantively, years passed before the federal government enforced *Brown*.

Dudziak suggests that Cold War imperatives motivated the US government to end legal support for public school segregation, and satisfaction of these motives may have been a factor in diminished federal commitment to continued action, i.e., enforcement (Dudziak 1988, 119-120). On May 31, 1955, one year after *Brown*, the US Supreme Court remanded the cases to the courts of origin “because of their proximity to local conditions” (Franklin 1980, 410). This decision laid the groundwork for indefinite delays in state compliance and federal enforcement. Eisenhower’s Justice Department filed *amicus* briefs supporting *Brown*, but the President refused to say to his constituents whether he approved of the decision and he indicated a distaste for rapid enforcement measures. At home, Eisenhower never took an active part in racial desegregation; instead, he showed more interest in sending a signal to Southern schools and businesses that he did not support radical desegregation measures in schooling or employment. As President Andrew Johnson’s failure to act decisively during Reconstruction encouraged a resurgence of Confederate resistance, so Eisenhower’s equivocation galvanized Southern political hopes of circumventing the *Brown* decision. Ten years passed before Congress

enacted legislation to support the *Brown* decision.⁶ Meanwhile, pro-segregation forces mobilized at the state level and enacted a barrage of legislation (McAdam 1982, 144). Southern political leaders were free to oppose the Court decision (Carnoy 1994, 206-207; Chafe 1980, 49). Only the most extreme defiance, such as Little Rock violence in 1957, incurred federal intervention. The federal government concentrated its efforts on yet another Cold War imperative --the Sputnik challenge to US military superiority in the world-system.

Sputnik and Federal Funding for Education

Eisenhower expressed more interest in the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) than in court-ordered desegregation. He viewed education as the weakest link in the US defense. The Soviet launch of Sputnik I on October 4, 1957 eliminated all resistance to expanding the federal role in public education. After Sputnik, political officials blamed schools for America's embarrassing lag in technological development and demanded more math and science education to meet the international military challenge. In 1958, Congress approved the NDEA to deal with the perceived threat of the Cold War, not to address racial justice (Spring 1986, 293-294; Dentler et al. 1983, 21).

Paradoxically, the federal role in public education expanded, while the Supreme Court remanded its desegregation edict to local school districts, and the executive and legislative branches of the federal government expressed stalwart support for local control of public

⁶ The 1957 Civil Rights Act confined the Attorney General to civil suits in the area of voting rights. The original bill included school integration and public accommodations but Southern opposition pushed Senate Leader Lyndon Johnson to draft a compromise (Horowitz 1988, 177-178).

education. Annual federal education funding rose from \$400 million to \$2.4 billion in the years between 1956 and 1965. Total appropriations for education, training, and related programs leaped from \$2.6 billion to \$7.2 billion a year in the name of strengthening national defense (Dentler et al. 1983, 21).

Many scholars overlook the NDEA's role in mid-century education reform. The NDEA created three major changes in public school policy. First, it redefined the federal government's role in public education, and justified intervention by connecting education to a global military crisis. The Sputnik "crisis" justified strengthening academic programs for the "best" students while ignoring the academic weaknesses of other programs. Second, increased federal spending furnished a means for the federal government to intervene in local schools anywhere throughout the United States. Although local school districts were not obliged to accept funding, few refused (Spring 1986, 295). Third, the federal government emphasized nationwide high school testing to identify students with high ability and to offer incentives to persuade them to study math and science. Testing also justified limiting opportunities to students with low scores, which included disproportionate numbers of poor and minority students. Ogbu argues that "the use of IQ testing and related techniques to exclude black children from high-quality education intensified after the Supreme Court order of 1954 to desegregate schools" (Ogbu 1978, 25).

Testing and tracking were "presented as the common sense means of shoring up American academic resources in the wake of Sputnik" (Oakes 1985, 39), not as a means of perpetuating inequality. US officials supported ending overt segregation, but enabled

schools to use more subtle institutional practices to deny students equal educational opportunity. The NDEA's increased funding for guidance, counseling, and testing services instituted a mechanism for sorting and tracking students. It subsidized higher education for the "best" students through the National Science Foundation.⁷

Significantly, the NDEA did not include a provision for enforcing desegregation. The federal government did not exercise its power to terminate funds on the basis of racial discrimination until enacting the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Congress gave the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) authority to terminate federal funds to any recipient practicing racial discrimination. At that time, Congress again increased federal funding through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 but transmuted the national defense element into the War on Poverty (Dentler et al. 1983, 21; Meier et al. 1989, 48).

Education and Regional Economic Development

At mid-century when the federal government revised US education policy to achieve international political goals, Southern state governments turned to education policy to support regional economic development plans. Hoping to achieve economic parity with the nation, all Southern states committed their colleges and universities to economic development in the 1950s. "Their goals and methods were not totally different from those of developing countries trying to catch up with the West" (Vogel and Larson

⁷ James Conant, who served as President of Harvard University and the first chairman of the board of the National Science Foundation took a leadership role in the Truman and Eisenhower administrations in linking education and defense goals. He did not advocate a federal subsidy for all students to attend college, only superior ones (Spring 1986, 286-288).

1985, 242-244). Southern political leaders and university administrators visited successful research and development centers in Massachusetts and California (MIT and Stanford) and observed how federal, state, and corporate resources created a research environment. It was obvious to them that R&D centers would attract industry to the South, but less obvious how the South would attract R&D centers. The South not only lacked economic parity with the nation, but also lacked parity in science and technology. Research scientists were five times more numerous in the nation than in the South, and southerners obtained patents at a rate less than one-third of the national average. The underdeveloped South seemed an unlikely place to provide industry with "a suitable climate for invention, discovery, and innovation" (Cobb 1984, 107).

No Southern state faced greater obstacles or achieved greater success in realizing its development goals than North Carolina. After World War II, North Carolina leaders searched for a means to achieve "a measure of economic diversification for a state economy narrowly based on tobacco and textiles" (Etkowitz 1990, 116). Federally funded research and development initiatives begun in the war years continued and expanded in the Cold War era (Nasaw 1979, 184-192). A scientific and technological revolution focusing on capital-intensive technologies was underway (Robinson 1996, 32). Business and scientific elites understood that research and development were the keys to future development, but the state seemed ill-equipped. At mid-century only half of North Carolina's first graders were expected to graduate from high school. In 1950, North Carolina ranked 47th among the 48 states as to the proportion of its population enrolled in college (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 648, 660).

The state's deficiencies in public education and scientific achievement posed problems for post-war economic development, but they were not insurmountable. In the 1950s, North Carolina's leaders relied on corporate philanthropy, Democratic party control, and public education to make a "backward" state more "progressive," just as it relied on similar strategies at the turn-of-the-century. This time, however, the corporate philanthropists were home-grown. At the turn-of-the-century, corporate philanthropists Rockefeller and Rosenthal supported the Southern Education Board. At mid-century, Robert Hanes of the Hanes Hosiery family and President of Wachovia Bank, and Gordon Gray of the Reynolds Tobacco family and President of the Consolidated University of North Carolina, served on the planning board for the Research Triangle Park. They shared their tasks with executives from textile mills and other major corporations in the state. The education elites who joined them at the conference table included administrators from NC State University, the state's land-grant school chartered in the 1890s in Raleigh; Duke University, the private university founded by North Carolina entrepreneur Washington Duke in Durham; and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation's first public university.

Political leadership came from the state's "businessman governor," Luther Hodges⁸ who committed his administration to bring together education and industry for diversified economic development. Hodges, a former textile mill owner who sold his

⁸ Luther Hodges, elected Lieutenant Governor in 1952, acceded to the governor's office in November 1954 with the death of Governor William B. Umstead. After completing Umstead's term, Hodges was elected governor in 1956. At that time, state law prohibited reelection. During his six years as governor, Hodges played an important role in delaying school desegregation and pursuing economic development. The first Southern governor to endorse Kennedy's campaign, Hodges was appointed US Secretary of Commerce in 1961. As governor, then Commerce Secretary, then chairman of the RTP foundation, Hodges contributed to the success of the Research Triangle Park (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 648; Chafe 1980).

business to Marshall Field and became a corporate executive, served a brief stint as an administrator for the Marshall Plan in Europe where he participated in rebuilding and planning for economic revival (Vogel and Larson 1985, 245). Hodges liked the Research Triangle Park concept of Howard Odum, Chairman of the Department of Sociology at UNC and Director of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences. Long before his death in the early 1950s, Odum proposed “an institute to provide intellectual leadership linking research and economic development, thereby improving the livelihood of ordinary people” (Vogel and Larson 1985, 243-244).

Odum’s vision captured the attention of political, business, and scientific elites in the post-war era. In 1955, Governor Hodges commissioned a report, “A Proposal for the Development of an Industrial Research Center in North Carolina.” In early 1955, he met with administrators of the three universities to discuss the possibility of cooperation for a Research Triangle, and in late spring 1955 he appointed business and education leaders to the Research Triangle Committee chaired by Robert Hanes, President of Wachovia Bank. The committee began fund raising in September of 1956 and searched for companies whose research interests matched areas where the three universities demonstrated great strengths -- chemistry, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. A team of academic salesmen visited firms and government agencies to explore the possibility of their relocation in the Research Triangle Park (Vogel and Larson 1985, 246).

Hodges’s decision to appoint an RTP committee in 1955 composed of business and education elites is noteworthy. First, the composition of the committee paralleled that of the Southern Education Board (SEB) and the General Education Board (GEB)

members of 1900; however, by mid-century, North Carolina had established its own business and education elite. The all-white committee was not representative of the “ordinary people” described by Odum, although it included one woman, the wife of a Wachovia Bank executive. Second, racial politics threatened to disrupt the existing social order in 1955, just as it had in 1900. At the turn-of-the-century black enfranchisement threatened Democratic party control of state government and plans for economic development. At mid-century, the Supreme Court’s *Brown* decision threatened political stability and jeopardized the state’s focus on higher education and economic development. In the summer of 1958, the RTP project veered toward financial collapse, and the threat of racial disturbances clouded efforts to sell the RTP to potential business investors. “Many people saw the park idea as too visionary, too much of an economic risk. Some Northern firms still feared the South would be a battleground of racial violence...” (Vogel and Larson 1985, 246).

Governor Hodges relied on his own good name as the “businessman governor” and the state’s “progressive” reputation to forge strategic alliances and to create the South’s most successful research and development park. Because the RTP did not stand on sound financial footing until the mid-1960s, its success required extraordinary political management to obtain necessary business and governmental alliances. When racial conflict, labor unrest, or international criticism threatened to tarnish his image or the state’s image, Hodges took coercive action, but skillfully engaged in impression management to achieve his goals. North Carolina’s Research Triangle Park succeeded, not only because of the cooperation and involvement of its three leading universities which

had flourished since the turn-of-the-century, and the support of home-grown corporate elites, but also because of successful impression management strategies of the state's political leaders who maintained social control throughout the desegregation crisis.

Regional Resistance

US political leaders supported ending *de jure* segregation as a symbolic means to achieve and legitimate US hegemony in the international arena, but traditional Southern political leaders resisted desegregation in symbol and substance, recognizing that racial barriers perpetuated their power and privilege. Traditional Southern Democratic party elites, particularly those in the Deep South states, failed to see where their interests converged with those of national elites on this issue. Poor whites in the South also resisted, especially after decades of assurance by powerful leaders in the South and in the nation of their racial superiority. Despite resistance, "the level of struggle by African Americans and the imperatives of running the world required that overt racial discrimination be outlawed" (Kushnick 1996, 64).

Pragmatic Southern leaders, particularly those in North Carolina, delayed implementation of the law but avoided overt resistance. Economic development required cultivating a national and international image as a progressive Southern state and avoiding federal intervention. Recalcitrant Southern leaders in Arkansas, Alabama, and Mississippi initially emphasized the race issue, but later they learned to subordinate overt racist practices to economic development goals, aided by governmental and business elites.

State and Local Elites Respond to *Brown*

The US Supreme Court urged the states to comply with *Brown* “with all deliberate speed,” but it took fifteen years of massive civil rights demonstrations, court action, and presidential interventions to effect any meaningful desegregation (Carnoy 1994, 181). Paradoxically, the night after the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the school board in Greensboro, NC declared its intent to comply with the desegregation edict. Three years later the city permitted token desegregation to occur, then it adopted a posture of resistance to further integration efforts⁹ (Chafe 1982, 42; Chafe 1980, 6). Greensboro, supposedly one of the South’s most “progressive” cities, and North Carolina, one of the South’s most progressive states, *appeared* to support integration and racial justice, but actually lagged behind more overtly resistant areas in achieving integration (Chafe 1982, 42-43). As one admiring school official in Little Rock, Arkansas wrote to an associate in North Carolina: “You North Carolinians have devised one of the cleverest techniques of perpetuating segregation that we have seen” (Chafe 1980, 70).

Despite appearances, North Carolina perpetuated segregation, not through outright defiance of the Supreme Court, but through calculated resistance and impression management. State officials and “business leadership played a central role in bringing about this paradox” (Chafe 1982, 43). The “textile empires,” including Burlington Industries and Cone Mills, and insurance companies, Jefferson Standard and Pilot Life,

⁹ In 1960, after six years of resistance to *Brown*, Greensboro, NC became the birthplace of the sit-in movement. In 1963 renewed demonstrations propelled a young NC A&T student named Jesse Jackson into national prominence. By the late 1960s Greensboro became the regional center of the Black Power movement. Ultimately, in 1971, the city became one of the last urban areas in the South to accept full-scale desegregation -- nearly two decades after *Brown* (Chafe 1982, 42; Chafe 1980, 6).

maintained their home offices in Greensboro. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, company executives helped shape Greensboro's civil rights history by insisting that the city *appear* moderate and enlightened in its approach to race relations, while simultaneously refusing to initiate or to support substantive changes toward racial equality beyond the minimum required to maintain a progressive image (Chafe 1982, 43-44). "Nowhere was this concern with image over substance [i.e., impression management] more present than in the school board's attitude toward desegregation" (Chafe 1982, 44).

The Pearsall Plan

The North Carolina State Board of Education took a similar stance. First, it responded to the May 17, 1954 *Brown* decision by voting to continue racial segregation for the 1954-1955 school year. Board chairman, then Lieutenant Governor, Luther Hodges led the anti-desegregation forces. In August of 1954, Governor Umstead appointed a nineteen-member advisory committee chaired by State Senator Thomas J. Pearsall to work out a policy and a program to "preserve" the state's public schools. Three African American men served on the committee. All three men were state employees and two of them, Dr. F. D. Bluford of North Carolina A&T and Dr. J. W. Seabrook of Fayetteville State Teacher's College, depended on state funding for their colleges. They supported the committee's recommended Pupil Assignment Act which removed state control over education and returned it to local school boards. Local control decreased the probability of the state being targeted for desegregation litigation (Chafe 1980, 50). In another calculated effort, on November 15, 1954 the state Attorney

General filed a brief with the Supreme Court, declaring that decrees calling for public school desegregation “forthwith” would be illegal and might lead to chaos (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 650).

The General Assembly enacted the Pearsall committee’s recommendations in its 1955 session. It changed the state’s school laws to eliminate any reference to race; transferred authority over enrollment and assignment of pupils from the State Board of Education to local boards; and transferred ownership, operation, and control of the state’s school buses to local units. By unanimous vote the General Assembly resolved: “The mixing of the races in the public schools within the state cannot be accomplished and if attempted would alienate public support of the schools to such an extent that they could not be operated successfully” (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 651).

Most segregationist lawyers agreed that the 1955 Pupil Assignment Act provided an effective barrier to integration. Black children who wished to challenge segregation would have to do so on a case-by-case basis at the local school level. Local administrators reviewed each individual case and considered multiple criteria such as residence, previous schools attended, and other “local conditions” (Chafe 1980, 50). These procedures perpetuated racial segregation without mentioning race. They superficially addressed *individualized* integration, but had no effect on *institutionalized* racism, the way of allocating resources and making decisions that systematically deprived blacks of equal opportunity (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967, 37; Gaston 1972, 12).

Following the Supreme Court’s 1955 decision to remand the *Brown* decision to the states for enforcement, Governor Hodges took a more aggressive anti-integration stance.

In the summer of 1955, with RTP planning underway and the gubernatorial election only one year off, Hodges appointed a new all-white Pearsall Committee to replace Umstead's committee. Following the new committee's recommendations, Hodges urged citizens to comply with "voluntary segregation" in his statewide radio and television address: "If we are not able to succeed in a program of voluntary separate school attendance...the state...will be face-to-face with deciding whether it will have some form of integrated public schools or shall abandon its public schools" (Chafe 1980, 51). Calling on the ideology of white supremacy, Hodges attributed the success of black education in NC to the "devoted friendship and assistance of white citizens" (Chafe 1980, 51). He added that proceeding with integration would force white citizens to withdraw their support from public schools, leading to the closing of public schools and creating lasting injury to the cause of black education. In his view, voluntary segregation offered the only possible "middle ground" for whites and blacks, "particularly given the fact that whites alone could be trusted to provide for black schools" (Chafe 1980, 51). Hodges denounced the NAACP and blamed protest organizations for the school crisis. Like his predecessors, he invoked the imagery of miscegenation to win white support.¹⁰ Schools opened in September without incident and without integration (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 651).

In 1956, Hodges called a special session of the General Assembly to enact the Pearsall Plan recommended by the Governor's advisory committee. The Pearsall Plan's proposed constitutional amendments included a local-option clause permitting local

¹⁰ According to Chafe (1981, 59) Hodges chose the Pearsall Plan out of political expediency and his own racial views at a time when strong leadership for compliance stood a good chance of success.

districts to close schools by public referendum if desegregation occurred, and an amendment granting state tuition aid for white students to attend private schools in those districts. Recognizing the imprudence of outright state defiance of the US Supreme Court order, state officials provided a way for individual districts to close their schools if they wished while other districts remained open. Voters overwhelmingly adopted these constitutional amendments or "safety valves" against integration in a special election held September 8, 1956 (Chafe 1980, 53-54; Lefler and Newsome 1963, 652).

The Pearsall Plan accomplished all that Hodges and Pearsall envisioned. "It postponed meaningful desegregation in North Carolina for more than a decade -- longer than in some states where massive resistance was practiced" (Chafe 1980, 60). It proved a brilliant political success for Governor Hodges whose national reputation for moderate and enlightened leadership in a Southern state established him as a possible Democratic vice presidential nominee in the 1950s and in 1960, and no doubt helped him win a position as the Kennedy administration's Commerce Secretary. Most importantly, the Pearsall Plan allowed North Carolina's business and political leaders to continue boosting the state "as a progressive oasis in the South, a hospitable climate for Northern investment, a civilized place in which to live" (Chafe 1980, 60). By creating popular consensus for token integration and employing skillful impression management techniques, NC elites strengthened industrial recruitment efforts, particularly those associated with the Research Triangle Park.

Problems with the Pearsall Plan

Governor Hodges called for “voluntary” segregation, asking African Americans to sacrifice a constitutional right, and threatened to close public schools if they did not. One observer, “paraphrasing Mr. Churchill,” commented: “never before in human history has one man asked so many to give up so much” (Chafe 1980, 55). The NC Council on Human Relations called the law a “nearly total evasion of the Supreme Court decision on school segregation” (Tyson 1994, 154). The Hodges request not only called for an abrogation of hard-won civil rights, but also threatened legal and extralegal coercion. Legally, the Pearsall Plan created a means to close public schools if African American families failed to comply with voluntary segregation. Extralegally, in Monroe, NC, the Ku Klux Klan publicly endorsed the Plan and offered citizens the “the Smith and Wesson plan” as an alternative if the Pearsall Plan failed at the polls (Tyson 1994, 77). No doubt both threats affected the willingness of African American students and their parents to file local petitions to attend white schools.

Hodges, like his turn-of-the-century predecessor Aycock, denied African Americans the constitutional rights of citizenship in the name of education and economic development. African Americans in North Carolina lost the franchise at the beginning of the 20th century, and lost the right to attend desegregated schools at mid-century. In both cases, political officials relied on the threat of extralegal violence to back-up their policies. Evidence of racial violence and white supremacy campaigns in the 1890s is well-documented, but racial violence in the 1950s is largely undocumented. Nonetheless, weekly bomb threats and other acts of violence occurred and functioned as a deterrent for

civil rights activities in North Carolina, including school desegregation efforts (Tyson 1994).

Token integration proceeded relatively peacefully in the Piedmont cities of Durham, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro, but not on the perimeter of the cotton belt. In Monroe, NC, the life of one civil rights activist, Robert Williams, stands out as an example of resistance to voluntary segregation and official impression management. Williams¹¹ organized a local, predominantly working class chapter of the NAACP, advocated using guns as a means of self-defense, and often incurred the disapproval of the national NAACP and its leaders including Martin Luther King, Jr. Not surprisingly, Williams and his wife were the first to petition the Monroe school board to admit their children to a white school (Tyson 1994).

On October 28, 1958, one day after Williams filed the petition, the police arrested two African American boys, ages 8 and 10, for kissing a white girl. During a children's kissing game, both black and white boys kissed girls, but only the black boys were arrested. Following their arrest, the children awaited trial in the Union County jail. At the trial, the boys received indeterminate sentences to be served at the Morrison Training School for Negroes at Hoffman, NC. The judge suggested that release might occur before the boys reached the age of 21 with evidence of good behavior (Tyson 1994, 146).

The two children violated the "unwritten law of white supremacy" in a county described by locals as "a hornet's nest of hate" that may have been home to the largest

¹¹ Williams's book *Negroes With Guns*, influenced Huey Newton and the Black Panther party. Williams left Union County for exile in Cuba and China following a 1961 racial incident involving mob violence in Monroe, NC (Tyson 1994).

chapter of the KKK in the United States. Robert Williams and others felt that the prospect of public school segregation raised white sexual apprehension and created the incident that became known as the “kissing case.” A local newspaper quoted one woman who said, “If [black children] get into our rural schools and ride the buses with our white children...the Monroe ‘kissing’ incident is only a start of what we will have” (Tyson 1994, 137).

News of the Monroe “kissing case” made front page headlines throughout the world in the fall of 1958. Newspapers in New York and London, as well as those in Europe carried the story, but the local newspaper did not report it until forced to acknowledge the international publicity. Hodges, who toured the world promoting economic development in North Carolina and spoke on behalf of racial moderation in Voice of America broadcasts, received letters from European and Canadian protest committees. Hodges¹² had much to lose from the bad publicity in Monroe, his wife’s hometown. Earlier, in the summer of 1958, the Research Triangle Park project veered close to collapse. Prospective investors and clients hesitated to invest, fearing Southern racial violence. At the time of the “kissing case,” a major financial and political organization of the RTP was underway (Vogel and Larson 1985, 248). Successful resolution of the RTP problems required skillful management of any racial crisis. Initially, Hodges’s public relations team tried to convince the public that the “kissing case” incident

¹² Also, in November of 1958, 1000 white textile workers went on strike in Henderson, NC to maintain a 14-year collective bargaining agreement between the Textile Workers Union of America and Harriet-Henderson cotton mills. Hodges sent the National Guard and the Highway Patrol to break the strike, described as the most serious conflict involving southern textile workers in the post-World War II pre-civil rights era (Frankel 1991, 103). The state brought criminal conspiracy charges against local and national union officials in the first real test of the right-to-work law in NC (Wood 1986, 161).

stemmed from a communist conspiracy to circulate misinformation throughout the world. Publicists claimed that the boys assaulted three white girls and engaged in other delinquent acts. Newspaper articles asserted that the mothers of both boys were sexually promiscuous and one of the mothers engaged her daughters in prostitution (Tyson 1994).

Political attempts to vilify the families and to redefine the situation as routine social work, not racial injustice, failed. Instead, international pressure forced state officials to free the boys in February 1959. NAACP efforts to secure the boys' release and to relocate their families in Charlotte allowed Hodges to claim that authorities based the conditional release of the boys on the improved home situation. Robert Williams claimed that Hodges acted following a phone call from President Eisenhower. It is not clear who brought about the release of the boys, but Tyson concludes that Williams may have been closer to the truth than Hodges (Tyson 1994, 216). Also, RTP fund raising must have been a consideration throughout the crisis. Plans for a newly organized RTP were finalized and initial fund raising was completed on December 29, 1958. Governor Hodges hosted a celebratory luncheon on January 9, 1959 (Vogel and Larson 1985, 248). The boys were released in February 1959.

The Eisenhower administration felt compelled to respond to the international imbroglio with additional impression management strategies. George V. Allen, director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), chose North Carolina to host a visit from an African head of state, President Sekou Touré of Guinea, "in order to counter Communist propaganda regarding race relations in North Carolina" (Tyson 1994, 164-165). In a carefully arranged 24 hour visit to Durham and Chapel Hill, Touré toured Duke

and UNC, and met the Chancellor of UNC, the vice mayor of Chapel Hill, and the President of North Carolina College (a state-supported school for African Americans in Durham, now North Carolina Central University). He received an honorary doctor of laws degree from North Carolina College, toured two African American-owned businesses in Durham, and feasted with state elites at the Morehead Planetarium in Chapel Hill. Afterwards, George Allen told the *Durham Morning Herald* that the trip paid international dividends for the United States (Hodges 1962, 260-262). Additional dividends accrued to North Carolina, boosting the state's "progressive" image and its governor's industrial recruitment activities as well as his national political prospects.

A December 1960 *Reader's Digest* article, "Does North Carolina Point the Way?" celebrates Touré's warm reception in NC and credits Hodges "for putting North Carolina in the forefront of Southern progressivism" (Daniel 1960, 177). It does not mention the "kissing case." The author observes that North Carolina schools are segregated, but he explains that black students are not enrolled in white schools only because they have not applied for admission. He quotes an African American alderman in Winston-Salem who says, "Negroes don't necessarily want to enter white schools, but they bitterly resent being told they cannot" (Daniel 1960, 174). Incredibly, the article suggests that a black child who transfers to a white school runs the risk of getting "less" education because teacher salaries and credentials are higher in black schools (Daniel 1960, 174-175).

Notwithstanding the writer's claims that North Carolina "points the way" toward good race relations in the future, his argument defending segregation comes from the past, echoing the segregationist ideology of Atlanta editor Henry Grady in the 1880s: "The

truth is, the negro [sic] does not want social equality. He prefers his own schools, his own churches, his own hotels, his own societies, his own military companies, his own place in the theater" (Gaston 1972, 8).

North Carolina seems to "point the way" once again in the February 1962 *National Geographic* magazine's lead story entitled "North Carolina, Dixie Dynamo" (Ross 1962, 141-148). The 47 page article features photographs of the state's natural attractions from the Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks. The discussion of the state's human resources, referred to as "human geography," and the accompanying photographs reveal much about industrial recruitment, education, and impression management. White women are shown working in a textile mill under the watchful eye of a male supervisor. A white woman dressed as a Southern belle at the Orton Plantation stands next to a black woman wearing an apron. African American males are depicted standing in a tobacco warehouse and working in a tobacco field. The image of whites males differs from the others. Some are shown in traditional fox hunting attire chasing the hounds, others play golf. Still others are shown working in a Research Triangle Park laboratory. One photograph shows William Friday, President of UNC; Terry Sanford, Governor of North Carolina; and John F. Kennedy, President of the United States, walking across the UNC football field for a presidential address.

In work, leisure, and politics, North Carolina, depicted as "the Dixie Dynamo," demonstrates the peaceful coexistence of traditional and modern institutions of white society where people know their "place." The presidential visit seems to confer legitimacy on these social, political, and economic arrangements. One subtitle "Typical Tarheel

Eager for Knowledge” and its accompanying story fails to point out that the typical Tarheel dropped out from high school and earned the lowest manufacturing wage in the nation. Although the University of North Carolina enjoyed a national reputation for excellence, the state’s school children received less support per pupil than children in most other states. Workers ranked near the bottom of the nation in per capita income and literacy, and the state used military force against workers to settle labor disputes (Chafe 1980, 5). Conditions for African Americans in North Carolina were worse than those of the “typical Tarheel.” Black earnings were only one-half of the state average and one-third of the national average (Vogel and Larson 1985, 242).

The High Cost of Conflict

North Carolina did not “point the way” to peaceful racial integration. Instead, it demonstrated how to avoid the high cost of racial conflict through calculated resistance and impression management. Governor Hodges and other business leaders recognized early that defiant resistance, including school closings and violence, would damage the state’s recruitment efforts, particularly those associated with the Research Triangle Park. Political and business elites cooperated to create the appearance of racial moderation in North Carolina at a time when Virginia and Arkansas received widespread publicity for school closings and racial violence. Whereas Virginia and Arkansas experienced sharp declines in business growth, North Carolina officials used the state’s reputation for racial moderation to recruit new industry (Douglas 1995, 37-38).

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith published a 1961 brochure entitled "The High Cost of Conflict: A Roundup of Opinion from the Southern Business Community on the Economic Consequences of School Closings and Violence." The collection of quotes from business leaders published in Southern newspapers provided "a body of information and opinion about the economic questions that are facing the Southern business community because of school closings, violence, and the substitution of private school systems for public education" (Anti-Defamation League 1961, 2). Most quotations indicated that Arkansas and Virginia paid a "high cost" for resistance, but North Carolina reaped the economic benefits of "moderation." Preston Holmes, a Richmond banker, contrasted NC moderation with Arkansas defiance: "North Carolina with legal compliance with the Supreme Court decision and little social unrest, had new plant investment in 1958 totaling \$253 million, while Arkansas, with its massive resistance and unsettled conditions, had only \$25.4 million in 1958 compared with \$44.9 million in 1957 and \$131 million in 1956" (Anti-Defamation League 1961, 1).

The "lesson of Little Rock" communicated by the Anti-Defamation League brochure and through public speaking appearances by Little Rock business supporters indicated that diehard resistance to desegregation was economic suicide (Cobb 1984, 111). Southern Regional Council officials launched the Southern Leadership Project to persuade businessmen to work for a non-violent end to segregation and discrimination.

A survey of community leaders in five Southern cities published in 1963 indicated that Southern businessmen understood the negative effects of racial conflict, but they did

not hold positive attitudes about desegregation. Instead, the community leaders expressed a desire to avoid racial controversy as a means to recruit new industry:

Almost all our leaders may be considered to be in favor of new industry and opposed to extreme measures to maintain segregation. Likewise, almost all leaders made some admission of an awareness of the effects of racial controversy on new industry recruitment. Thus, perhaps the leaders --all desiring new industry--have, indeed, become a bit more 'moderate' on the desegregation question because they know extremism hurts the drive for new industry (Cramer 1963, 387).

Local business elites, as well as those at state and national levels, viewed racial extremism not only as a threat to industrial recruitment and a deterrent to investment, but also as a threat to developing markets for goods and services among African American consumers. "Economic diversification and the growth of black consumption gave modernizing business elites a vested interest in southern social harmony. Looking to a future of economic development and ties to the national marketplace, southern leaders of commerce feared the unstable consequences of violent racial conflict" (Horowitz 1988, 18).

Despite their fears, the business leaders in Cramer's study took little initiative to lay the groundwork for the inevitable arrival of school desegregation (Cramer 1963). Instead, their response to civil rights "was calculated to preserve the "image" of progressiveness while yielding a minimum of desegregation" (Jacoway 1982, 3). Their fears motivated them to do the minimum necessary to avoid white militant resistance as well as to end black boycotts and demonstrations, not to do the maximum necessary to

achieve racial justice (Chafe 1980, 150). At the state and local level, business leaders “often played crucial roles in engineering peaceful transitions to token desegregation” (Cobb 1984, 111). Business recruiters understood that industrial prospects were not interested in school desegregation, only racial stability. In the words of Arkansas business booster Winthrop Rockefeller: “The industrial prospect doesn’t give a hoot whether your schools are segregated or not, but he wants no part of disorder and violence” (Cobb, 1984, 116). The prospects of critical media coverage, not discriminatory race relations, affected corporate decision-making. “The expectation that industrialists would demand racial equality in any area they chose as a plant location ignored the fact that prior to the activism and federal pressure of the 1960s few industries appeared to have any difficulty accommodating themselves to racial conditions in the South” (Cobb 1984, 115).

In North Carolina, where racial “moderates” and business elites prevailed in state government, political elites worked to avoid or to contain damaging publicity. In some other Southern states, local business elites combined forces with President Kennedy to put pressure on defiant Southern state officeholders. Motivated by their distaste for militant resistance to integration, 200 Tuscaloosa businessmen signed a petition urging Governor Wallace to stay away when he threatened to block integration of the University of Alabama in the spring of 1963 (Horowitz 1988, 189). Confronted with Wallace’s intransigence on racial issues, the Kennedy administration used the machinery of the federal government to prompt the state’s corporate community to intervene. The Pentagon asked Alabama defense contractors to visit the embattled governor. Cabinet members, the three armed forces secretaries, and the administrators of the major

regulatory agencies, received notebooks containing the names of approximately 375 major Alabama businesses. Kennedy requested that these officials personally telephone businessmen they knew to urge them to persuade Wallace to follow a course of moderation. The administration asked representatives of United States Steel, Goodyear, Monsanto, Kimberly-Clark and Union Carbide to contact top officers in their Alabama plants. Since these industries engaged in international business, they were reminded of the global implications of civil rights. Ultimately, Wallace and the Kennedy administration worked out a scenario in which the governor verbally protested the integration of the university with his "segregation forever" speech, then stepped aside to let federal marshals escort black students through the doors of the institution. Apparently Kennedy convinced Wallace that the state could not afford continued racial disturbances, that its industries would leave the state (Horowitz 1988, 189). Once again, calculated resistance and impression management produced an outcome that protected business interests, but failed to desegregate a public institution.

Grass-Roots Insurgency

Elite measures to delay desegregation could not contain the civil rights insurgency that swept through the state in the 1960s. Demands for improved schools increased and widespread protests followed when these demands were unmet. In rural Eastern North Carolina, black students protested not only inferior facilities but also policies such as the "harvest recess" that closed black schools, and only black schools, for students to labor in local cotton and tobacco fields. Other African American communities in North Carolina's

Black Belt counties campaigned for voting rights and jury service, and the removal of “white” and “colored” signs. Some communities battled job discrimination, others drove away the Klan. White editors failed to report these struggles, but an African American newspaper in Durham, NC, the *Carolina Times* published numerous accounts (Cecelski 1994, 28-30). When the state began to implement meaningful desegregation in the late 1960s, African American activists demanded an equitable share of power over school policy, administration, and teaching to assure intellectual achievement and pride for black children (Cecelski 1994, 149). Legal battles also continued in the state. In 1971, the US Supreme Court ruled in *Swann v. Mecklenburg* that busing was a legitimate remedy for *de jure* segregation (Douglas 1995). When the courts required that whites attend African American schools to achieve desegregation, as opposed to blacks attending white schools, Charlotte’s white elites resisted. The school board exempted the city’s wealthiest neighborhoods from desegregation, but biracial community groups organized to oppose any plan that discriminated against African Americans and lower and middle income whites. They forged a more stable and equitable desegregation plan and built a supportive biracial political coalition (Baker 1997, 97). Subsequently, Charlotte’s desegregated public schools generated favorable media attention, boosted North Carolina’s “progressive” reputation, and enhanced economic development recruitment efforts. Charlotte’s desegregated school system became a model of peaceful and successful desegregation until new pressures for education reform mounted in the 1980s (Mickelson and Ray 1990). These issues are discussed in Chapter Five.

Education Reform at Mid-Century

At mid-century, civil rights efforts to obtain equal educational opportunities for African American children drew a pragmatic response from US governmental and business elites. The US Supreme Court ruling, *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, ended *de jure* segregation, allowing the United States to defuse Cold War criticism of American race relations and to intensify its global political and economic expansion in the post-war era. Through skillful impression management strategies, the US government took credit for promoting race relations at home by ending *de jure* segregation, and placed the blame for problematic race relations on defiant southern states.

After the Court's *Brown* decision, the executive and legislative branches of the federal government did not rewrite national education policy to endorse the civil rights goal of creating equal access to education for all American students. The courts remanded the decision to the states and federal policymakers turned their attention to another Cold War imperative -- the Soviet military threat. In the aftermath of Sputnik I, the President and Congress supported education reform as a means to achieve defense goals. The National Defense Act (NDEA) purported to raise the standards of American education, to correct its deficiencies, and to prepare students to respond to the Soviet military threat. NDEA funding was in place long before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 empowered HEW to terminate funds in schools which practiced racial discrimination. It also preceded the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which funded programs for poor and minority children. Schools relied on testing to allocate NDEA funds as well as ESEA funds.

The NDEA strengthened support for guidance and testing programs and the differentiated curriculum put into place by federal vocational education programs dating from the Smith Hughes legislation of 1917. Testing, used to determine ability grouping and "tracking," became the "efficient" means of identifying "better" students for additional educational opportunities. It also justified limiting opportunities for other students. The intensification of the use of IQ testing and related standardized tests after the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation decision indicates that more subtle institutional practices to deny equal educational opportunities replaced more overt techniques. Recent studies find that black students are over-represented in lower track programs and in classes for the mentally handicapped. Also, black students are under-enrolled in college preparatory and academically gifted programs (Hochschild 1984, 31; Meier et al. 1989; Ogbu 1978, 137).

State policymakers not only failed to rewrite education policy to endorse the civil rights goal of creating equal access to education for all American students, but also failed to comply with the desegregation mandate. State governmental elites delayed meaningful segregation for more than a decade through legal and extralegal coercion. Legislators in North Carolina, and other southern states, enacted "freedom of choice" plans to substitute token desegregation for substantive compliance with *Brown*. In North Carolina the threat of Klan violence deterred resistance to the Pearsall freedom of choice plan and supported the Governor's request for "voluntary segregation." Racial segregation continued, but political elites convinced the nation and the world that North Carolina was a "progressive" state in contrast to more openly defiant Southern states. No prominent white politician in North Carolina openly supported school desegregation until the 1970s. Even Governor

Terry Sanford, often considered the state's most liberal postwar elected official, opposed school desegregation and supported the Pearsall Plan during his 1960-1964 gubernatorial term (Cecelski 1994, 26). The state's pragmatic political and business elites, like their national counterparts, demonstrated the value of using impression management strategies to maintain the status quo in racial relations, to defuse criticism of discriminatory practices, and to pursue other goals.

Impression management enhanced the US position in the world system and boosted economic development efforts in North Carolina. When racial conflict frightened industrial prospects away from Arkansas and Virginia, North Carolina elites skillfully employed impression management techniques, pursued industrial recruitment, and created the Research Triangle Park. Most observers consider the Research Triangle Park to be an unquestioned success. In the early 1990s, 35 years after its founding, the 7,000 acre park provided direct employment for 34,000 people and for another 30,000 who offer support services in the area (Scherer 1993, 8). The project is a source of pride for the state, for its universities, and for NC business leaders. It offers enhanced research facilities for university faculties, access to new technology for companies, and a higher standard of living for workers in the area (Vogel and Larson 1985, 260). But did the Research Triangle and mid-century economic development strategies improve the lives of ordinary people and help the state achieve national parity?

The overall quality of public education and the economic opportunities for poor citizens of the state have not changed as a result of the RTP. Despite its success in one area of the state, the RTP has created only a modest impact on the state as a whole. The

Research Triangle Park has one of the highest concentrations of Ph.D.s in the country, but one-third of adults living in the state's rural counties never completed high school (Foust 1993). In the early 1990s, three counties around the park had per capita incomes 25% above the state average and 8% above the national average (Scherer 1993). But in 1996, North Carolina ranked 43rd in average manufacturing wages (Morgan and Morgan 1997, 161). The growth of Durham's black middle-class is impressive, but the vast majority of African Americans living in North Carolina have not significantly benefited, even indirectly, from the Triangle. Moreover, RTP growth continues to rely on the relocation of outside firms and government laboratories such as IBM and the federal Environmental Protection Agency, not locally generated start-ups in technology. But lay-offs associated with recent mergers and downsizings have led to a number of entrepreneurial ventures (Wysocki 1996). At present, more than half the park tenants are foreign-owned (Scherer 1993). "In a sense, the very strenuous efforts of people connected with the park helped produce macroeconomic results that on a statewide basis only slightly more than compensated for the natural forces of decline in textiles and tobacco" (Vogel and Larson 1985, 260-261).

At mid-century, elites in North Carolina and in the nation adopted a pragmatic response to civil rights demands for equal educational opportunity that furthered US global interests and perpetuated inequality. Overt white supremacist ideology and institutional practices used around 1900 gradually gave way to more subtle as well as more efficient means of institutional discrimination. Impression management strategies allowed the United States to defend its position in the world system and to pursue its

interests by ending overt *de jure* segregation and perpetuating a more subtle institutional racism. Similar strategies allowed North Carolina to maintain its reputation as a “progressive” Southern state despite its use of coercive measures to maintain social stability, to pursue economic development strategies, and to perpetuate racial inequality.

A number of scholars suggest that it is difficult to understand the American civil rights movement without considering Cold War imperatives (Dudziak 1988, Horne 1996, Skrentny 1998). Horne adds that one of the shortcomings of research about American race relations is the separation of US foreign policy issues from domestic policy (Horne 1996, 89). The connection between domestic and foreign policy and the consequences for US race relations was not lost on many civil rights advocates including Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and Dr. Martin Luther King (Skrentny 1998, 259). When Dr. King met Vice President Richard Nixon in Africa at independence ceremonies for Ghana, he did not waste the opportunity to point out the irony: “Mr. Vice-President, I’m very glad to meet you here, but I want you to come visit us down in Alabama where we are seeking the same kind of freedom Ghana is celebrating” (Skrentny 1998, 259).

CHAPTER V

GENDER AND INEQUALITY

Institutions of civil society -- schools, families, and churches -- operate as important agents of social control. By defining and inculcating social norms, particularly those that control the behavior of subordinate groups, these institutions maintain and sustain the social order. In *Killers of the Dream*, Lillian Smith writes that the Southern social order is "firmly triangulated on sin, sex, and segregation" (Smith 1949, 94). According to Smith, the "race-sex-sin spiral" began during slavery but continued into the twentieth century. Men who were "hungry for political and economic power could not resist exploiting this terrifying complex of guilt, anxiety, sex jealousy, and loneliness.... to irrigate their political and economic crops. And they are still green today, cultivated by the same system" (Smith 1949, 121- 122).

Lillian Smith, W. J. Cash, and others have written about the role of families and churches in perpetuating the "race-sex-sin" spiral in Southern communities. The consequences of this spiral are well-known -- lynchings and other forms of racial violence, disfranchisement, and segregation. It is less well-known that the institution of public education developed in the South at the turn-of-the-century during this period of intense racial violence and disfranchisement. In the late 1890s, Southern Democratic Party candidates waged white supremacy campaigns to regain state political office, disfranchised black voters to maintain power, and promised to ensure citizenship rights and economic

opportunities for poor whites through “universal” education (Lefler and Newsome 1963, 528; Ayers 1992, 300). The utility of mass public schooling for winning popular political support and establishing a less coercive, more “democratic” means of social control appealed not only to New South leaders, but also to industrial interests outside the region in search of a stable and docile work force. The expanding global economy “helped to make certain elements of the social and political organization of a fading plantation society not just compatible with but almost integral to the establishment of a new industrial one” (Cobb 1988, 68). Building on existing social and political traditions allowed regional leaders, in association with Northern investors, to structure cooperative economic and educational institutions.

For Gramsci (1971), dominant groups and classes sustain power through two forms of social control -- coercion and consent. State political structures organize the use of coercion or force as a means of social control; the institutions of civil society -- families, churches, and schools -- produce consensus or ideological domination as a means of social control. These institutions rely on meanings, symbols and ideas to universalize dominant group ideologies while simultaneously shaping and limiting oppositional discourse. Dominant interests rely on the coercion of the state as well as the consensus within civil society to maintain social control and to establish hegemony. This hegemony “involves securing both the conditions for future capitalist production and the consent of the subordinated population to the social and cultural implications of ‘progress.’ It is exercised not only through law and coercion, but also through ‘educative’ processes in a larger sense, including schooling, the media and, centrally, political parties” (Centre for

Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981, 32). This ideological consensus is more effective than any police force or lynch mob. It mystifies public issues and historical events, confuses private interests with public ones, encourages fatalism and passivity, and justifies status inequalities (Boggs 1984, 158-161; Robinson 1996, 20-25). These inequalities are reinforced in formal political processes and social arrangements and profoundly influence the aspirations and accomplishments of people in subordinate positions.

This chapter investigates the process of social control that operates through consensus or ideological domination produced within the institution of public education. It demonstrates how the dynamic interplay between ideology, power, and knowledge structures social relations, furthers dominant group interests, and legitimates racial, gender, and class inequality; moreover, it explains how these ideologies and the structure of inequality become naturalized and accepted as "common sense." Specifically, this chapter focuses on the consequences of ideological domination and social inequality for Southern women, especially North Carolina women. It demonstrates how ideologies of race, gender, and class affect educational access, content, and outcomes. Through historical sociological analysis, it explains how the institution of education operates as an agent of social control in the South.

Power, Inequality, and Social Control

In the late 19th century, leaders of the New South were mindful of existing race, class, and gender inequalities when creating new economic, social, and political arrangements. Proponents of industrial development and public education recognized the

value of traditional ideologies on race, class, gender, and religion. Significantly, the ideological foundations of the Old South that supported paternalism, male dominance, and white supremacy formed the basis for an “organic ideology,” or a unified ideological system in the New South, based on the compatibility of these traditional ideologies with industrial capitalism’s hierarchical division of labor. The ideological system enabled Southern leaders to establish political control, to pursue economic development, and to implement public education. Ideologies on race, class, and gender guided Southern development efforts in the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society and shaped emerging institutions of civil society, including education. In turn, these civil institutions helped maintain the ideological hegemony of New South political leaders by legitimating the emerging economic and educational opportunity structure at home and by increasing opportunities for alliances with groups and classes outside the South. Alliances among these state, national, and global elites, fused with ideological consensus, succeeded in transforming the Old South and integrating New South regional institutions into the world system (Mouffe 1979, 188-192).

Wallerstein (1991) argues that the perpetuation of racist, sexist, and classist ideologies, not their elimination, works to maximize the accumulation of capital. Racism is needed to “ethnicize” incorporated parts of the labor force at low wages, to justify inequalities, and to socialize groups into their own role in the economy (Wallerstein 1983,79); moreover, it is used to confer status and privilege on poor whites (Roediger 1991, 13). Sexism first relegated women to the realm of non-reproductive, or non-paid labor, intensifying their actual labor and denying them privileges conferred by wage labor.

Later, sexism helped define a gendered division of labor for segmented labor markets (Wallerstein 1983, 103). Also, sexism provides a source of status and privilege for males.

Racism and sexism interact with class divisions to produce two immediate benefits for capital accumulation. First, they succeed in lowering the cost of labor and increasing surplus extraction beyond what can be obtained by the class structure alone. Second, racism and sexism divert attention from class divisions and thereby help maintain social control. Workers who have a heightened awareness of race and gender differences and are less likely to organize on the basis of class differences to demand increased wages or benefits. In the South at the turn-of-the-century, the ideologies of white supremacy and male dominance, linked with the promise of "universal" education, created a political consensus for segregation, disfranchisement, and industrialization during a time of social, economic, and political instability (Harlan 1958, 79; Billings 1979, 202-203; Woodward 1951, 350). The emergent consensus helped control "unruly women," as well as "insolent blacks" and "backcountry whites" whose willingness to challenge the status quo threatened Democratic party rule,¹ and New South visions of political stability and economic growth. By using disfranchisement, manipulation of racist and sexist ideologies, and the outright repression of labor activism, New South leaders left the region without an organized "class" able to force "the creation of a more open, competitive society with services and institutions more attuned" to the needs of its people (Cobb 1984, 160).

¹ Unruly women refers to a book by Victoria E. Bynam by that title; insolent blacks refers to a remark by Mississippi Governor Vardaman criticizing the role of education in creating insolent (black) cooks; and backcountry whites is a term used by W.J. Cash in *The Mind of the South*, along with cracker, to describe poor whites.

Subsequently, public education developed along traditional ideological guidelines, perpetuated the structure of inequality, and strengthened the mechanisms of social control.

Social Control

Although the "New South" struggled to create a new institution of civil society, i.e., public education, it counted on more traditional institutions to maintain social control in the midst of dramatic change.² Churches and families stressed the "idealized role of the patriarchally protected Southern [white] woman" (Dillman 1989, 16). The idealization of Southern white womanhood and the subordination to white male authority produced a sexually untouchable class of higher status white women and a sexually exploited caste of black women. The prevailing ideology masked contradictions in social relations affecting all women, regardless of race or class (Collins 1991, 71). The legal system banned intermarriage, denied that black women could be raped by white men, and sanctioned mob violence against black men for alleged rapes against white women (Berry and Blassingame 1982, 114-126).³

² The South underwent a massive transformation between 1880 and 1900. In those two decades "the amount of manufacturing capital in the nation as a whole grew 253 percent but increased 391 percent in the South; the number of wage earners expanded 95 percent in the country as a whole, but 160 percent in the South; the wages those people earned grew by 146 percent in the country, but 268 percent in the South; the value of the products they produced grew by 143 percent in the entire United States, but the South doubled that rate of growth" (Ayers 1992, 456). Several caveats should be noted. First, the rate of increase in the South is phenomenal, but the base numbers for manufacturing and income were much lower in the South than the rest of the nation. These increases did not enable the South to catch up (McKinney and Bourke 1971). Second, not everyone benefitted. Many people and places in the South became poorer during this "growth" period. Third, Ayers includes 13 states in his definition of the South between 1880 and 1900 -- Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

³ In 1951, the state of NC convicted and imprisoned a black sharecropper for the "rape by leer" of a white woman standing 75 feet away. After two and one half years of legal appeals he was freed. In 1955, Emmett Till was kidnapped and killed in Mississippi because he allegedly whistled at a white woman. Till's killers received a not guilty verdict at trial. In 1975, NC tried a black woman, Joan Little, for

Churches sanctioned the region's economic, social, and political arrangements before the Civil War; similarly, they sanctioned the new industrial order (Pope 1942, 29-32). Textile mills, and other employers, relied upon churches to mold transplanted and displaced farmers, as well as their wives and daughters, into a stable, industrial workforce. Churches instilled the Protestant work ethic and taught workers that the traditional hierarchies of race, class, and gender with their emphasis on obedience and subordination were compatible with the newly emerging order. They preached a gospel of work, of gratitude, and of patience which defined social problems as personal sins or shortcomings and deflected attention from problems associated with the relations of production. One mill worker, Mary Thompson, summarized religious teachings: "It's just in the Bible that people is supposed to make their living by the sweat of their brow. They preached that" (Hall et al. 1987, 125). Talk of self-discipline and obedience to authority dominated religious discourse. Ministers "praised the new industrialists as redeemers of a people and a region" (Pope 1942, 20). In turn, mills subsidized ministers, built churches, and financed church operating budgets (Pope 1942, 39; Hall et al. 1987, 125).

Churches helped bridge the gap between the old and the new South, but they were not sufficient for producing future generations of cheap, docile labor. The South needed schools to teach literacy and to socialize a labor force. "Proponents of Southern industrialization increasingly viewed mass schooling as a means to produce efficient and contented labor, and as a socialization process to instill in black and white children an acceptance of the Southern racial hierarchy" (Anderson 1981, 19) as well as class and

killing a white policeman who raped her at gunpoint in a jail cell. A jury exonerated Little in a nationally publicized trial (Berry and Blassingame 1982).

gender hierarchies. Public schools, almost non-existent in the South before 1900, supplemented family and church efforts to establish a system of social control based on ideologies of “sin, sex, and segregation” (Smith 1949, 94).

The Subordination of Women

The antebellum social order and the New South industrial order created social control based upon “the hegemony of men over women, whites over blacks, and businessmen and landlords over the laboring poor” (Jones 1990, 110). Prior to 1864, NC law permitted a (white) husband to “use toward his wife such degree of force as is necessary to control an unruly temper and make her behave herself” (Mathews 1984). The law also required North Carolina (white) women to forfeit control over all personal property to their husbands. Divorces were uncommon, but antebellum newspapers printed reward notices for runaway wives as well as for runaway slaves. In 1864, North Carolina granted married women control of their own property, but required them to secure their husband’s written consent prior to selling any of it. This law remained in effect until 1964 (Mathews 1984).⁴

Not surprisingly, some of the most avid proponents of slavery, and champions of the New South, glorified the subordination of women. George Fitzhugh, a defender of slavery, asserted that each woman should have “a husband, a lord and master, whom she should love, honor and obey” (Jeffrey 1979, 8). Similarly, 20th century leaders advocated

⁴ Wife beating was sanctioned throughout the United States in the first half of the 19th century. Most states passed unqualified laws against wife beating, although courts were not necessarily sympathetic toward battered wives (Pleck 1979).

training women teachers to become "servants of the State," not independent pedagogues (Leloudis 1996, 76-77). The stress on obedience before and after the Civil War suggests that slavery, and the restrictive system which replaced it, severely restricted women's social roles (Jeffrey 1979, 8). Disfranchisement, segregation, and sharecropping replaced slavery as a system of social control. These arrangements restricted political and labor force participation, thereby reinforcing the hierarchy of race, class, and gender. In both systems, higher status white women "were positioned both as objects of protection and as keepers of the rituals of racial dominance" (Hall 1993, xxxiii). Consequently, in the New South as well as the Old South, white women represented the most potent symbol of white male supremacy (Mathews and De Hart 1990, 9; Hall 1993, 155).

At the beginning of the 20th century when Democrats in North Carolina and in other Southern states used coercive means, primarily racial violence and intimidation, to regain control of state governments (Woodward 1951; Crow 1984; Ayers 1992, 300), they used the most potent symbol of white supremacy -- white womanhood -- to legitimate their actions. In North Carolina, Democratic politicians, the press, and the pulpit attacked universal male suffrage as the foundation for "sanctionized mongrelization" of the races. They called upon white men to "assert their manhood" and "do their duty" to protect "the white womanhood of North Carolina" by intimidating black voters and voting for disfranchisement. Afterward, for more than a generation, NC Democratic party leaders reminded voters of the "agony" of being forced to discount more than 100,000 black votes to protect women's virtue, men's honor, and Christian civilization (Mathews and De Hart 1990, 7). They defined the murder of 14 African Americans and the wounding of

others in the Wilmington Race Riot as a victory of white manhood on behalf of women (Mathews and De Hart 1990, 19), attempting to legitimate violence and laying the groundwork for political consensus.

State leaders also recalled the “agony” of that period to oppose campaigns for woman’s suffrage in the second decade of the 20th century. James Gray, wealthy tobacco and textile entrepreneur from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, wrote that he opposed woman suffrage for fear of “the dangers that confront us....This Commonwealth has gotten along so well since 1900, that it does seem a pity to bring back unnecessarily upon us the days of 1896 and 1898” (Green 1997, 36). Prominent industrialists and political strategists who supported and enacted racial disfranchisement also led campaigns for public education and against woman’s suffrage (Green 1997).

The early 20th century movement to establish a racial caste, class, and gender hierarchy in the new industrial order succeeded. Poor whites, allied with the proponents of white supremacy, consented to disfranchise blacks, and “unintentionally affirmed their own second-class status” (Leiman 1993, 41). Poor white males lost the franchise and found themselves “relegated to a condition of economic servitude not much different than that to which they condemned blacks” (Piven and Cloward 1977, 187). Higher status white women paid dearly for a system that required their continued obedience and subordination. Working class white women endured double disadvantages of gender and class. Poor white women, many of whom lacked male “protection,” often faced the same degradation and exploitation as black women who endured the triple disadvantages of

gender, racial, and class subordination (Marable 1983, 76; Davis 1981). When civil society failed to maintain social order, more coercive measures took effect.

Despite the ideal of the “protected” Southern white woman, women who took a public role were subjected to derision and degradation. Few NC women participated in the antebellum feminist movement, but many more participated in the turn-of-the-century suffrage movement and the latter 20th century ERA movement. In both cases female activists encountered criticism, condescension, ridicule, hostility and failure. In 1897, North Carolina (male) legislators referred a woman suffrage bill to the committee on insane asylums (Mathews 1984, 434). Bills introduced in 1915 and 1919 drew similar responses. When the NC General Assembly met in special session in 1920 for final consideration of the woman’s suffrage amendment, opponents argued that ratification threatened the family, “virile manhood,” white supremacy, and states’ rights. The most outspoken opponents of woman’s suffrage came from the rural eastern part of NC that had the highest density of blacks, disfranchised at the time, and the lowest rate of industrialization. In other words, legislators who could not afford any diminution of social control raised the most vocal objections to woman’s suffrage (Mathews and De Hart 1990, 26).

After Tennessee ratified the 19th amendment, making it part of the US Constitution, the NC legislature considered a resolution ratifying the *fait accompli*. It failed by a vote of 71 to 41 (Mathews 1984, 434). In a symbolic gesture, the NC legislature ratified the 19th amendment in 1971, a half century after it became the law of the land. In 1982, the legislature defeated the Equal Rights Amendment by one vote. Ratification of the ERA

fell one vote short in the NC legislature and one state short in the nation. National ERA supporters counted on the “progressive” Southern state to support the amendment, but the NC legislature maintained its historic commitment to traditional gender values. In both constitutional debates traditional attitudes about women’s roles surfaced that denied or patronized the public roles taken by women throughout the state’s economic, social, and political history.

The totalitarian system which prevailed in the South until after World War II resorted to coercive measures when needed to maintain the social order. Poor whites and African Americans learned that “economic interests could fire and evict and withhold credit at will; white mobs could lynch and burn at will” (Piven and Cloward 1977, 188). Southern women, particularly poor whites and African Americans in North Carolina and Virginia, faced involuntary institutionalization and sterilization to control their sexual behavior (Noll 1994; Woodside 1950). But the socializing structures of southern society, i.e., its civil institutions, minimized the need for overt control and physical coercion by building consensus for the emerging social order. Schools, churches, and families “were organized to inculcate the belief among blacks [and women, and poor whites] that their lot in life was the only rightful one or, at least, the only possible one. The structure of coercion and of socialization was so formidable that defiance simply could not be contemplated” (Piven and Cloward 1977, 188-189).

Illiteracy and Regional Recovery

Training uneducated rural workers to participate in an industrial economy posed many challenges. At the turn-of-the-century only about one-third of school-aged children in the South enrolled and attended school for terms that lasted less than 100 days, about half the term of New England states. The average term in North Carolina lasted only 70 days. School expenditures in the region equaled about one-third of the national average. About one-third of Southerners could not read a simple sentence. Illiteracy rates for blacks were higher than those for whites, and they were higher for women than men. North Carolina reported the region's highest illiteracy rate for native-born whites - 23%, compared to states like Maine, which reported a 4% illiteracy rate among native whites (Harlan 1958, 8-11; Escott 1985, 173; Brown 1964, 72; McCandless 1993; Knight 1924; Plemmons 1946, 20-21; Eaton 1946, 206). For blacks in North Carolina, the illiteracy rate stood at 50% in 1900, having declined from 75% in 1880 (Woodward 1951, 400).

Traditional ideologies about the rightful roles of women and blacks, as well as the plantation system, contributed to the South's high illiteracy rate. The antebellum ban on teaching African Americans to read⁵ limited African American literacy, but the plantation system also constrained white literacy rates. Regional reliance on private, not public, schooling denied education to poor whites. Families who could afford private schooling preferred paying for boys, not girls. Edwin Alderman campaigned throughout North Carolina for public education in 1890, but encountered few who supported educating

⁵ Before the Civil War, most Southern states made it a criminal offense to teach slaves to read. Although whites and blacks often broke the law, in some cases, one slave who taught another to read received the death penalty (Anderson 1988, Bulloch 1970, Allison 1995).

women. From the mountains he reported: "the idea largely prevails here that women need no education. That they were intended for house-work [sic]" (Eaton 1946, 209).

Notions of the economic futility of educating women concurred with religious prohibitions. Religious experts taught that the submission of women to male authority indicated moral superiority among women; hence innocent women, not knowledgeable ones, exhibited moral strength (Jeffrey 1979, 7). New South reformers viewed these traditional attitudes as barriers to economic recovery and political stability. The success of campaigns for public education hinged on the ability of reformers to redefine women's work within acceptable ideological limits, and to redefine the moral threat to women. Then, they could institutionalize these newly defined roles for women within the structure of public education. A similar transformation of ideas about women's work and women's education took place in other regions of the United States.

The Ideology of Separate Spheres, the Cult of Domesticity, and Racial Caste

Outside the South, industrialization and urbanization drew young women away from families and farms to cities and factories; furthermore, they blurred traditional gender boundaries and threatened power differentials. Traditionalists considered these new developments a threat to civilization. They embraced the early 19th century ideology of the cult of true womanhood which stressed piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. Takaki (1993, 206) states that the image of the white "true woman" and the image of the black "child/savage" served as reference points for nervous middle-class white men in the industrializing Northeastern United States at mid-century. They affirmed their own

identity through the degradation of blacks, which demonstrated their own virtuous self-control and work ethic, and the elevation of white women, which allowed them to claim to “protect” culture and beauty in a rapidly changing society. These controlling images allowed them to maintain a hierarchy of white male dominance -- white over black and male over female.

Later in the 19th century, a number of intellectuals, including Herbert Spencer, considered the ideology of separate spheres -- private for women, public for men -- as a form of specialization within the modern division of labor. An emphasis on “domesticity” redefined homemaking as a profession, endowed the traditional roles of wife and mother with social and political meaning, and supposedly raised the status of women. From this perspective, the “woman question” asked how to professionalize the work of homemaking and child care and to develop schools to prepare women for their profession, not how to prepare women for intellectual and economic equity in an industrializing society. A gender-differentiated vocational curriculum that diverted girls from academics to home economics helped resolve the woman question throughout the United States. In the South, gender-segregated or coordinate public education offered additional controls. These reforms reduced competition with men; satisfied religious and business concerns that men should head the household, the family and the place of business; and, most importantly, assured a plentiful supply of low-cost labor for schools and business offices.⁶

These strategies not only devalued intellectuality and hindered access to higher status employment for women, but also sustained ideologies of male dominance, white

⁶ Restricting women to a narrow set of occupations defined as “women’s work” can produce an excess supply of women workers thus limiting their wages (Jacobs 1995, 84).

supremacy, and class privilege. The ideology of separate spheres and the cult of domesticity purported to raise the status of white, middle-class women as wives and mothers, but relegated working class women and black women to degraded work as low-wage factory and domestic workers. These ideologies supported institutionalization of the racial caste system. Until World War I, 90% of all nonagriculturally employed Black women in the South worked as domestics. Nationally, servants and laundresses accounted for nearly half of non-agriculturally employed black women in 1930 (Glenn 1992, 8).

Traditional middle-class households benefited from the availability of cheap domestic labor which reinforced white male privilege, perpetuated the concept of reproductive labor as women's work, and sustained the illusion of a protected private sphere for white middle class women. The privileges of cheap household labor often crossed class lines. In the 1930s, white women tobacco workers in Durham, NC employed black women to work in their homes to mitigate the effects of the "double day" -- household labor that followed the factory day (Janiewski 1983, 93). White women textile workers in Winston-Salem, NC also hired domestic help. The state sometimes forced black women into domestic work as a condition for receiving county welfare assistance (Hall et al. 1987, 157). Employer demands on poor and black women hampered them from carrying out domestic responsibilities in their own households, especially on Sundays and holidays. Pointing to a lack of concern for the families of domestic workers, Hurtado concludes that "there is no such thing as a private sphere for people of Color except that which they manage to create and protect in an otherwise hostile environment" (Hurtado 1989, 849).

Really, there was no such thing as a “separate sphere” for most Southern women, despite the myth of the Southern lady (Scott 1972). In the South at the turn-of-the-century, very few women enjoyed the comforts of middle class life. Most rural farm women, whether they were members of tenant families or landowner families, performed field work as well as housework. No boundaries operated between public and private spheres for textile factory workers who labored in the mills, brought up their children in company owned mill houses, bought their food and commodities in the company store, and worshipped in the company church. Even so, farms and factories distinguished between men’s and women’s work in job description, status, and pay; but the cult of domesticity supported the illusion of separate spheres, reinforced the ideology of male dominance, and so defined a Southern woman’s place.

A Southern woman’s place, in Goffman’s terms, is “a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well articulated” (Goffman 1959, 75). The traditional pattern of appropriate conduct for Southern women, interwoven with the traditional pattern of appropriate conduct for African Americans, persisted long after legal sanctions ended. Following woman’s suffrage in 1919, powerful forces continued to limit the political participation of Southern women. As late as 1952, 1 of 3 Southern white women and 9 of 10 Southern black women had never voted (Jones 1990, 109; Baxter and Lansing, 1983). In the late 1930s, the wife of a white NC tenant farmer clearly understood her place, despite her constitutional rights: “I ain’t never voted, but John’s a Democrat. He ain’t never let me vote but he thinks it’s a woman’s place to cut wood and stay all night in a mean neighborhood by herself” (Jones 1990, 110). Her comments point

out the conflicts with the rhetorical idealization of women, the harsh realities of women's work, and women's lack of power at home and in the public political arena.

The ideology of separate spheres limits the aspirations of all women and inhibits their willingness to struggle for equality whether they work in fields, factories, schools, or homes. Employers preferred hiring white females who considered their wage labor only a supplement to their husbands' income. Female factory workers knew their place in the Southern hierarchy; consequently, they worked for low wages, accepted poor working conditions, and resisted union recruiters (Cobb 1984, 82).

Encumbered with the double duty of household work and wage labor in factories, or subsistence labor on farms, white women operated within the parameters of separate spheres, patriarchy, and racism to reduce the demands of housework. Women were unlikely to challenge racial ideologies that helped relieve the burdens of their own subordinate status at home and at work. Likewise, education reformers did little to challenge traditional notions of Southern womanhood, just as they did little to challenge the ideologies of racial and class subordination (Weiss 1988, 184). To have done otherwise would have challenged the structure of inequality that benefited elites, that promoted the expansion of capitalism and industrialization in the South, and that perpetuated social control.

Racial Ideology and Women's Access to Higher Education

In many Southern communities whites resisted tax-supported schooling out of fear that blacks would benefit as well as whites, and generally they opposed public education

for girls. Charles McIver, a leader in the education reform movement and the first President of the Normal School for white women in North Carolina, criticized opponents who incited racial fears that public education would create a competitive disadvantage for whites; nonetheless, he used racial comparisons to win over opponents to higher education for white women. McIver contended that philanthropists and legislators established higher education for white men, black men, and black women, but failed to provide access for white women. Organizers for a white Normal School in South Carolina supported their cause with racial comparisons, noting that the state already provided a college for “her colored men and women...at Claflin University”; therefore, the state ought to do the same “for her fair daughters” (McCandless 1993, 309). Georgia women cited racial arguments to demand admission to the state university: “‘negro [sic] men and women in the State are being given the opportunity for higher education,’ they told the trustees, ‘which, so far, the white women of Georgia have pleaded for in vain’” (McCandless 1990, 216).

At that time, Congress approved the Second Morrill Act that mandated separate public colleges for African American students in states unwilling to integrate existing land-grant schools (Preer 1990). Religious organizations and philanthropies also supported colleges for African American students, such as Shaw University in North Carolina. These schools admitted both males and females who arrived with little formal schooling, and offered them elementary and secondary education. Few black students, especially women, attended. But the existence of co-educational schools for African American students, that at least nominally provided opportunities for women, armed reformers with a useful threat to win support for educating white women. Paradoxically, once North Carolina secured

legislative support for the higher education of white women, the legislature failed to continue its meager support for the education of black women. In 1900, North Carolina A&M (now North Carolina A&T) discontinued female enrollments because state officials refused to appropriate the necessary funds to accommodate them. Women did not return to A&T until 1924 (Jenkins 1991, 66).

Appeals to racial ideology legitimated white women's access to higher education. Racism and sexism helped education reformers redefine women's work in the New South, and redefine the moral threat to Southern women as a racial one. For "modern" Southern leaders, the real moral threat was not that educated women would lose their innocence through the acquisition of knowledge, but that white women would lose the advantages of a public education to their "inferiors," i.e., black men and women. Reformers created the ideology of the "forgotten woman" to support their efforts. The "forgotten woman" ideology weakened traditional resistance by redefining the moral threat to women as a racial threat. Also, by redefining women's work as the care and teaching of children in schools and in homes, and by promoting the economic advantages of training a feminized labor force to become "servants" of the state, reformers emphasized the public benefits of education. These new definitions maintained traditional notions of a woman's place and further weakened political resistance (Eisenmann 1997, 699).

The Forgotten Woman

North Carolina reformers Charles McIver and Edwin Alderman canvassed the state between 1889 and 1892. Mindful of traditional roles for women, they claimed that

education for girls was more important than for boys, because future wives and mothers would educate the next generation of North Carolinians. "Educate a man," McIver said, "and you educate a citizen; educate a woman and you educate a family" (Dean 1995, 304). Moreover, educating women was cost effective. Educating mothers and teachers provided "the cheapest, easiest, and surest way" to eliminate illiteracy (Dean 1995, 304) and furnished cheap labor for public schools. At this time, the South employed the least feminized teaching force in the nation, more than two-thirds of the teachers were men (Rury 1991, 64; Leloudis 1996, 76; Eaton 1946, 209).

Walter Hines Page, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and a North Carolina native, echoed the theme of the forgotten woman and described her role in laying "the foundation of a new social order" in his 1898 commencement address at the North Carolina Normal and Industrial School for white women (now UNCG). Page urged the state to provide a public school system to mitigate the harshness of life for Southern white women whom he described as "thin and wrinkled in youth from ill prepared food, clad without warmth or grace, living in untidy houses, working from daylight till bed-time at the dull round of weary duties, the slave of men of equal slovenliness, the mothers of joyless children - all uneducated if not illiterate" (Page 1902, 24).

Page chooses the images of "untidy houses" and slavery to compare the lives of uneducated rural white women with the lives of African Americans and to draw a sharp contrast with the myth of the "protected" Southern lady. Education will improve the status of these white women vis-a-vis their racial "inferiors," but will not change their subordination to white men. Educated white women can expect to occupy a status in the

emerging hierarchy that is superior to lower class whites and to blacks, but is subordinate to men in families and in schools (Roediger 1991). Page's remarks blend ideologies of class, race and gender from the old order with the New South's demands for a literate labor force. His career plans for educated women fit traditional Southern beliefs that children, particularly female children, should not move away from family and community (Dillman 1989, 11).

Leloudis portrays the reformers as men who "acted on motives grounded in persistent notions of sexual inequality and the needs of the new education (Leloudis 1996, 76)" The presence of women in the classroom helped legitimate the hierarchical foundations of the public schools. The division of labor between administrators and teachers placed men in the roles of superintendents, principals, and "guardians of professional knowledge" and accorded women the dependent status of "servants of the State," not independent pedagogues (Leloudis 1996, 76-77). The ideologies of domesticity, dependence, service and male dominance also applied to other organizations where a distinctly gendered division of labor occurred, including health care and textile mills (Glenn 1992, 25; Gullickson 1991).

Co-education and Coordinate Colleges

The gendered division of labor required a gendered division of educational opportunity. Although southern states supported higher education for women by founding public colleges for women at the turn-of-the-century, demands for the "same educational opportunities" for women and men did not include teaching men and women

the same subjects in the same classrooms. Early in the 20th century South, political and educational leaders opposed co-education and restricted the formal curricula of public women's colleges to practical training for wives and teachers; at the same time, most private schools, or finishing schools, emphasized art and music and continued to groom higher status white women for their roles in the families of powerful white men. Only private schools for African Americans offered a liberal arts curriculum for Southern women. Although they failed to grant black women equality with black men, they furnished a liberal arts education in a co-educational setting at a time when both public and private schools denied these opportunities to Southern white women (Gilmore 1992, 70; Dwight 1991).

Co-education at private and public schools for African-Americans occurred more as a concession to fiscal pressures than as a legitimation of gender equality. Similar budgetary constraints may have convinced legislators in Midwestern states to establish co-educational state universities, but pragmatism did not prevail in the South. The poorest region in the United States certainly could not afford to maintain separate colleges for men and women, especially since it already divided its meager resources between racially segregated schools. Nonetheless, the South refused to support co-education in public schools and preferred to emulate the Northeastern model of private higher education. At the College of Charleston a 1903 student petition claimed that the admission of women "would inevitably tend to alter the spirit and tone of robust manliness of the student body which we believe to be of even greater importance than scholarship" (McCandless 1990, 201). It also would have altered the system of social control.

Despite the candid disclosure from men at the College of Charleston, most opponents of co-education in state universities were not so forthright. Some claimed that women would lower standards, ruin traditions, distract men or displace them. Similar arguments surfaced throughout the 20th century when outsiders challenged segregationist and exclusionary practices. At the University of North Carolina, where a few women enrolled only as upperclassmen and graduate students at the turn-of-the-century, women sat behind screens to ensure that the men kept their attention focused on their work. Women students excelled academically but their photographs did not appear in the yearbook with the graduating class. Also, they received their diplomas privately, not in the public ceremony with the men (Lane 1984, 6).

One woman wrote that the official attitude “seems to be that women are admitted but not encouraged to come” (McCandless 1990, 206). Those who did come lived in boarding houses. The state made no provisions for housing women students at UNC until 1925 when Spencer Dormitory opened. Two years before, when the legislature discussed the appropriation for building a women’s dormitory, the student newspaper, *The Daily Tarheel* proclaimed “Women Not Wanted Here!” In a special issue published prior to taking a campus vote on building the women’s dorm, editorials opposed the dormitory, objecting to the use of state money to support women instead of men, and speculating about more restrictive rules for men if “co-eds” attended.⁷ Once again, race emerged as an issue. Women who advocated increasing female enrollments stated the rights of citizenship as a reason for admission to UNC. One editorial dismissed the resolution as

⁷ In fact, until the 1960s, the university required that women live under an elaborate set of social rules while men lived under limited regulations.

irrelevant: "On the basis of that argument we could justify the admission of negroes [sic] to the University. Perhaps we should permit them to do so, but where can we find a sane white man or woman in North Carolina who believes that we should?" (Edy 1997, 32).

Separate and Unequal Education

Education reformers persuaded lawmakers and taxpayers to redress a perceived racial injustice to white women, but they did not intend to admit women to the state university or to provide equal economic opportunity. New South leaders established agricultural and mechanical colleges for white men, normal and industrial institutes for white women, and racially segregated schools for black men and women. Fears of increasing women's access to state universities conjured up similar fears of African Americans. McCandless concludes that the university represented

...the ultimate symbol of male dominance, white supremacy, and class privilege; the men who ran the state were no more willing to grant sexual equality than they were to acknowledge racial or social equality. The coordinate college was the female counterpart of the black state college. It did not provide a separate but equal education. Nor was this its purpose. Coordination served to prevent the introduction of coeducation [sic] at men's colleges and to restore segregation to coeducational [sic] campuses. For Southern colleges and universities in the first decades of the twentieth century, maintaining the "spirit and tone of robust manliness" was more important than promoting academic excellence or educational equity (McCandless 1990, 216).

Typically, public women's colleges in the South offered less rigorous academic curricula and more vocational training than their male counterparts. White women

enjoyed more opportunities than black women, but all women, especially Southern women, found their educational and career choices circumscribed by ideologies of race, class, and gender. Beliefs about women's "nature" along with beliefs in modernization and progress, opened doors to teaching, closed doors to other professions, and emphasized the importance of a utilitarian education. So-called scientific and religious ideologies legitimated exclusionary practices and differentiated curricula as a means of protecting women and upholding academic standards (McDowell 1868; McBeth 1977; Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg 1973, 340; McClelland 1992, 39).

The University of North Carolina declined to admit freshmen women until 1951 when the School for Nursing opened. In 1962, the Department of Art advocated admitting women to the Fine Arts program. The faculty allowed the admission of women "if housing were available." Quotas for admission were established according to dormitory space and program space; consequently, between 1963 and 1972 women were admitted under much more rigorous academic standards than men (Lane 1984, 6).⁸ In 1972, the year that Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendment which addressed discrimination on the basis of sex, the University instituted single admissions requirements for males and females. Since women have been guaranteed equal access, the composition of the student body at UNC has changed dramatically. During the 1980s, female enrollments outnumbered male enrollments for the first time. But women did not receive as much money in grants, scholarships, or student loans (Report 1980). In 1996, women constituted 58% of the total enrollment (Brown 1996, 24).

⁸ The University of Virginia excluded all women until 1970.

Following years of conflict, and resurgence of the women's movement, Title IX legislation helped US women win the battle for equal access to institutions of higher education. Since 1982, women have earned more than half of all college degrees in the US (Jacobs 1995, 81). This statistic is remarkable considering that in 1960 women earned 35% of college degrees; in 1950 they earned 23.9%, and in 1940 they earned 41.3% (Jacobs 1996, 155). But access alone does not guarantee full participation in all fields of study or occupations (Eisenmann 1997, 692). Also, it does not guarantee that males and females experience genuine equal opportunity at any level of education (AAUW 1992). Discrimination occurs against girls in primary and secondary school as well as against women in higher education. Also, through a complex process of socialization and self-selection, beginning at middle school, girls tend to concentrate their studies in more traditional fields of study (Jacobs 1995). These decisions have their origins in the separate but unequal curricula offered to young women and children nearly a century ago.

Coordinate Education

Southern states established coordinate schools and discouraged co-education, but few schools offered similar educational opportunities for women and men. Curricula at most state supported colleges for women included domestic, vocational, and academic courses. One North Carolina lawmaker stressed that young women learn "how to stuff a chicken as well as the head of a dull boy" (McCandless 1993, 310). McIver, first President of the North Carolina Normal, aspired to build "a great institution for women of the white race which shall combine...industrial and normal features.... with the work of a

high class college like Vassar or Smith" (Dean 1994, 98). The three departments of study combined these features: Normal (pedagogy courses as well as math, science, history, foreign languages, art, and music), Business (typewriting, bookkeeping), and Domestic Science (cooking and sewing as well as bacteriology). For more than 70 years the Normal college gained recognition as the leading educator of white women in North Carolina and acquired the reputation of the best of the Normal schools for white women created by the southern states in the 1880s and 1890s. By the 1930s, it was the second largest woman's college in the United States (McCandless 1993, 310; Dean 1994, 98).

Despite the success of the coordinate colleges, they failed to satisfy independently minded Southern women. At the Second Conference for Education in the South, held at Capon Springs, West Virginia in 1899, a woman from Randolph-Macon Woman's College, identified as C.S. Parrish, challenged the ideologies of segregation and subordination. Good men, she laments, argue "that since women were born to be wives and mothers no other profession must be allowed to them." From her point of view, the idea of subordination of women "has done more to destroy the education of women in the south than any other one thing" (Parrish 1899, 44-45). She also attacked "the commercial fallacy which has so vitiated all education -- the doctrine that education is to fit a man or woman to DO some specific thing instead of to BE a complete human being; to make money rather than to develop a perfect life" (Parrish 1899, 44-45).

Parrish's criticisms of education for Southern white women also apply to Southern black women. Although the limits of racial caste affected the educational opportunities and employment options for black men, they even more severely restricted the

opportunities for black women. Limited to teaching in black schools or working as domestic servants, black women sought an education hoping to improve their lives (Giddings 1984, 101). But conservative thought within the African American community at the turn-of-the-century disputed the appropriateness of higher education for black women.

Anna Julia Cooper viewed the higher education of black women as crucial not only for African Americans, but also for the United States and the world. She believed that black women were particularly well suited to study and redress social injustice because of their position as women in a sexist society and as black people in a racist society. Cooper, a distinguished scholar and educator, was born enslaved in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1858. Her formal education began at St. Augustine's Normal School in Raleigh, NC, established to train teachers for service among formerly enslaved people (Gates and McKay 1997, 553; Solomon 1985, 76). Married and widowed at a young age, Cooper continued her education at Oberlin (BA in 1884, MA in 1887), then Columbia, and later in life, at the age of 67, Cooper received a Ph.D. from the Sorbonne. In *A Voice From the South by a Black Woman of the South* (1892), Anna Julia Cooper laments the acceptance of arguments against the higher education of women, noting that as black men struggled to attain political and social positions similar to those of white men, many adopted the dominant view of the subordination of women, thereby intensifying the struggle for black women. From her own experience as a student at St. Augustine's, Cooper protests that boys who showed any interest in the classics and theology received encouragement and support, but "a self-supporting girl had to struggle on by teaching in the summer and

working after school hours to keep up with her board bills, and actually had to fight her way against positive discouragements to higher education..." (Cooper 1892, 77). Cooper estimated that in 1891 only 30 black women attended college in the United States. She urged that "money be raised and scholarships be founded in our colleges and universities for self-supporting worthy young women, to offset and balance the aid that can always be found for boys who will take theology" (Cooper 1892, 79). Cooper insisted that "the world needed the education of women to unlock the feminine side of truth, which was as validate [sic] as the masculine side and of equal importance" (Cooper 1892, 160; Dwight 1991, 61).

Cooper criticized conservative African American males who "do not yet think it worthwhile that women aspire to a higher education," an attitude that extended to other intellectual pursuits. For example, women were excluded from the American Negro Academy, organized in 1897 to bring together intellectuals like Reverend Francis Grimké, Reverend Alexander Crummell, and W. E. B. Du Bois, educated at Princeton, Cambridge, and Harvard, to promote scholarship and to encourage promising youth (Giddings 1984, 116). The academy's by-laws allowed only men of African descent to participate. Despite George Grisham's suggestion that women be included, since "in the year of our opening there has been a higher attainment of scholarship...by our women than our men," the organization never changed its by-laws (Giddings 1984, 116). In that respect, the men of the American Negro Academy sided with the men of the College of Charleston and the men of UNC -- scholarship was secondary to male dominance. Gender mattered more than achievement.

Cooper's battles not only supported higher education for black women. She fought the battle for black students to pursue the highest possible academic curriculum in the face of mounting pressure for industrial education. As principal of Washington, DC's M Street School, later known as Dunbar, Cooper prepared black students to enter the most prestigious colleges and universities in the United States. These successes not only defied Booker T. Washington's industrial model, but also occurred at a time when less than 0.2% of the US population received a college education (Warren 1995, 266). Cooper's insistence on an academic curriculum, not just an industrial one, brought Du Bois to speak at the school and provoked sanctions from the school board. Eventually her determination to maintain a classical curriculum materialized as a factor in the school board's decision not to rehire her in 1906. Her replacement, an African American man, promoted industrial education (Giddings 1984, 105; Hutchinson 1993, 278-279).

Defining A Woman's Place

Although some educated Southern women challenged the idea of a woman's place and many women inevitably gravitated toward politics, early 20th century school reformers discouraged women from public involvement in political controversies surrounding women's suffrage or black disfranchisement. Reformers turned to science and religion to verify, not to challenge, existing beliefs about a woman's place in the social order (Noll 1994, 33). Their education restrictions fit the gender appropriate roles proscribed by religious and scientific experts. The curriculum at the North Carolina Normal, and other public colleges for white women, did not educate women to "unlock

the feminine side of truth” and made no attempt to prepare women for public leadership roles in the New South. Instead, the curriculum reinforced the notion that an education should expand a woman’s “natural” abilities for nurturing and maternal roles. Too much of the wrong kind of education --academically challenging and professional, or co-educational --created false beliefs “that the mental powers of the sexes are equal,” endangered a woman’s mental health and possibly limited her capacity for childbearing. Besides, as one physician wrote, “why spoil a good mother by making an ordinary grammarian” (McDowell 1868; McBeth 1977; Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg 1973, 340)?

Harvard’s Dr. Edward Clark, “scientifically” confirmed traditional verities on the education of women. His books: *Sex in Education; or, a Fair Chance For the Girls* (1873) and *Building a Brain* (1874) claimed that education promoted “monstrous brains and puny bodies” (Rosenberg 1982, 10). The brain’s depletion of energy from reproductive organs jeopardized not only a woman’s health but the survival of civilization, i.e., the propagation of affluent whites. A prominent gynecologist, Thomas A. Emmet, prescribed a limited educational regimen for young girls “in the better classes of society” (Rosenberg 1982, 10). In Massachusetts, and other Northeastern states, the burgeoning immigrant population and declining birth rate of affluent whites sparked fears of “race suicide” (Morantz-Sanchez 1985, 54, 106; Gordon 1990). Dr. Clark raised the specters of white race suicide and female masculinization. He concluded that the “identical education of the two sexes is a crime before God and humanity that physiology protests against and that experience weeps over” (Rosenberg 1982, 11-12). Clark’s discussion of white race

suicide and female masculinization influenced not only the medical community, but also the thinking of college administrators, psychologists, ministers, and legislators.

Controlling Unruly Women

As US women assumed increasingly public roles, especially, white middle-class teachers and reformers, they challenged men's control of the public sphere and gravitated to universities in large numbers. By the turn-of-the-century, women nearly equaled or outnumbered men at California, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. These enrollments frightened administrators who did not want universities to be downgraded to female academies. The President of the University of Chicago used funds from a private donor to build a separate junior college for undergraduate women. He believed that only segregation could stem the tide of feminization. Jane Stanford, the widow of the founder of Stanford University, feared that the school would become a female seminary and froze female enrollment at 500 (Rosenberg 1982, 42-45). Although many universities denied women admission to graduate programs, the University of Chicago advocated "professionalization" at the undergraduate level to counteract the trend toward feminization. Chicago economist J. Laurence Laughlin conceded that much of the liberal arts curriculum, as well as education and social work, were doomed to feminization. He believed that the university would secure its reputation as a male institution training men for identifiably male work by establishing its professional schools and in identifying the professional utility of departments like economics and sociology (Rosenberg 1982, 48-49).

Segregation and exclusion of women seemed designed to protect the male public sphere from women, but ideologically, it intended to protect women. The traditional ideological view of women as inferior, child-like, emotional and difficult to control legitimated coercive efforts to protect women from the evils of the world, including too much of the wrong kind of education, sexual promiscuity, and mental illness. Measures taken for the "protection," i.e., control, of women varied according to race and class, but all focused on controlling education, sexuality, and fertility. Higher status white women required educational and social restrictions to protect their capacity for childbearing and childrearing to ensure perpetuation of the white race. Lower status white and black women, however, required more coercive external controls over their sexuality and fertility to protect the social order. Biological explanations for class, race, and gender inferiority led to the use of standardized tests for identifying and categorizing society's most burdensome individuals and legitimated institutionalizing the "feeble-minded" during the early decades of the 20th century (Noll 1994). Because poor women bore children, they were viewed as more dangerous than men. Southern states joined the national effort to build public "training schools," or warehouses to institutionalize the afflicted. Arbitrarily applied admissions procedures often targeted sexually active Southern women as deviant. Young, poor, promiscuous women were at a high risk of being involuntarily institutionalized and involuntarily sterilized to control their behavior, but women from higher status families did not entirely escape these controls.

A South Carolina Report on the Feeble-minded of 1916-1917 investigated high-level "mental defectives" and verified that female mental deficiency and sexual immortality

went hand in hand. The report identified 18 out of 23 feeble-minded women as sexually active. One woman married without her mother's consent and "went out in automobiles with men." Another woman, a college student, was categorized as feeble-minded because of her illegitimate pregnancy (Noll 1994, 47). The North Carolina legislature enacted provisions for the institutionalization of children of both sexes as well as "feeble-minded women between the ages of twenty-one and thirty" (Noll 1994, 47). A 1933 statute expanded the state's power of sterilization to noninstitutionalized individuals, based on the recommendation of county welfare authorities, making the state unique in the South. Later, in the face of mounting scientific evidence that questioned the connection between mental health and heredity, North Carolina officials supported the continuation and expansion of sterilization (Noll 1994, 39).

Admissions records indicate that males were admitted to state institutions at earlier ages and remained there for shorter periods of time. The later admission ages and longer retention rates for women demonstrate that officials viewed non-institutionalized women of child-bearing age as a threat to the social order (Noll 1994, 44). Still greater sexual disparity existed in North Carolina's noninstitutional cases -- women constituted 90% of the non-institutionalized sterilization cases in the 1930s. A researcher in 1936 concluded that "we tolerate the actions of men where we do not tolerate similar actions in women" (Noll 1994, 50).

In the United States the medicalization of deviance, and its affect on the social control of women are well-documented (Conrad and Schneider 1992). Its use for the control of Southern women is even more insidious given the willingness of Southern states

to use institutionalization and sterilization procedures. Between 1907 and 1949, Virginia and North Carolina led the South in sterilizations (Woodside 1950, 195). Females constituted 60% of the Virginia cases and 80% of the North Carolina cases. The desire for social stability became the primary rationale for these procedures whether or not they were supported by "scientific" studies.

The eugenics movement lost public support following Nazi atrocities in World War II, but the medicalization of deviance continues to be used as a means of social control for unruly women in the South. Recently, a former Tennessee doctor of the year, Dr. Elaine Kennedy, found herself involuntarily committed to a psychiatric hospital for five days in 1993 when she visited the office of a Georgia physician to review the medical records of her elderly aunt. The aunt's physician, Dr. Ferroll Sams III, accused Dr. Kennedy of being "hostile, demanding and interfering" when she questioned his care. Dr. Sams replied: "You are an impaired physician. You will be committed to a mental hospital." He signed a commitment form and ordered Dr. Kennedy taken by ambulance to a psychiatric hospital. Later, based on this event, the state of Tennessee revoked Dr. Kennedy's license for three years when she refused psychiatric treatment. Unlike poor and uneducated women who had no recourse to their mistreatment by medical professionals, Dr. Kennedy sued Dr. Sams. In 1997, a Georgia jury found that she was wrongfully committed and awarded her \$3.4 million in damages. Tennessee restored Dr. Kennedy's medical license (Associated Press 1997, A5).

Biology, Theology, and Psychology Define A Woman's Place

At the turn-of-the-century, government officials did not trust women to control their own bodies, and religious leaders did not trust women to lead churches. Traditional political, scientific, and religious elites upheld a curricular emphasis on domesticity, despite challenges from feminists and suffragists. Religious knowledge, scientific knowledge, and political strategies prevented women from gaining access to higher education (McClelland 1992, 38). In many cases, it is difficult to determine whether these decisions protected women from the evils of society, or if they protected men from women. Confronted with turn-of-the-century discourse about co-education and feminism, Southern Baptist Convention spokesmen reminded followers of the two prongs of Baptist opposition to leadership roles for women -- her delicate nature and the law of God. Denying that women could be the intellectual, political or spiritual equals of men, they cited the Old Testament account of original sin where the serpent deceived Eve, but not Adam, as well as the New Testament's admonition from the Apostle Paul to ban women from the pulpit. Southern Baptist leaders blamed "the fall" of the human race on one woman, banned women from speaking in the pulpit, and prohibited them from voting in associational meetings. Not surprisingly, they opposed political rights for women, including suffrage. During early 20th century debates on the 19th amendment, the editor of a Kentucky Baptist paper claimed that "its ultimate ideal is to de-womanize the woman and make her a female man" (Sumners 1977, 46-47). Others wrote that any attempt to break down barriers between the sexes would violate God's natural law.

One Southern Baptist layman, a medical doctor, expressed his views on women and education in an 1886 Baptist publication, claiming that women were biologically and psychologically inferior, unfit for “the machine shop, the halls of higher learning, and the legislative halls” (McBeth 1977, 10). Co-education threatened to ruin the family and the “procreation of our race” (McBeth 1977, 10). The welfare of the human race depended on “the maintenance and cultivation of effeminacy in the female” (McBeth 1977, 10). Women should be restricted to the care of husband, children, the easel, the piano, and the needle. He objected to the idea of women speaking in public and abhorred the idea of women becoming doctors.

Biological and theological discourse also affected the thinking of educational psychologist G. Stanley Hall. Hall, along with Edward L. Thorndike, published in popular and academic periodicals and achieved notoriety in scientific educational research and IQ testing during the Progressive Era. Hall, a student of Freud, Jung, and Darwin, believed that women were lower on the evolutionary scale than men; consequently, he concluded that men and women could not be held to the same “standards” (McClelland 1992, 39). As a champion of masculinity and femininity, Hall urged that schools push distinctions between boys and girls to “their utmost” to “make boys more manly and girls more womanly” (Rury 1991, 158). Hall viewed education as a means to prepare women for their roles as wives and mothers. He discouraged co-education and rigorous academic preparation which he claimed produced only poor health, sterility, and unhappiness. Instead, Hall endorsed practical, non-intellectual education for women, even in co-educational settings; consequently, some educators promoted creating special courses in

“applied” chemistry and physics developed to prepare women for housework and relaxing mathematics requirements because only arithmetic would be necessary for homemaking (Rury 1991, 158).

Thorndike shared Hall’s interest in identifying and measuring psychological differences between the sexes; however, he disagreed with Hall’s conclusions about the health risks of educating women. Thorndike, along with many other educational psychologists, subscribed to a theory of variability of intelligence. He believed that men and women demonstrate the same average intelligence, but men’s intelligence shows greater variation from the mean than women’s. If, in fact, men show greater variation in intelligence, Thorndike concludes that the most gifted individuals will almost always be men. (Admitting a lack of evidence, he cited historical data showing that the most famous and influential people throughout history had been men!) He concluded that women should be educated for teaching, nursing and other professions where average intelligence is essential, but not for fields of administration, statesmanship or scientific research which require a few people of exceptional ability. Furthermore, he recommended that educational resources should be concentrated where they would do the most good -- on the exceptional few rather than the average many; on men rather than women (Seller 1981).

The association between “scientific” testing and public policy recommendations stands as Hall and Thorndike’s most lasting contribution to the field of educational research, producing grave consequences for gender, as well as class, race, and region for the duration of the 20th century. Then, and now, their ideas affected education policy, not

because they were scientifically sound or unchallenged, but “because they were compatible with and supportive of other educational, social, and political agendas of the time” (Seller 1981, 373). Their recommendations to concentrate educational resources where presumably, they would do the most good, justified unequal expenditures and differentiated curricula for Southern blacks, Northern immigrants, and women at all levels of education (Seller 1981, 373). Not surprisingly, the trend of declining female enrollments in mathematics dates from this time.

The Smith-Hughes Act and Home Economics

The US government legitimated task- and role-oriented education with passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. The first successful federal intervention in education occurred in response to demands from industry to develop a more competitive labor force. Although supporters of the Smith-Hughes Act claimed to promote the spread of democracy through vocational education, in their view, democratization was less “a matter of opening opportunities than of reconstructing individuals to fit labor market needs” (Mink 1995, 85-87). The implementation of vocational education, along with the scientific categorization of students by ability, led to sifting students on the basis of *a priori* assumptions about their roles in life based on class, gender, race, ethnicity and region. For example, one educational psychologist interpreted regional differences in IQ tests to suggest that 75% of Southerners lacked the capacity for high school academics and to recommend that Southern States find an alternative to academic high schools to educate the region’s students. By the 1930s, Southern schools cited standardized test

scores as justification for maintaining the racial status quo through segregation and vocationalism (Mink 1995, 85-87; Spring 1986, 208-212; Cobb 1922, 553-555; Thomas 1981).

With the use of Smith-Hughes funds, Northern schools focused on creating an industrial workforce, especially among immigrant populations. Southern schools used the program to promote “scientific” agriculture, to support training for mechanics and tradesmen, and to ensure a supply of agricultural and domestic workers. Both regions geared training to maintaining gender, race, ethnic, and class inequalities in the occupational structure, thereby using federal aid to turn schools into “nurseries of inequality” (Mink 1995).

The Smith-Hughes Act also provided a solution to the “woman question.” Throughout the United States, schools implemented home economics as vocational education for women. For immigrant women in the Northeast, home economics played a key role in cultural assimilation. For minority women in the South, home economics provided training for domestic work. For middle-class white women, state-supported colleges established or expanded home economics departments to train more teachers to teach vocational education courses in high schools (Mink 1995, 109; Urban 1981, 126; Powers 1992).

State-supported land-grant institutions in the mid-West and coordinate women’s colleges in the South inaugurated home economics training for homemakers, creating more suitable marriage partners for educated farmers who graduated from the land-grant schools. But the educated homemaker was not considered “the ideal mate for the Ivy

Leaguer” (Strasser 1978, 150). The oldest eastern women’s colleges in the northeast “self-consciously avoided them” in their efforts to establish curricula comparable to those of the prestigious men’s schools (Solomon 1985, 85). In 1904, the sixth Lake Placid Conference adopted a class conscious nomenclature for their subject. It was called “handwork” in elementary schools, “domestic science” in secondary schools, “home economics in normal and professional schools, and “euthenics” in colleges and universities” (Strasser 1978, 150).

Paradoxically, the professionalization of the domestic sciences allowed some women to achieve professional status and a degree of personal autonomy that contradicted the domestic ideology they promoted for school girls (St John 1994, 192-193). Home economics provided an important source of female employment by creating a new occupational specialty for high school teachers and college professors. For some women, home economics provided new opportunities; for other women, however, home economics jeopardized their academic standing and limited their career options. Often schools shunted women into home economics, regardless of academic specialization, and denied them positions in their own disciplines. A 1911 study indicated that 60% of women faculty in co-educational schools worked in home economics departments (Solomon 1985, 86-87).

Despite the limitations imposed by academic home economics, Solomon (1985, 87-89) suggests that in the hands of imaginative professors, home economics programs foreshadowed women’s studies courses. Courses in the role of women in the family and the professions, consumerism, the needs of working women transcended a narrow

domestic focus. The presence of women faculty and students, even in home economics departments, allowed them to participate in the intellectual and social processes of modern higher education.

The home economics movement at the beginning of the 20th century, “ a product of the period of transition to monopoly capitalism,” used language and linguistic distinctions from business, industry, and science to upgrade the status of domestic work. The ideology of home economics emphasized the qualities that household work shared with capitalist production in general: rationality, training, and a basis in privacy, class, and the money economy (Strasser 1978, 152). The actual term “home economics” involved a business analogy. “But no books on the subject questioned the lack of parallels between the home and industry which the ideology obscured. None mentioned the pay/no pay distinction, and none mentioned the isolation of women at home which did not apply to men (or women) in factories and offices” (Lopate 1974, 56). The ideologies of home economics and separate spheres assumed that wage labor operated as a function of the life cycle for single young women who left paid employment after marriage. The home economics curriculum ignored the needs of women wage earners and failed to train them to be competitive industrial workers. It also succeeded in diverting women from male-dominated professions for decades.

Powers also notes the long-term negatives consequences of the gendered curriculum for women:

By applying science and business to home economics, advocates sought to meld mainstream cultural trends and ideals with women's sphere --thereby elevating the status of women's work and ultimately the power of women, theoretically, while maintaining the boundaries of separate roles.

Ultimately, this separate but equal approach rationalized sex segregation in secondary schools and promoted training for non-remunerative occupations in a society where an increasing number of women worked outside the home. Moreover, this philosophy may have contributed to the dilution of science courses for women, and ultimately to the drop in female enrollments in science courses during the first two decades of the twentieth century (Powers 1992, 16).

Latimer (1958) observed the drop in female enrollments in science courses in his review of US Office of Education high school enrollment records from 1890 to 1955. In all years, total female school enrollments outnumbered total male enrollments, but as total enrollments increased, the percentage of female enrollments in math and science courses declined. For example, in 1900, 58% of high school students were girls. They made up 57% of enrollment in physics, 55% of enrollment in chemistry, 58% of enrollment in algebra, and 47% of the enrollment in trigonometry. By 1955, when girls represented 51% of high school enrollments, their enrollment in science courses had declined to 20% in physics, 43% in chemistry, 45% in algebra and 21% in trigonometry. Interestingly, the number of boys in science courses outnumbered the number of girls for the first time in 1922 (Latimer 1958, 144-147). The date is significant, not only because it followed ratification of the Woman's Suffrage Amendment, but also because it followed passage of Smith-Hughes.

Latimer's study also documents the emergence of an explanation for declining female enrollments in math and science courses. By 1958, there is a commonly accepted

assumption that certain courses, i.e., math and science, are more suitable for one sex than for the other. "Before 1910 such an assumption would have been difficult to document; by 1928 it might seem to have had reasonable validity. This in itself may have had an unconscious psychological influence on the girls or their parents and advisers, in the selection of some subjects instead of others" (Latimer 1958, 147).

Latimer's conclusion that girls, their parents, and their advisers operate under an unconscious psychological influence that some courses are not suitable for girls supports Gramsci's theory of consensus. When ordinary people internalize the ideology of gender, race, or class difference and accept it at the level of "common sense," or an unconscious influence, an ideological consensus has been achieved. The consensus that women are not as well suited for some courses and careers continues to restrict women's opportunities in education and employment, despite the end of sex segregated public higher education brought about by Title IX, and the decline of a differentiated curriculum (Jacobs 1995).

Latimer correctly identifies a change in attitudes and enrollments that occurred after 1910, but he completely ignores the effects of Smith-Hughes and vocational education. No doubt, the creation of vocational math courses for high school students contributed to declining female enrollments in algebra and trigonometry courses at a time when educational opportunities expanded. A 1917 text by William H. Dooley titled *Vocational Mathematics for Girls* claims to show the "value of mathematics in daily life." It "contains samples of problems from all occupations that women are likely to enter, from the textile mill to the home" (Dooley 1917, ii-iv).⁹ It is divided into six parts. Part I is a

⁹ This text is located in Special Collections at the UNCG Jackson Library.

review of arithmetic. Part II concerns problems in homemaking. Parts III-VI include math for dressmaking, for office assistants, salesgirls, cashiers, nurses and problems on the farm. The section on homemaking explains that "the wife is really the spender and the husband the earner in the ordinary home. Therefore, it becomes necessary for every young woman to know how to get one hundred cents out of a dollar" (Dooley 1917, 89).

Home economics significantly affected the educational aspirations and attainment of women throughout the United States, but it had the greatest impact on women living in agricultural regions -- the South and the plains states. Enrollments in home economics courses were the lowest in the most industrialized regions of the US, particularly in the Northeastern United States, and the highest in the South. Rury concludes that home economics appealed to students in agricultural regions where women "may have identified more strongly with their roles as wives and mothers than elsewhere, simply because there were fewer opportunities for employment outside the home" (Rury 1991, 165).

Rury's conjecture correctly identifies an important regional difference for traditional roles, but he misattributes the distinction to the lack of job opportunities in agricultural areas. If occupational opportunities help shape students' educational goals and achievements, then generally, women and minorities should be discouraged in pursuing educational goals. Research suggests that the lack of job opportunity, or the job ceiling, negatively affects the educational goals of African-Americans (Ogbu 1978), but has no affect on the goals of young women (Mickelson 1992). Therefore, there are two better explanations for large home economics enrollments in Southern schools. The first is ideological. Traditional role expectations from the 19th century, combined with the

emerging role expectations for “New South” women, created normative expectations within families that were institutionalized in schools and supported by religious teachings. As a result of these expectations, Southern girls were more likely to identify with traditional gender roles and to face formal and informal sanctions invoked by homes, churches, and county officials when they defied them. Second, many rural high schools, particularly black schools, offered no alternative courses. Indeed, in the 1880s and 1890s, Southern black schools became the first in the nation to implement home economics. They intended to prepare black women to become household servants (Kent 1936; Mann 1989, 793). In some cases, all girls who attended school took home economics by force, not by choice. Powers (1992) explains how home economics courses prepared black girls for domestic service in North Carolina in 1916, despite objections from students and parents:

Blacks were more frequently required to take home economics than their white counterparts, and in some instances they were encouraged to take special courses to train them for domestic service. Home economics was required for blacks in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and when “the sewing classes were filled and cooking and laundry classes went begging....The School Board decreed that every girl who failed to give the required amount of time to cooking, sewing and laundry would be dismissed.” Laundry courses which led to hard menial labor were not sought after by young women who were sent to schools because parents wanted them to escape the drudgery of their own lives; nonetheless, some schools insisted that young black women take the course, in view of their presumed future employment as domestic servants (Powers 1992, 90).

Pressure to teach home economics weighed heavily on African American educators such as Nannie Helen Burroughs, founder of the National Training School for Girls in

Washington, DC. Burroughs supported the idea of professionalization of domestic work, hoping it would improve economic benefits for black domestic workers, make black women more competitive with increasing numbers of poor European immigrants, and ensure a healthy homelife for black families (Giddings 1984, 102). The curriculum at the National Training School included courses in the "domestic arts" as well as the liberal arts. African American women took further training in the domestic arts in colleges in universities, even private liberal arts colleges. Women at Spelman College and Atlanta University in Georgia, and Hartshorn in Virginia, studied domestic arts. School officials denied that they were training domestic servants. Instead, they emphasized the importance of preparing women to care for their own homes and to "lift up the black community through the example they set in maintaining clean, orderly, and well-cared-for-homes and families." They also hoped to improve white perceptions of the black community (Shaw 1996, 77-78).

Through both accommodation and resistance, Burroughs and other reformers worked to secure a better future for women; nevertheless, domestic science courses succeeded primarily in maintaining the class, race, and gender status quo. Vocational education did not create better opportunities for most women; instead, it closed access to occupational mobility and solidified institutional links between economic and educational systems that perpetuated inequality. Enactment of Smith-Hughes created federal support for institutionalization of a differentiated curriculum. After 1920, women's enrollments declined in math and science courses. Feminism entered a forty-year period of fragmentation and decline. During that time, before a resurgence of the women's

movement in the 1960s, few women became historians or social scientists. Between 1920 and 1960 only five major historical works dealt with the history of American women; three of these dealt with colonial history, and only one mentioned the South. The number of scholarly publications concerned with women and women in the South changed when women gained access to graduate schools in the 1960s and 1970s (Hall and Scott 1987, 455-456).

CHAPTER VI

CLASS AND INEQUALITY

The ideology of equal opportunity through public education pervades US history. According to this ideology, Americans built common schools to serve all children, both rich and poor, and to assure all classes equal access to school knowledge and to equal occupational opportunity. In the antebellum period, beginning with the Common School established by Horace Mann in Massachusetts in 1837, middle class and working class Americans in the Northeast and the Midwest united to endorse tax-supported elementary schools. Southerners “displayed more reluctance than northerners to tax property for school costs and to erect state-level supervisory mechanisms for common-school systems” (Kaestle 1983, 203). The politics of education was interwoven with that of slavery and sectionalism. Wealthy planters had little interest in educated white labor and no interest in educated slave labor. Southern states relied on private academies for families who could afford them, setting up an elitist education structure in the ante-bellum period that excluded blacks and limited access to only a few whites. Poorly financed charity schools provided an alternative to private academies and denominational schools; however, free schools, like the poor house, were stigmatized as charity institutions (Link 1992, 4). In 1900, all Southern states lacked public school systems; but thirty years later, every Southern state had adopted the organizational model established nearly a century before in New England (Maxcy 1981, 48-53).

Much of the rhetoric of the common school movement treats the expansion of public education as a national effort to assure all classes equality of opportunity, except in the South; but the rhetoric does not correspond to the reality, particularly at the close of the nineteenth century when businessmen and professional educators organized to take control of school boards to run the schools according to modern business practices. Business leaders envisioned a relationship between industry and state run institutions, especially public schools. They fostered the doctrine of efficiency in public schools as a means of operating schools the same way as the industrial workplace. The standardized, tracked, efficient school segregated by class, race, and gender emerged in the midst of the historical context of struggles between big business and labor unions in the Northeast and Populist movements in the West and the South (Carnoy and Levin 1985, 10-11).

Bowles and Gintis (1976, 3) define the ideology of equal opportunity as the folklore of capitalism. As folklore, the ideology of equal opportunity obscures the role of education in mediating inequality and generates public support for education reform to meet the needs of capital expansion at the expense of democratic participation. In reality, did common schools really create equality of opportunity? Originally, common schools served only white, native-born males. The curriculum emphasized assimilation and morality, not mobility. Although educators celebrated the absence of hereditary privilege and the abundance of opportunity in America, they advised to parents to educate their children in a manner suitable to their "station" (Kaestle 1983, 91-92). Consequently, Michael Katz (1971, 106) concludes that by 1880 American "public education was universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratically arranged, class based, and

racist.” Additionally, it was sexist. The Southern Education Movement promoted this model of “universal education” for Southern states early in the twentieth century.

In primary and secondary schools throughout the United States, immense variations in physical facilities and academic content create conditions described by Kozol (1992) as “savage inequalities.” These inequalities impugn the ideals of democracy, yet they persist. Kozol explains that persistent inequality in primary and secondary education is mediated by a tax system that most Americans do not understand and seldom scrutinize. By extension, his argument includes not only the specific role of the tax system, but also the more general role of the state, i.e., the US decentralized or “federalist” state structure mediates inequality. Championed by both conservatives and liberals as a safeguard of democracy, decentralization is often thought of by “community organizations as well as by many lower administrative structures to be a maneuver for the diminished allocation of state resources” (Stromquist 1994, 449-450). Public acceptance of property taxes as the primary source of local funds, and the unquestioned ideology of “local governance” as the best standard of policy in a decentralized system, allow variable standards and ideological biases to affect provision of education and other services (Weir, Orloff and Skocpol, 1988).

Just as these governmental structures mediate inequality in primary and secondary schools, the complex structure of higher education mediates inequality in postsecondary schools. Brint and Karabel view the structure of the American system as “an institutional embodiment of the ideology of equal opportunity” and a powerful instrument for disseminating meritocratic ideals. “The system reaffirms the national belief that any

individual, no matter how humble the circumstances of his birth, can rise as far as ability and hard work will take him" (Brint and Karabel 1989, 223). It also reinforces the idea that failure reflects a deficiency of individual ability and/or effort

Consensus and Control, and the State

In generating and legitimating different class, race, and gender based occupational, social, and political destinies (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981, 248; Aronowitz and Giroux 1985), schools play a role in winning the consent necessary for the dominant class to govern a divided society, i.e., to establish hegemony. According to Gramsci, hegemony can be understood as "the spontaneous consent given by the great mass of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" (Gramsci 1971, 12). It involves the acceptance of specific ideologies and relations as "routine" and "natural." Without the routine daily acceptance of inequality, dominant groups could not maintain power and control; nonetheless, power relations are never permanently secured but must always be won.

Michael Apple writes that schools "provide sites where ideological struggles within and among classes, races, and sexes can and do occur" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985, 88). Conflicting ideologies, contested policy, and a changing economy, mean that "educational settlements" are subject to re-negotiation. Settlements embody a more or less enduring set of solutions to the educational needs of capital. These solutions establish the groundwork for alliances among political and economic elites and the basis of elite "recruitment of popular support or inducement of popular indifference." Forged in a

contested political arena, these “settlements are highly unstable and deeply contradictory arrangements” which periodically develop into crises (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981, 32).

Three crisis periods -- early, mid, and late twentieth century -- demonstrate the importance of social class in determining US “educational settlements.” At the beginning of the twentieth century, African Americans in the South and immigrants in the North sought education as a means of political liberation and occupational mobility. Dominant interests in both regions acceded to demands for expanded educational opportunity, but implemented vocational education to control labor and to dampen hopes of social mobility. This settlement of expanded access, but limited mobility, helped elites control labor and thereby ascend in the world economy, but it denied equal opportunity to African Americans, immigrants, and low-income whites. At mid-century, when the United States achieved an unprecedented level of dominance in the world economic system, the South and the nation faced pressure from nationalist movements in the Third World and from the African American struggle to expand educational opportunity. The US Supreme Court’s *Brown* decision forced the states to end *de jure* racial segregation, but it did not end *de facto* segregation based on race or class, nor did it end unequal funding. By eliminating overt discrimination and promising to uphold equality of opportunity, however, this settlement helped legitimate US political dominance in the world system. Following *Brown*, the implementation of more intensive testing and tracking continued to deny equal opportunity to low-income and minority students. The decision also created a basis of

resentment for working class whites who blamed “undeserving” minorities for their own lack of resources instead of investigating elite decision-making processes.

Two decades after *Brown*, the US Supreme Court upheld *de facto* class and racial segregation as well as financial inequality in the *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* decision. The Court rejected the equal opportunity arguments used to attack local property tax financing as a violation of the US Constitution. The *Rodriguez* decision left constitutional challenges in funding inequity cases to state courts (Evans et al. 1997). During the last 25 years, disadvantaged groups have contested financial and curricular inequities in 30 states with mixed results. Significantly, state equity lawsuits were filed during a period of global economic restructuring when other nations challenged US dominance in the world system. A national business-led education reform movement also emerged during this period claiming to support “excellence,” not equity. Business and government leaders publicly criticized schools for failing to train a competitive work force, although demanding reduced spending for public services. These competing efforts to define the “education crisis” shifted the rhetoric from deficient schools to deviant students, and from equality of opportunity to adequacy of basic education (Ray and Mickelson 1990; Johnston 1997).

This chapter reviews theories of class production and reproduction that critique the ideology of equality of opportunity in public education. It examines principles of US education policy at the beginning of the twentieth century, which served as a model for the Southern Education Movement, questions the “democratic” intentions of “progressive” education reform in both regions, and examines the role of business in negotiating

“educational settlements.” It examines class-related education “crises” in North Carolina public schools in two different historical periods, starting with a study of the Mill Schools of North Carolina at the beginning of the twentieth century (Cook 1925). Later, at the end of the twentieth century, it examines how a nationally defined “competitiveness problem” with public education is “reshaped to fit a local setting with its own unique history and social coalitions” (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 178). These findings demonstrate that throughout the twentieth century, solutions to education crises in one Southern state, North Carolina, are compatible with national settlements, but all settlements fail to achieve equality of opportunity.

Lastly, this chapter examines social class and inequality in postsecondary education. Access to higher education expanded dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century, but stratification intensified within the increasingly differentiated system. Affluent students are the most likely to attend leading public and private universities, but working class, minority, and female students are more likely to attend community colleges (Karen 1991, 218). Despite their self-promotion as “democracy’s colleges,” community colleges were never intended to provide equality of opportunity to students (Brint and Karabel 1989, 205; Pincus 1980). Research shows that vocational education in community colleges benefits employers more than students and helps reproduce race, class, and gender inequality (Pincus 1980, 354-356). It offers an effective means of perpetuating and legitimating inequality while promoting competitiveness in the world system.

Elites and the Role of the School in Reproducing Inequality

Many scholars write that public schools are not about equality, but inequality, and they prepare students for an unequal future by assuring their personal underdevelopment through tracking and sorting (Willis 1977; Oakes 1985). The ideology of equality of opportunity through public education masks actual class biases affecting the distribution of knowledge, skills, and credentials required for access to professional, managerial, and technical occupations (Finley 1992; Bowles and Gintis 1976). Public education appears as an objective, merit-based system of selection for occupational achievement and social mobility, but in reality, dominant groups determine the selection criteria. Schools reward the cultural capital of the dominant class and systematically devalue and disconfirm the cultures of other groups. Cultural capital consists of general background, knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are passed on from one generation to the next. Children who read books, visit museums, attend concerts, and go to the theater acquire cultural knowledge that the educational system implicitly requires. Students who grow up in families where these experiences are limited or non-existent are disadvantaged. The “school serves as the trading post where socially valued cultural capital is parleyed into superior academic performance. Academic performance is then turned back into economic capital by the acquisition of superior jobs” (MacLeod 1987, 12). By appearing to neutrally “transmit” the benefits of a valued culture, schools promote inequality in the name of fairness and objectivity (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). The school reproduces inequality but legitimates the process by dealing in the currency of academic credentials (MacLeod 1987, 12). Moreover, schools reproduce the skills, values, and ideology that

contribute to capitalist production, while legitimating an unequal economic system (Carnoy and Levin 1985, 20-21).

For Bourdieu (1986), the family, not the school, is the most important producer of cultural capital. Family resources correlate with the parents' location in the stratified occupational structure, i.e., their social class. Class differences produce unequal educational achievement among children. Schools define talent or "natural" ability as a biological product, when in reality, it is the product of an investment of time and cultural capital. The "best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment" (Bourdieu 1986, 244) is the transmission of cultural capital that begins with early socialization within families. It escapes observation, creating the appearance of natural ability. Schools bestow rewards on people who possess cultural capital, increasing future investments and returns. According to Bourdieu, students whose families have only a tenuous connection to the dominant cultural capital are disadvantaged:

The culture of the elite is so near that of the school that children from the lower middle class... can acquire only with great effort something which is *given* to the children of the cultivated classes -- style, taste, wit-- in short, those aptitudes which seem natural in members of the cultivated classes and naturally expected of them precisely because (in the ethnological sense) they are the *culture* of that class (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985, 81).

Schools play an important role in maintaining class differences by exposing students "to qualitatively different types of educational knowledge" (Anyon 1981, 3). Even in elementary schools, where there is a fairly standardized curriculum, a social

stratification of knowledge occurs. In schools where the parents are predominantly working class, students are expected to learn facts and mechanical skills without developing thought processes or decision-making skills. Teachers tend to focus on the physical control of students, not winning their hearts and minds. Middle class schools emphasize commodified knowledge, teaching that knowledge can be useful if you have enough of it. Schools teach students in affluent professional schools to think for themselves and to acquire knowledge through direct experience. Highly privileged children in elite schools learn to understand the internal structure of things. They are more likely to engage in analytical, but not critical, study of the social class structure and the distribution of wealth than students in any of the other schools. Through school knowledge and family socialization these children learn to work very hard to keep what they have (Anyon 1981, 16-17).

Schools play a vital role in the transmission of dominant culture and the legitimation of inequalities in power, prestige, and production through bureaucratic organization and ideology (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Apple 1979; Anyon 1981). Prolonged exposure to the hierarchy and unequal organization of authority and control teaches students to acquiesce to inequalities in power. Students and their parents learn to accept evaluation practices that question individual motivation and ability, not the institutional capacity to meet a student's needs. Young elementary-aged children learn to accept their placement in groups as a result of their own personal merit or failure. Children in low ability groups do not challenge the placement, they blame themselves (Anyon 1981, 198-201). The ideology of equality of opportunity legitimates

personal outcomes as well the persistence in educational and occupational outcomes that occurs from one generation to the next, "through the individualization and internalization of responsibility for one's class position" (Finley 1992, 244). School experience "explains" and makes socially reasonable the future success of students from more affluent family settings, and the "failure" of students from poor, working class, and minority backgrounds (Anyon 1980, 203).

Despite school efforts to reproduce class relations, the outcome is in doubt with each generation. School policies and practices do not always reproduce the status quo. Willis (1977), Ogbu (1978), and Weiler (1988) demonstrate that students "forge their own meaning systems in response to the society position they face and its material implications" (Holland and Eisenhart 1990, 32). Students do not automatically and inevitably acquiesce to school practices. They sometimes produce an oppositional culture by drawing on elements of working class culture "in a creative and potentially transformative fashion" (McLeod 1987, 18-19). Cultural production, marked by contestation, resistance, and compromise, suggests the possibility of change within the structure (Holland and Eisenhart 1990, 33).

The United States

Early in the twentieth century Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University, suggested sorting public elementary school children according to "their evident or probable destinies" (Nasaw 1979, 138). Acting accordingly, schools placed immigrant and African American children where they received the least academic training, directed

native-born "American" children into manual and non-academic programs anticipating blue collar careers, and steered middle class white children into more traditional academic courses (Nasaw 1979, 138-139). Eliot and other administrative progressives at the turn-of-the-century disparaged the democratic ideal of equality and urged that schooling be adapted to fit the existing social structure. Ellwood Cubberley, Dean of the School of Education at Stanford, advised urban schools to "give up the exceedingly democratic idea that all are equal, and that our society is devoid of classes... Increasing specialization... has divided the people into dozens of more or less clearly defined classes...and the increasing centralization of trade and industry has concentrated business in the hands of a relatively small number..." (Tyack 1974, 188-189). Further, Cubberley advised that public schools should prepare some students to assume subordinate economic and social roles. He claimed that "success is higher up the ladder now than it was a generation ago, while the crowd about the bottom increases every year" (Tyack 1974, 189).

Dean James Earl Russell of Teacher's College in New York advised educators to prepare students to lower their expectations to fit changing social realities. "The school that did not dampen the youngster's dreams of future economic independence, of professional or white-collar positions, was not doing its duty to that youngster and his society" (Nasaw 1979, 131). Russell addressed the 1908 NEA symposium on "The Place of Industries in Public Education." His speech, entitled "Democracy and Education: Equal Opportunity for All," promoted "differentiated" schooling -- different curricula for different classes of students -- as democratic schooling. Russell praised African American vocational schools in the South, the county agricultural schools of Wisconsin, and the

trade schools of some eastern cities for structuring “the school courses and school work” of their students in accordance with their “definitely known ... future vocations” (Nasaw 1979, 132). For Russell, “democracy meant offering every student the opportunity for an education equally adjusted to what school officials assumed would be his or her future vocation” (Nasaw 1979, 132). It also meant reducing a student’s expectations for social mobility. “In a society that generated far more ambition for upward mobility than its structure of opportunity could possibly satisfy, the logic of vocationalism...was compelling” (Brint and Karabel 1989, 11). Russell clearly stated the benefits of differentiated schooling for controlling labor:

How can a nation endure that deliberately seeks to rouse ambitions and aspirations in the oncoming generations which in the nature of events cannot possibly be fulfilled? If the chief object of government be to promote civil order and social stability, how can we justify our practice in schooling the masses in precisely the same manner as we do those who are to be our leaders? Is human nature so constituted that those who fail will readily acquiesce in the success of their rivals....Is it any wonder that we are beset with labor troubles (Nasaw 1979, 131)?

Business leaders supported developing a separate system of vocational education at the secondary level to bypass union apprenticeship programs, to weaken the power of unions, and to put the teaching of job skills and “work values” under management control (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 193; Pincus 1980, 335). The American Federation of Labor and labor leaders opposed vocational education fearing that big business dominance would produce workers willing to labor for low wages and to be loyal to the company rather than

to the union. Won over by the promise of sharing control of vocational education with industry and government, labor desisted and Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 with little opposition. The bill did not create a separate system of vocational education, but it did establish a vocational track in the public high schools (Pincus 1980).

Students resisted vocational education from its inception. Girls, including native-born whites, immigrants, and blacks in the Northeast and the South, objected to home economics (Powers 1992; Kent 1936). African American males and females sought academic, not vocational training (Anderson 1988). Unable to persuade students, or their parents, that students should voluntarily enroll in vocational education for their own good, schools denied students the opportunity to select their own programs of study (Pincus 1980, 336). Schools placed students in vocational or academic tracks, but “some process of distinguishing the gold from the dust had to be established and legitimized as more than social class, ethnic, or racial discrimination” (Nasaw 1979, 137-138). The selection process became more “scientific” after World War I when “objective tests” were introduced into the schools. In 1916 Lewis Terman, an early proponent of testing, explained its usefulness for tracking students:

At every step in the child's progress the school should take account of his vocational possibilities. Preliminary investigations indicate that an IQ below 70 rarely permits anything better than unskilled labor; that the range from 70 to 80 is pre-eminently that of semi-skilled labor, from 80 to 100 that of the skilled or ordinary clerical labor, from 100 to 110 or 115 that of the semi-professional pursuits; and that above all these are the grades of intelligence which permit one to enter the professions or the larger fields of business.... This information will be a great value in planning the education of a particular child and also in planning the differentiated curriculum here recommended (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 197).

Expert scientific knowledge about social differences confirmed “common sense” understandings about racial, gender, and class stratification and furthered the goals of dominant interests in creating ideological hegemony (Gramsci 1971). It made “sense” for education reformers to implement a differentiated curriculum for people of different backgrounds and abilities and to prepare them for different social and economic roles. Conveniently, the high correlation between test scores and class, race, and ethnic background legitimated decisions to place privileged, native-born, white children in academic tracks that led to college (Pincus 1980, 336). It legitimated decisions to direct others toward gender, class, and race based employment. Schools promised working class and minority students that industrial, commercial, and domestic science courses would improve their lives and their earnings. Research documents the ineffectiveness of the differentiated curriculum for low-income and minority students; however, research confirms that vocational education has preserved the academic curriculum for higher status students (Oakes 1985, 153).

“Scientific” knowledge that strengthened connections between schooling and work appealed to industry. The Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations funded research to investigate further educational uses of “objective tests.” A 1931 Carnegie-sponsored study recommended “that certain groups having similar abilities can be segregated and given a more appropriate curriculum.” (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 197). In the first half of the twentieth century, these two foundations supported the College Entrance Examination Board (sponsors of the Scholastic Aptitude Test), the Graduate Records office, and the

National Committee on Teachers Examinations. The foundations also supported consolidation of testing organizations under the aegis of the Educational Testing Service in 1948 (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 197). Now fifty years later, the Educational Testing Service designs, administers, and evaluates "objective tests" that profoundly influence admission decisions in all undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools in the United States.

The South

Between 1890 and 1920, the Progressive Era, Southern educators promoted public education as a means of "democratizing" Southern social institutions. Edwin Alderman, a North Carolinian who served as president of the University of North Carolina, Tulane University, and the University of Virginia selected the school as "the heart of the South's problem." He said: "Our institutions needed to be democratized; our thought to be nationalized; our life to be industrialized, and the whole process was one of education" (Alderman 1907, 108). Alderman's views conformed to Progressive expectations that the South would truly rejoin the Union, abandon racial violence, and renew its commitment to "democracy" by adhering to the national model of modernization and industrialization. Scholars debate the motives of national reformers such as Jane Addams and John Dewey who claimed they wanted to democratize the incipient industrial system. Similarly, did Southern progressives want to "democratize" the South through education to serve the needs of people living in the region or to serve the needs of the South's developing industrial system?

Billings (1979, 208) contends that "the southern education movement served the needs of the South's developing industrial system, just as progressivism generally contributed to the development of the American corporate economy." In both cases, reformers "sought not so much to democratize the industrial system as to make it run more efficiently" (Lasch 1969, 10). Education substituted for older and cruder methods of social control that were coercive, hence undemocratic, as well as inefficient. Lasch concludes that "even when they originated in humanitarian impulses, progressive ideals led not to a philosophy of liberation but to a blueprint for control" (Lasch 1969, 10).

Southern Education Movement reformers embraced the philosophy of education as a blueprint for social control in a period of economic restructuring and political upheaval. Their ideology of "progressive" education increased investor interest outside the region and diminished political opposition within the region. Additionally, it established a basis for organizing popular consent among rural whites, many of whom participated in the Southern Farmers' Alliance and the Populist movement in the 1880s and 1890s. Small farmers joined these uprisings to protest the increasing dominance of large-scale agricultural, commercial, and industrial interests and the concomitant growth of social, economic, and political inequities. In the short run, a flurry of successes, notably in North Carolina, suggested the potential for democratic reform; in the long run, the Populist movement increased the cohesion of the elites and solidified the one-party South (Cobb 1988, 57; Billings 1979, 208; Jeffrey 1975).

The promise of "universal education" and the ideology of equal opportunity (for whites) helped win consent for Democratic party rule in North Carolina. Disfranchisement

eliminated the political participation of blacks and poor whites, enabling planters and industrialists “to use state government as an instrument for modernization” (Billings 1979, 211). “The State that emerged in North Carolina after 1900 reinforced the social and economic control of planters and textile industrials and played an important role in containing periodic threats to proletarianization, exploitation, and capital accumulation” (Wood 1986, 122). As the state expanded public schools it allowed the costs to be passed to the working class through a system of regressive taxation. Consequently, middle class whites benefited most from increased public expenditures for “universal education.” During the first few decades of the twentieth century, the tax-burden and expenditures for public education became increasingly inequitable. Funding inequities between black and white schools increased dramatically. Although discrimination “against whites in poorer areas was less than that against blacks, ... there was a clear change in the distribution of white expenditures from a relatively equitable pattern before to an increasingly inequitable one after the passage of suffrage restriction laws” (Kousser 1980, 190-191).

Financial inequities reflected class and race discrimination. So did decisions on the structure and organization of schools and the content of school knowledge. In 1886, the State Superintendent of Florida recommended vocational education for the “children of the poorer people,” obviously anticipating Eliot’s directive to prepare these children for their “probable destinies”:

The State Board of Education are deeply impressed with the fact that the large majority of the children in attendance upon the public schools are the children of the poorer people, and will fill the large and important classes of farmers, workmen, mechanics and artisans of the State, and that to impart to them only the knowledge to be derived from the school books...will but illy equip them for the sphere of life to which in Providence and circumstance they are sure to be called...(Kent 1936, 10-11).

The Superintendent stressed that boys should learn about tools and implements and that girls should learn cooking, sewing, and housewifery “so that a taste may be cultivated for the very useful and important vocations in life and some knowledge imparted to them, but mainly to impress them with a true and proper conception of the honor and dignity of honest labor” (Kent 1936, 10-11).

North Carolina Governor Charles B. Aycock, a prominent leader in the Southern Education Movement, elaborated on the role of education for poor whites. Education not only should teach white workers the honor and dignity of honest labor, but also should teach them to know their place in the new social order. In what has become known as his Universal Education speech, Aycock compared the process of educating, i.e., controlling, poor whites to that of “breaking a mule”:

But this is your unbroken mule. We call it “breaking” them. What is “breaking” a mule except training him, educating him, bringing out of him what there is in him? Why, when you buy a mule fresh from a drove it takes two white men and one 15th amendment to hitch him to a plow, and when you get him hitched up he plows up more cotton than he does grass; but after you have broken him, trained him, developed him, educated him, why the old mule goes right along (Billings 1979, 209).

Aycock and other New South leaders urged poor whites to go along with vocational education, disfranchisement, segregation, and plans for industrialization. Not coincidentally, the Southern Education Movement paralleled the Cotton Mill Campaign in North Carolina. In public meetings, conducted much like revivals, would-be entrepreneurs presented plans for building cotton mills, not as a business, but as a social enterprise. They promised to save poor whites from poverty and from occupying the bottom of the social hierarchy with blacks, and “to drag them back from the edge of the abyss” (Cash 1941, 177-178). From their point of view profits were only incidental

Playing on fears of poverty, notions of white supremacy, and religious prescriptions for work, elites won consent for building “the factory and the school” in southern communities. Whites consented to work for low wages and to accept educational inequities with the understanding that they would be able to support their families, and to occupy a more advantageous “place” than black workers. But industrialists also considered the training and the socialization of the black working class as critical to Southern industrialization. Industrialists promoted education as a subtle and systematic form of coercion that would subjugate blacks and create an inexpensive labor force. “Also, a key concern of the industrialists was to manipulate labor to their advantage through creating a docile, tractable black working force that would be insurance against the spread of unionized white labor” (Anderson 1975, 22).

Industrialist William H. Baldwin, a persuasive proponent of vocational schooling for African Americans, recommended to the Second Conference of Education in the South (1899), that schooling for black students should be directly related to the type of work

they would perform -- heavy labor at low wages. Also, he stressed the subordination of black workers to white workers (Nasaw 1979, 141; Anderson 1975, 34).

In the negro [sic] is the opportunity of the South. Time has proven that he is best fitted to perform the heavy labor in the Southern states....The South needs him; but the South needs him educated to be a suitable citizen. He will willingly fill the more menial positions, and do the heavy work, at less wages, than the American white man or any foreign race which has yet come to our shores. This will permit the Southern white laborer to perform the more expert labor, and to leave the fields, the mines, and the simpler trades for the negro [sic] (Anderson 1975, 33-34).

Baldwin planned to keep black labor subordinate to white labor in times of economic stability. In times of crisis, Baldwin planned to use black workers to break the power of organized labor. "The union of white labor, well organized, will raise the wages beyond a reasonable point, and then the battle will be fought, and the negro [sic] will be in at a less wage, and the labor union will either have to come down in wages, or negro [sic] labor will be employed" (Anderson 1975, 34). Anderson maintains that Baldwin's plan required careful training of black workers to manipulate them back and forth, and separating them from white workers. They would be trained to mark time in menial "black jobs" and move back and forth into "white jobs" when needed as strikebreakers. Perhaps more importantly, the scheme required training black workers to be "tractable, humble, and obedient" and to stay in "their place" (Anderson 1975, 34-35). Education, like slavery, was to restrain African Americans into a social caste.

The Mill Schools of North Carolina

Early in the twentieth century, the rapid expansion of the textile industry spurred the growth of mill villages and towns. Then, and now, local governments lured industry to their communities through tax abatements (Lyson 1989, 4-6). Textile mill owners soon learned that "it was usually much cheaper for mills to provide inferior schools for the children of their workers rather than to pay school taxes" (Cook 1925, 5). For labor purposes, it was also much more efficient to operate schools "as extensions of the factory than as independent institutions" (Hall et al. 1987, 127-128). One company official clarified the relationship between industrialization and education: "The school is part of our business" (Cook 1925, 9). By 1925, North Carolina mills operated 119 mill schools in 36 counties, 29 of which were located in the Piedmont region.

John Harrison Cook's 1925 publication, *A Study of the Mill Schools of North Carolina* described the education of the children of cotton mill workers as "one of the vital problems of education in the South" (Cook 1925, 1-2). Cook found that the organization, segregation, and administration of mill villages and schools created sharp class cleavages between white mill workers and their neighbors. According to Cook, the control of the mill owners over schools, housing, churches, utilities, and stores, was "not conducive to the development of democratic ideals" (Cook 1925, 49). Also, it was not conducive to the development of equal educational opportunity.

Mill owners exercised the greatest influence in schools where the mill supplied schooling in lieu of paying school taxes, and mill owners or their representatives controlled local school committees. The mills provided buildings, and in some cases they

actually collected rent from county governments for the use of their buildings. Companies listed teachers and principals on the factory payroll and issued their paychecks along with those of other employees. Mills required teachers to instruct children to uphold mill work as an honorable vocation (Cook 1925, 9-10). In all of these schools, mills supplied schooling only through the seventh grade and provided no libraries. The state required children to enroll in the town or county high school and to pay tuition to continue their education, but failed to enforce compulsory attendance laws. Lacking tuition and transportation, mill children typically dropped out of school and worked in the mill to help support their families. George Shue, a typical mill village student, explained why he dropped out: "I finished the sixth grade and that's as far as it went. I wanted to finish seventh grade, but you had to go to Charlotte High School and you had to pay. Well, my daddy couldn't afford to do that making fifteen dollars a week" (Hall et al. 1987, 127-129). Only 3% of the children from seven-grade mill schools attended high school and earned the educational credentials needed to expand their occupational opportunities; consequently, the cotton mill labor force became self-reproducing.

Cook viewed the control of mill schools as "part of the general program of control which mill owners have with respect to those who live in the village" (Cook 1925, 9). This control not only lowered school costs, but also lowered the cost of labor and minimized the likelihood of dissent. Lacking educational credentials, children of mill workers were unlikely to seek employment elsewhere. Mill workers lacked a voice in local government because public utilities, as well as all residential and commercial real estate, were controlled by the mills. There were no public libraries, and no places to hold

public meetings. The school certainly was not part of the local community and was indeed part of the business.

Cook found that when owners exercised less control, mill schools were organized more democratically and usually contained 11 grades. (North Carolina high school students completed their diplomas in the eleventh grade until the state added a twelfth grade during World War II). Those schools complied with the state minimum for high schools and contained at least 300 library books. They also enrolled children from nearby towns or rural communities as well as the mill workers' children. Less segregation for mill children, more taxation from the mill, and more community participation in school governance created more equitable opportunities to complete high school. Students also achieved higher IQ test scores in these mill schools, but failed to achieve scores equal to those of students in the state's city schools.

Cook found that the mill school system of segregation and subsidy produced school drop-outs, child labor, and low IQ test scores. Consequently, he defined mill schools, not mill children, as the pressing social problem. Unlike most "scientific experts" of his generation, he explained low test scores as a product of the education system, not an indication of a lack of innate ability. Cook traced the origins of mill workers to disadvantaged rural communities where the parents grew up with poor schools or non-existent schools. "The children living in segregated mill villages, in homes lacking educational stimulation, and in environments where all initiative is suppressed will be expected to be somewhat deficient in the informational element when examined by general intelligence tests" (Cook 1925, 21). Cook concluded that low test scores did not indicate

a lack of native ability. He found the schools, the textile mills, and the state culpable, not the children and their families. In many ways, Cook's findings on the test scores of poor white children in North Carolina are similar to Horace Mann Bond's analysis of army intelligence tests that appeared in *Crisis* in 1924. Showing that whites in the South rated lower than whites in the North and that blacks in the South rated lower than blacks in the North, Bond claimed that Alpha Army Tests measured environment, not native capacity. He argued: "Instead of furnishing material for the racial propagandists and agitators, it should show the sad deficiency of opportunity which is the lot of every child, white or black, whose misfortune it is to be born and reared in a community backward and reactionary in cultural and educational avenues of expression" (Bond 1995, 594).

Cook recommended that the state improve opportunities for mill children by ending the system of segregation and subsidy for mill schools and by making them more democratic. Absorbing mill schools into local school districts ended the practice of allowing company-owned school buildings and company-hired teachers and principals. It also weakened company control and strengthened community participation. In Cook's view, sending mill children and town children to the same schools provided equal opportunities to mill children and town children, and counteracted "the tendencies toward class cleavage" (Cook 1925, 21). Moreover, Cook recommended expanded community involvement in school committees and limited company involvement:

Local committeemen for mill schools should not be chosen from those whose financial interests clash with the adequate support of the school; nor should they be selected from those whose economic interests are furthered by having children leave school at an early age. The greater the degree of control by mill owners, the less likely are the schools to have a course of study beyond the seventh grade or any other advantages beyond the minimum legal requirements (Cook 1925, 13).

Cook considered democratic community participation crucial to public education. He advocated turning mill towns into incorporated municipalities with playgrounds, libraries, and community buildings where citizens could engage in uncensored discussion. He expected private home ownership and competitive businesses to make town and school operations more democratic. He also suggested that the state provide adult education for mill workers and add kindergartens for the children of working parents. He supported after-school activities for children including scouts and clubs (Cook 1925, 50-51).

Cook urged the state to raise the age of compulsory school attendance and to enforce it. At that time North Carolina's compulsory attendance law, the lowest in the United States, did not apply to children ages 14 and older. Also, it was not enforced. Under the best of circumstances, however, Cook continued to view the presence of mills in the community as a "a constant temptation to children to leave school before entering or completing high school" (Cook 1925, 39). Disadvantaged rural white children were more likely to enroll in high school than the mill children. "As a rule the children of mill-workers would have had three times as much chance for a high school education had the father remained in the rural districts rather than moved to a mill village..." (Cook 1925, 48-49).

Cook's findings and recommendations represent a remarkable achievement for the 1920s. Rejecting contemporary scientific experts who explained class differences in standardized test scores as reflections of innate ability, Cook examined structural and environmental factors. Believing that democratic participation would create equal opportunity and improve educational outcomes, Cook advocated structural change. He failed to understand that the elimination of segregated mill schools was not sufficient to ensure equal opportunity. Cook's hopes for ending class segregation resembled the hopes of African Americans who struggled to end racial segregation. In both cases, reformers failed to understand that class, race, and gender based differences in educational and occupational opportunities are fostered and maintained *within* public schools as well as *between* schools.

Recent research confirms that the presence of textile mills, and opportunities for child labor, depressed school enrollments for white children in North Carolina and South Carolina early in the twentieth century (Walters and James 1992). In the 1930s, North Carolina eliminated mill schools and the United States restricted child labor, partly in response to "progressive" reformers. Student enrollments increased, but schools continued to produce different class-based opportunities and outcomes. The federally funded Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 supported a separate structure of vocational education *within* schools for low income students. Racially segregated public schools discriminated against the children of poor factory workers, where students and teachers often castigated them as "lint heads" or "mill trash" (Roebuck and Hickson 1982, 18-19). White school officials typically dismissed the children of sharecroppers and mill workers as incapable of

learning and expected them to fail. Lacking teacher encouragement and facing work responsibilities at home, poor children rarely participated in extracurricular activities. In some cases, schools offered two separate senior class plays, one for the “lint heads” and one for the other children. Not surprisingly, many poor children dropped out long before reaching high school. White illiteracy rates were highest among sharecroppers and mill workers during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s (Roebuck and Hickson 1982, 28).

Taxes, Equality of Opportunity, and Business-led Reform

Separately subsidized mill schools disappeared when the state of North Carolina restructured school finance with the School Machinery Act of 1931 and additional tax reforms in 1933. The structure of school finance created in the 1930s remains in effect today (Mesibov 1995, 12-13). North Carolina distributes tax funds to school districts on a per pupil or flat grant basis (Evans, Murray, and Schwab 1997, 18), regardless of the needs of the students or of the costs of providing the same educational services in rural, urban, and suburban school districts (Yudof, Kirp, and Levin 1992, 593). Local communities “supplement” state per pupil expenditures according to their ability to generate local property taxes and their willingness to spend them. Also, local communities must construct and maintain school buildings. This two-tiered financial system fosters inequities between property-rich and property-poor school districts, creating “a systematic bias against the poor” (Carnoy and Levin 1985, 10). Moreover, because low property taxes are essential for maintaining North Carolina’s “favorable business climate,” along with low wages, and low rates of unionization, inequities between schools in North

Carolina and states outside the South are inevitable. Schools also suffer from the cumulative effects of decades of state-sponsored industrial recruitment strategies which fueled the "sunbelt" growth phenomenon of the 1970s and 1980s, activated rapid population and business growth in some Southern communities, aroused envy in low-growth communities, and strained the capacity of local infrastructures.

Paradoxically, the low property tax rates that attract business relocation in the first place ultimately spawn newcomer complaints about inter-state school inequities (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 180-181). In the 1980s, relocating company executives and their employees discovered that Southern schools, even more advantaged Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, did not meet the standards of the northeastern and midwestern suburban schools they left behind. Newcomer corporate complaints spurred creation of a Chamber of Commerce Task Force on Education and Jobs in 1987 in an attempt to "do something" about the education crisis in Charlotte.

Ironically, the influx of newcomers increased property values in high growth areas, and decreased property values in low-wealth, low-growth areas, leading to greater intra-state school inequities (White 1996). Property-poor school districts cannot meet the standards of property-rich districts such as Charlotte and Raleigh. Often residents in property-poor counties tax themselves at a substantially higher tax rate than the more affluent districts, but the poor districts still raise less money. As the amount of taxable property wealth rises in rich counties and declines in poor counties, the spending gap between rich and poor districts widens (White 1996). In the early 1990s, parents in five low-wealth school districts decided to "do something" about inequitable school finance so

they filed a lawsuit against the state of North Carolina, *Leandro, et al. v. North Carolina* (NC Court of Appeals 1996). The litigants demanded elimination of discrepancies in per pupil expenditures between rich and poor districts claiming that inequities denied students equal educational opportunity.

Both local school crises, addressed by the Charlotte Task Force and the *Leandro* lawsuit, occurred in the midst of a national campaign of criticism of public schooling. Beginning in 1983 and 1984, a number of national commissions, business groups, and political groups issued reports urging Americans to “do something” about declining standards in public schools. The most widely circulated reports were *A Nation At Risk*, published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education for the US Secretary of Education, and *Action for Excellence*, published by the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Education Commission of the States. Berliner and Biddle (1995) refer to these unprecedented attacks on public education by governmental and business leaders as a “Manufactured Crisis” based on myths, half-truths, and lies. Proponents of the “manufactured” national crisis ignored equality of opportunity issues and shifted public discourse to lagging “competitiveness” in world markets and fear of foreign competition. *A Nation at Risk* claimed that the nation’s “once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world” (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983, 1). The report called on the states to bolster “the educational foundations of our society...being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our

very future as a Nation and a people” (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983, 1).

National reports omitted any discussion of global changes produced by the world-economic contraction of the 1970s, the US descent from its post-war position of dominance, and the *effects* of these changes on education. Instead, business and government elites treated the so-called decline of public education and the failure of students as *causes* of US failure in world markets. Further, the political rhetoric about competitiveness ignored the profile of low wage, low skill service sector jobs actually available to youth and overlooked the role of business in eliminating and exporting jobs and creating a contingent work force (Borman et al. 1994, 70).

The Business Roundtable, established by the chief executive officers of America’s largest corporations in the 1970s to lobby Congress for more favorable legislation (Domhoff 1983, 135-136), actively worked to redefine global economic restructuring as a consequence of US educational shortcomings. The Roundtable’s task force on education, chaired by IBM chairman John Akers, proposed a ten-year plan for “a transformed educational system” to raise the productivity of students and teachers through tech-prep and work-based learning (Akers 1990, 25). In 1994, Congress passed the School-to-Work Opportunities Act to establish the Roundtable’s plan at the federal level (Savage 1994, 15). Then, recognizing that the Constitution reserves the power for education to the states, the Roundtable targeted state governments for reform (Akers 1990; Borman et al. 1994). California’s Business Roundtable profoundly influenced that state’s education reform efforts. One critic predicts that the California plan will “transform an institution

that, at its best, now teaches children to think into one that will teach them to work. If adopted, this plan would mean that those who believe learning is valuable in and of itself will have been silenced in favor of economic development” (Savage 1994, 12). Critics fear that educational opportunities for artists, musicians, and intellectuals will be limited or eliminated by business-led reforms. Also, the Business Roundtable excludes organizations that represent the interests of children, women, and minorities and focuses on its own self-interests (Borman et al. 1994, 77).

Evidence from the last century reveals a long history of subordinating education to economic development in North Carolina. At the beginning of the twentieth century, elites promised “universal” education to silence opponents of one-party Democratic rule and to build popular consensus for disfranchisement, segregation, and industrialization. At mid-century, state officials delayed desegregation and engaged in skillful impression management to pursue foreign investment and to secure funding for the Research Triangle Park (Chapter Three). By the end of the twentieth century, in the midst of a national “crisis,” North Carolina leaders discovered ways to shape public discourse about school reform and to protect the interests of the state’s “growth elite” in promoting economic development.

The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Task Force

The findings of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Task Force on Education and Jobs in 1987 demonstrates how the nationally defined “competitiveness problem” with public education is “reshaped to fit a local setting with its own unique history and social

coalitions" (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 178). Charlotte, NC, a high-growth city, a regional banking center, and headquarters of NationsBank -- one of the largest US banks, also experienced court-ordered busing for school desegregation during the 1970s (Douglas 1995). When the courts required that whites attend African American schools to achieve desegregation, as opposed to blacks attending white schools, white elites resisted. The school board acted to exempt the city's wealthiest neighborhoods from desegregation, but this effort backfired. Biracial community groups organized to oppose any plan that discriminated against African Americans and lower and middle income whites. They forged a more stable and equitable desegregation plan and built a supportive biracial political coalition (Baker 1997, 97). Subsequently, Charlotte's desegregated public schools generated favorable media attention, boosted North Carolina's "progressive" reputation, and enhanced economic development recruitment efforts. Buses brought black and white children to the same schools but African American and low income students remained cloistered in the least challenging academic tracks (Baker 1997, 97). An erosion of community support for public schools occurred in Charlotte in the mid-1980s, as it had throughout the nation. Those who openly criticized Charlotte's desegregation and pupil reassignment were white, relocated newcomers who moved to Charlotte from "homogeneous white middle-class or upper middle-class suburbs, where there was no school integration by either race or class" (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 180). Relocated newcomers also raised questions about the quality of public education in Charlotte.

Responding to negative publicity on public education and attempting to control its potentially damaging effects for new business recruitment, the Charlotte Chamber of

Commerce announced formation of a Task Force on Education and Jobs in the fall of 1987. The Task Force included educators, elected officials, representatives of state and national civil rights organizations, and business leaders. The business leaders were divided into two groups: about half of them represented recently relocated corporate leaders, and the other half represented more established members of the "growth elite" associated with banks, department stores, and regional development groups. Members of the growth elite were more knowledgeable about community issues and the history of race relations in Charlotte. But relocated corporate executives, active in the Business Roundtable and other national groups, held the power to commend or to condemn Charlotte in national forums. Sensitive to the need for impression management in national forums, as well in the local community, the Charlotte Chamber organized its task force to convince relocated corporate executives and employees, as well as local citizens, that Charlotte wanted to "do something" about public education (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 181).

Attempts to define Charlotte's education problem reflected conflicts between the two groups of business elites. Initially, both groups agreed that an increasingly competitive global marketplace necessitated education reform, but they disagreed about the source and solution of the problem. Charlotte's relocated company executives complained about the poor quality of the schools and the allegedly poor quality of the local labor pool. First citing problems related to the work ethic such as "failure to show up on time," and "immaturity," but saving complaints about the actual academic qualifications of workers until last, they targeted inadequate vocational-technical education (VTE) as the cause of an untrained and undisciplined work force (Ray and

Mickelson 1990, 182). From their point of view VTE was inadequate because it was not centralized; instead, all of Charlotte's 12 comprehensive high schools offered VTE. Relocated company executives on the Chamber's Education Task Force recommended eliminating these comprehensive high school programs and establishing one magnet vocational high school in the central city to improve the quality of the labor pool and to solve the school crisis. Supposedly, removing vocational students from the city's schools would improve the quality of education for future workers and for college bound students who would not be distracted by the presence of students who failed to learn academic skills and "social discipline" in the comprehensive schools.

One model of centralized urban vocational education exists in the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (CHSAS) which opened in 1985. Most of its students are African American and Latino who are classified as "at-risk." The school claims to offer "an integrated curriculum in which agriculture is as important as English." It also claims to offer a strong college-prep curriculum. Science classes study soil erosion, math classes graph corn fields and create production charts, and English classes write about careers in agri-business. Students work during the summer, many of them on the school farm. School partners include The Chicago Board of Trade, the USDA, and Quaker Oats (McGraw and Frank 1995, 2-3).

The CHSAS model, or a similar one, must have appealed to relocating corporate executives in Charlotte, NC. With working class and minority youth already tracked into vocational education and Charlotte's black population historically concentrated in the central city, a vocational magnet school created the perfect opportunity to resegregate the

public schools (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 183). It offered a means to keep black students and working class students downtown and out of the suburbs, despite official claims that the central location encouraged nearby businesses to donate resources and expertise in partnership with schools (Mickelson and Ray 1990, 350). Many local elites recognized that centralized vocational education would produce overt racial and class segregation and jeopardize the state's image -- regionally, nationally, and internationally -- as a good place to live and work. Pragmatic members of the state and local growth elite were unwilling to risk losing that national reputation by implementing overt resegregation or by defining existing vocational education as inadequate. They preferred to publicize reports from educators and other Chamber members that existing VTE programs in comprehensive schools produced successful workers, and that desegregated schools constituted a "progressive" community. The Chamber faced a dilemma. The continuation of uncontrolled debates about the quality of public education led to bad publicity which compromised industrial recruitment efforts, but unwillingness to address the "competitiveness" crisis also threatened growth prospects.

The Chamber of Commerce acted to resolve conflicts and to build cohesion between relocated corporate executives and local members of the "growth elite." Their efforts to control the debate, to find an acceptable definition of the education crisis, and to propose a local educational solution to the problem of global competitiveness resulted in publication of a 40-page report. The first five pages established that problems in Charlotte were not unique by acknowledging "America's educational crisis" (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 183). Then, the Task Force's explanation of the problem shifted the discussion

“from a rhetoric of inadequate schools to one of low income students and their families” (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 179). The local report, like many national studies, found that “at-risk” students, particularly working class and minority students, not necessarily schools, needed reform and restructuring. “By shifting the task force’s gaze from the schools to low-income and minority students and their families, educators and the growth elite successfully asserted that the schools were basically good, and were suitable for prospective client companies considering relocation...” (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 187). Defining the weaknesses of low-income children and their families as the source of the problem, the report recommended improving early childhood education as the solution.

Discourse on improving early childhood education is far less controversial than discourse on segregation and quality of education. Public discussions of early childhood education programs dominated public discourse, created positive media impressions, satisfied relocated critics, and won broad-based political support. It reduced divisions between Charlotte’s corporate newcomers and established elites, and allowed both groups to maintain a strong role in education reform and to pursue economic growth. It helped legitimate and institutionalize business-led school reform at local and national levels. “Moreover, the emphasis on low-income families as the source of the problem neatly blames the poor for US corporate leaders’ relative weakness in world markets, allowing the latter to escape examination of their role in exacerbating domestic poverty through the expansion of unstable jobs that offer low annual wages, no security, and few advancement possibilities” (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 187).

Equality of Opportunity -- *Leandro, et al. v. North Carolina*

North Carolina business leaders avoid the equality of opportunity issue in education reform, and focus instead on building a "competitive" work force, but parents and students who live in low-growth, low-wealth communities have not abandoned the search for equal opportunity. In 1994, plaintiffs in five relatively poor school systems in Eastern North Carolina -- Cumberland, Halifax, Hoke, Robeson, and Vance Counties -- filed a lawsuit against the state demanding a more equitable financial system. A few months later, parents from several large and wealthy school systems, including Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Wake, Buncombe, Asheville, Winston-Salem/Forsyth and Durham, joined the lawsuit as "plaintiff-intervenors." All plaintiffs claimed that North Carolina's funding mechanism fails to provide equal opportunities for all students and violates the state's constitution. The original plaintiffs demanded financial equity for rich and poor districts. The plaintiff-intervenors contended that the state's school funding system does not account for differences in the educational and resource needs of various student populations in urban districts (NC Court of Appeals, Brief for Appellants, 3).

The issue for both plaintiffs and plaintiff-intervenors is the state's flat grant funding system (Evans, Murray, and Schwab 1997, 18; Yudof, Kirp, and Levin 1992, 593). North Carolina allocates funds to each school district on a per pupil basis, but allows local districts to "supplement" the state allocation. The 10 wealthiest counties, including Wake (Raleigh), Orange (Chapel Hill), and Mecklenburg (Charlotte), spend \$1,441 per pupil in supplemental local funds and the 10 poorest counties spend \$431 (White 1996). The state legislature created a special fund to assist small and poor school districts in 1991.

Subsequently, the state has allocated more than \$41 million, \$37 per student-per year, to supplement funds in poor, small school districts. Despite this effort, the spending gap between rich and poor counties has widened since 1991 because poor counties have smaller tax bases to generate property-tax revenue. Residents in poor counties often tax themselves at a substantially higher tax rate than the residents of more affluent districts, but the poor districts still raise less money. With current patterns of economic growth, the amount of taxable property wealth rises in rich counties and declines in poor counties; consequently, the spending gap between rich and poor districts widens (White 1996).

The plaintiffs failed to win their case in North Carolina's District, Appellate, and Supreme Courts. In 1997, the NC Supreme Court ruled that the state financial system is constitutional and does not need to be restructured. Further, the Court ruled that equal opportunity is not guaranteed by the state constitution, despite its provision for a "general and uniform system of free public schools" (Johnston 1997, 20; White 1996, 20).

The plaintiffs in low-wealth districts described a poor standard of quality of education in under-resourced schools in everything from the quality of classroom buildings to the content of the curriculum. They described dilapidated school buildings, textbook shortages, and limited academic courses for college bound students as evidence of a gap in equal opportunities. They also associated a lack of opportunity with low standardized test scores and difficulties in pursuing higher education. For example, most Halifax County high school students failed to demonstrate proficiency in the state's end-of-course tests. The failure rates cited were: 90% for Biology, 86% for Chemistry, 79% for Physics, 88% for Algebra I, 89% for US History, and 82% for English I (North Carolina Court of

Appeals, Brief for Plaintiff Appellees 1996). Statewide, the failure rate on high school end-of-course tests in core subjects is 60%, but the distribution of these test scores shows great disparities in student achievement across the state. Jay Robinson, chairman of the state board of education acknowledges these inequities: "We have some of the best schools in the country, but also some schools that desperately need more resources for facilities and technology and more community support" (Lindsay 1997, 177). Evidence linking these alarming failure rates with inadequate local resources did not persuade the courts to intervene. It did not provoke a public outcry or prompt a political promise of a legislative remedy for financial inequities. John Dornan, president of the Public School Forum of North Carolina, a non-profit organization, responded to the Court's decision. "I didn't think they'd move [funding] equity so far off the table....If it does anything it forces us to redefine a basic education" (Johnston 1997, 20).

Business-led State Reform and Equality of Opportunity

To date, North Carolina's two-tiered finance system remains intact, but the Republican-controlled legislature recently enacted reforms intended to improve basic education. It dismantled the state department of public instruction, the most centralized in the United States, and transferred \$21 million to local districts. About 300 of the department's 700 employees received pink-slips. The legislature enacted the state board of education's "ABC" plan, an assessment system to hold individual schools, not districts, accountable for improving basic skills. Each school will assess student performance annually, but will not compare scores with a state average. Instead, each cohort's

performance will be compared to its previous year's performance. For example, fifth graders will be compared with how they performed last year as fourth graders. Schools with improving performance will receive a cash bonus of \$500 to \$1000 to be used for teacher salaries or school resources. Schools with lagging performance face potential take-over by the state. The legislature approved 100 charter school bills and debated school vouchers and tax-credits for private school tuition. State School Board Chairman Jay Robinson views these legislative efforts as an attempt to "do something" about the school crisis in an era when people are looking for alternatives to public schools (Lindsay 1996, 9; Lindsay 1997, 178-179). Clearly, these reforms did not address inequities.

Current efforts to create local control and individual "choice" in response to an "education crisis" can be compared with efforts to implement local control and choice in an earlier time -- the 1950s. Then, state officials supported a Pupil Assignment Act which removed state control over education and returned it to local schools to decrease the probability of the state being targeted for desegregation litigation for failure to comply with the US Supreme Court's *Brown* decision, and to keep whites from abandoning and closing public schools in favor of white academies (See Chapter Three). These tactics kept public schools open, delayed meaningful desegregation, and convinced investors that North Carolina's racial moderation contributed to a "favorable business climate."

Current state policies of decentralization, downsizing, local control, and accountability seem familiar to, but different from state education policies in the 1950s. In 1954, the US Supreme Court ruling accepted the equality of opportunity arguments and ruled against *de jure* racial segregation. The 1954 decision prompted state efforts to resist

the federal court. In 1973, the US Supreme Court in the *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* rejected the equal opportunity arguments used to attack local property tax financing as a violation of the US Constitution. Subsequently, courts in 30 states, including North Carolina, have heard school finance challenges. Cases in half of these states have succeeded and resulted in reduced inequities. When equity reform is not mandated by the courts, it is unlikely to occur (Inman 1997, 1-3), as shown by North Carolina's *Leandro* case.

Unlike the situation in 1954, state governments are not searching for ways to circumvent the law and to maintain the status quo. Instead, in a period when Courts sanction inequality, state governments create the impression of improving education in the name of innovation, competition, privatization, and democratization, i.e., choice, but operate to maintain the status quo. Recall that despite their rhetoric of improving education, Charlotte's relocated corporate executives voiced their academic complaints *last*. They insisted that schools teach a work ethic to prepare some students for work, and others for college. As one Charlotte businessman complained: "All kids are being pushed to go to college ...vocational education and vocational skills are being downgraded. The community college tries to be a feeder for [the local university]; it's a mistake" (Ray and Mickelson 1990, 182). In contrast, the *Leandro* legal brief stated academic complaints *first*. Parents demanded that schools in low-wealth districts teach academic skills to prepare students for equal educational and occupational opportunity, but their demands were denied by the legislative and judicial branches of state government. Business elites demanded that schools prepare students for unequal work according to race, class, and

gender differences and to ensure an adequate labor supply, as they had at the beginning of the twentieth century. The use of the terms “competitiveness” and “choice” obscured their economic interests and created the impression that business and governmental elites promoted democratic interests.

Cognitive Elites, Inequality, and Higher Education

At the end of the twentieth century, “a powerful offensive is under way to make social Darwinism, sociobiology, and the ‘scientific’ justification of racism and of social inequality again respectable in academic circles” (Mandel 1995, 80). Many critics of public schools use recent so-called “scientific” publications, including *The Bell Curve*, by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, to defend inequality. They justify inequities in funding, curriculum, and other resources by arguing that it is futile to invest in education and training for the innately “cognitively disadvantaged.” Rather, it is more productive to allocate additional resources to the “cognitive elite.” The racial and class implications are obvious: low-income, African American, and Latino students are disproportionately represented in classes for low-achievers, and middle class white students are disproportionately represented in “gifted” classes. *The Bell Curve* urges members of the “cognitive elite” to reject the myth of equality and to accept the notion that all people, regardless of social inequities and “cognitive disadvantages” have a “valued place” in society. Rejection of the myth of equality is necessary to end the “egalitarian tyrannies” at work in American society (Herrnstein and Murray 1994, 533-536).

Herrnstein and Murray claim that educational and occupational advantages are unequally distributed because of innately conferred ability that is measured by IQ. They downplay the structure of social, economic, and political institutions that affects the distribution of wealth. Although they concede that both environment and genes influence cognitive ability, they conclude that “as America equalizes the circumstances of people’s lives, the remaining differences in intelligence are increasingly determined by differences in genes....Success and failure in the American economy, and all that goes with it, are increasingly a matter of the genes that people inherit” (Herrnstein and Murray 1994, 91).

Gould views *The Bell Curve* as an attempt to rehash the nineteenth century arguments of Social Darwinism, or biological determinism as social policy:

The theory arose from a paradox of egalitarianism: as long as people remain on top of the social heap by accident of a noble name or parental wealth, and as long as members of despised castes cannot rise no matter what their talents, social stratification will not reflect intellectual merit, and brilliance will be distributed across all classes; but when true equality of opportunity is attained, smart people rise and the lower classes become rigid, retaining only the intellectually incompetent (Gould 1995, 4).

Gould adds that *The Bell Curve* is “scarcely an academic treatise in social theory and population genetics. It is a manifesto of conservative ideology...” (Gould 1995, 12). It supports reducing or eliminating welfare, ending affirmative action in schools and at work, cutting back Head Start and other preschool programs, and improving programs for gifted students funded by cutting programs for slow learners (Gould 1995, 12). These policies

are justified by the “argument that program beneficiaries cannot be helped, owing to inborn cognitive limits expressed as low IQ scores” (Gould 1995, 4).

The claim that America has “equalized the circumstances of people’s lives” denies the reality of poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. The idea that citizens have a permanent and subordinate place in a democratic society contradicts the tenets of American democracy (Scott 1994, 51-54). But from the standpoint of Herrnstein and Murray, the “cognitive stratification” of education, particularly higher education, is evidence that “the college degree has become more democratic during the twentieth century” (Herrnstein and Murray 1994, 37). Since the 1950s and 1960s, the university selection process has become more efficient in bringing the brightest youth to college and in sorting the best of these students into the Ivy League schools. “By the early 1960s, the entire top echelon of American universities had been transformed. The screens filtering their students from the masses had not been lowered but changed. Instead of the old screen -- woven of class, religion, region, and old school ties -- the new screen was cognitive ability, and its mesh was already exceeding fine” (Herrnstein and Murray 1994, 42).

Most scholars agree that students enjoy greater access to higher education as a result of the massive postwar expansion of higher education since 1950. But access to the best public and private universities has become increasingly stratified and gentrified, not more democratic (Davies and Guppy 1997; Karen 1991; Lasch 1995). Economic stratification offers a better description of postwar changes in higher education than cognitive stratification, but both are highly correlated. Today, more than half of all college

freshmen attend community colleges which occupy the bottom tier of a hierarchically arrayed system of institutions and programs constituting US higher education (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1433). Community college enrollments include disproportionate numbers of low-income, female, and minority students; meanwhile, leading college and university enrollments have become increasingly gentrified. In 1991, more than 60% of freshmen entering UCLA came from families with incomes over \$60,000 and 40% came from families with incomes over \$100,000 (Lasch 1995, 176-177).

The concentration of working-class students at the lowest tier of the higher education system, the community college, is based on inequalities in test scores, ability to pay, and knowledge of the educational marketplace. All three of these variables -- test scores, money, and know-know -- correlate with social class (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1420; Karen 1991, 220). Rising tuition costs and diminishing grants, loans, and scholarship programs suggest that the stratification of higher education will intensify (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1434). But stratification is obscured by the size and structure of an increasingly differentiated system, with more than 3,600 institutions enrolling more than 15 million students. Ideologies of equality of opportunity and choice also obscure stratification processes. A recent community college profile reports that 48% of all minority undergraduates enrolled in higher education attend a community college. It explains "that community colleges are the schools of choice among America's minorities" (Phillipe 1997, 20), but fails to explain how social, economic, and political structures affect those choices. It also fails to acknowledge striking inequalities within different

types of postsecondary education (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1417-1418), including community colleges.

“At least two axes of stratification dissect the postsecondary system: the hierarchy of institutions of differing prestige and selectivity, and the stratification among fields of study” (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1418). Selective schools offer opportunities to cultivate advantage connections and networks whose benefits may increase later in life.

Community colleges, despite promoting greater educational opportunity, have channeled working-class, minority, and female students into the lower rungs of an unofficial status hierarchy where they are directed into unequal class, race, and gender based programs.

Within community colleges, members of these groups are over-represented in vocational education in general and in lower-level vocational programs in particular. So-called meritocratic standards legitimate the tracking function of community colleges and make the resulting class, race, and gender inequalities appear inevitable (Pincus 1980, 354).

Stratification among fields of study occurs at all levels of the higher education hierarchy. “Intrainstitutional segregation is the major contemporary basis of gender stratification in postsecondary education, while remaining socioeconomic disparities are rooted in interinstitutional hierarchies” (Davies and Guppy 1997, 1433). At the interinstitutional level, according to Lasch “a liberal education (such as it is) has become the prerogative of the rich, together with a small number of students recruited from select minorities” (Lasch 1995, 177). Many middle class college students study business, accounting, physical education, public relations, and other practical subjects. They hold part-time jobs that leave little time for reading and reflection. Working class students are

more likely to attend community colleges where they are trained for employment, not empowerment. Most community college students work full-time or part-time.

At the intrainstitutional level, where stratification occurs among fields of study, Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) claim that general arts programs within colleges are “dumping grounds” for minority and working-class students. Males are more likely than females to enter the most financially lucrative fields of study. Gender segregation by field of study persists although formal barriers to entry have ended and females often outperform males in high school academics (Stockard and Wood 1984). Some gender desegregation, but not parity, has occurred in medicine, law, business, and biology. Males continue to predominate in engineering and the physical sciences, and women remain over-represented in nursing and education (Jacobs 1995; Davies and Guppy 1997, 1419-1427). Because the field of study affects the economic benefits and social status derived from higher education, women, minorities, and low-income groups continue to be disadvantaged (Jacobs 1995, 81).

Community Colleges -- Second Chance or “Diverted Dream” ?

After World War II, equality of opportunity came to mean that everyone, including students with limited academic achievement and tuition money, enjoyed access to higher education through two-year colleges. Between 1948 and 1960, community college enrollment grew by half a million. Between 1960 and 1978, enrollment increased from 650,000 to more than 4 million (Pincus 1980). The expansion of two-year publicly supported schools has benefited many individuals; however, its aggregate effect has not

been a democratizing one. The very fact of attending a two-year college lowers the likelihood that a student will obtain a four-year degree and negatively affects adult occupational status, even controlling for differences in class and measured cognitive ability (Brint and Karabel 1989, 226). The concentration of working class, minority, and female students in community colleges raises questions on the role of community colleges in higher education, and the role of community colleges in economic development. These questions are especially important for North Carolina's Community Colleges.

Two-year colleges, both privately and publicly supported ones, developed in the United States early in the twentieth century. Generally, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who achieved less measured academic success attended these junior colleges in hopes of transferring to four-year institutions. The vocational wing of the junior college movement did not gain momentum until after World War II. Historically, two-year colleges faced two contradictory tasks: the democratic one of bringing new students into higher education, and the exclusionary one of diverting students from four-year institutions. At the turn-of-the-century, university officials welcomed the junior college as a buffer between elite institutions and a population clamoring for access to higher education. They supported strengthening the junior college's sorting function as a means of channeling undesirable students away from their gates (Brint and Karabel 1989, 206-208). The first junior college opened in Chicago in 1896 when the President of the University of Chicago used private donations to build a separate junior college for undergraduate women to divert them from professional coursework and to stem the tide of "feminization" of university enrollments (Rosenberg

1982, 48-49; Pincus 1980, 337). Significantly, junior colleges came into existence at the same time as black land-grant colleges and female coordinate colleges. Unlike the other two institutions, junior colleges offered and emphasized an academic curriculum, not a vocational one. All three types of institutions protected white male privilege in state universities.

Leaders of the two-year college movement worked to transform the predominantly college transfer-oriented schools into vocational ones during the 1920s and 1930s, despite student and parent resistance to increased vocational training. Vocational efforts gained support among junior college administrators who hoped to move their schools from the bottom of the academic hierarchy to the top of the vocational training hierarchy, and among administrators in elite colleges who sought protection from "unqualified" students. State governmental elites endorsed terminal vocational education as a low-cost alternative to state universities, and as a means of harnessing workers to economic development strategies. Business leaders ignored two-year colleges until they recognized the advantages of vocational programs for training workers at state expense. Private foundations, especially Carnegie, realized the "potential of terminal vocational education as a means of rationalizing the relationship between a burgeoning system of higher education and an economy that remained highly stratified" (Brint and Karabel 1989, 209-213).

From 1939 to 1943, the General Education Board funded studies by the American Association of Junior Colleges to promote vocational education. The big push to expand two-year colleges and vocational education came from the federal government. In 1944,

Congress passed the GI Bill to thank American veterans for their service in the war and to use colleges and universities to keep masses of veterans out of an overcrowded labor market. "If the man in uniform would go from the battle line to the breadline...he probably would demand radical economic and political changes" (Olson 1974, 23-24). In 1948, the Truman Commission Report on higher education called for equality of educational opportunity and universal access. It recommended expanding public two-year colleges and changing their name from junior colleges to community colleges. The name change symbolized the administration's endorsement of vocational education and indicated that the schools were to be "people's colleges" designed to serve the needs of the community. The report also emphasized the importance of the student's "right to choose" (Brint and Karabel 1989, 70).

The two-year college movement grew slowly in the South until the national transformation of junior colleges into community colleges was underway. North Carolina established its Community College system in the late 1950s with vocational training for economic development, not college transfer, as its primary mission. North Carolina General Statutes (115D) define the mission:

The major purpose of each and every institution operating under the provisions of this Chapter shall be and shall continue to be the offering of vocational and technical education and training, and of basic, high school level, academic education needed in order to profit from vocational and technical education, for students who are high school graduates or who are beyond the compulsory age limit of the public school system and who have left the public schools (NC Community College System 1997).

In 1958, North Carolina became the first state to subsidize new industry through community college programs offering customized training for employees. It maintains one of the largest budgets in the nation to meet employer requests for trained workers. Last year it appropriated \$6 million to offer training to any new or expanding company with at least 12 employees (Schmidt 1997, 30; Luebke 1990, 72). Employers benefit from the reduced cost of labor and increased control over workers whose technical training is based on a "need to know" basis divorced from broader knowledge of the production process (Braverman 1974, 82-83). Pincus questions whether such narrowly specialized training can prepare students for life in a democratic society, or if it just allows corporations to turn community colleges into trade schools:

These programs ...offer narrow, firm-specific training that threatens both the institutional integrity of the community colleges and the interest that employees have in obtaining the kinds of broad, general skills that will maximize their bargaining power with employers at the same time that it will enable them to adjust with the greatest possible flexibility to a rapidly changing economy (Pincus 1980, 228-232).

Programs and Probable Destinies in North Carolina's Community Colleges

North Carolina Community Colleges offer programs in four broad categories: curriculum -- technical, vocational, general, and college transfer; basic education -- literacy, adult high school, and GED; continuing education -- non-credit vocational or avocational; and, specialized programming targeting economic development --business

training programs and human resources development (NC Community College System 1997 Facts, 7). Data from 1996-1997 show that less than 10% of the state's 795,425 community college students enroll in college transfer courses, 30% enroll in technical and vocational courses, and the majority are enrolled in extension courses that include basic skills, continuing education, business training, and human resources (Annual Statistical Report, Table 3). These numbers indicate that community colleges fulfill the state-mandated mission to emphasize vocational and technical education, not college transfer. Further examination of enrollment data reveals that community colleges do not provide equal educational opportunity, they reproduce inequality.

Within the "curriculum programs," college transfer students are 58% female and 22% minority, general education programs are 61% female and 30% minority, technical programs are 64% female and 27% minority, and vocational programs are 40% female and 38% minority (Table 4). A closer look within these categories reveals a pattern of race and gender differences suggesting that training which leads to higher paying jobs is more likely to enroll white male students. Training for low-wage, traditional female employment is more likely to enroll female students. Minority students are concentrated in the least desirable occupational categories. Within technical programs for example, teacher associates are 95% female and 49% minority, social service associates are 92% female and 44% minority, and recreational grounds management is 6% female and 3% minority. Plastics manufacturing is 17% female and 12% minority, fire protection diploma is 0% female and 7% minority, forest management is 11% female and 2% minority, while industrial engineering technology is 33% female and 9% minority.

Within vocational programs: food service management is 54% female and 41% minority, medical assisting is 98% female and 42% minority, marine and diesel mechanics is 3% female and 23% minority, masonry is 100% male and 69% minority, geriatric care specialist is 94% female and 19% minority, and geriatric care assisting is 100% female and 79% minority.

The state's special programs include Expanded Industry Training (EIT), and Focused Industry Training (FIT), which provide customized training for industry, and Human Resources Development (HRD), which targets the unemployed and disadvantaged to eliminate welfare. Enrollment in these programs reflects glaring race and gender differences. The EIT is 66% male, the FIT is 71% male, and the HRD is 29% male. Race for the EIT is 67% white, the FIT is 73% white, and the HRD is 49% white.

These statistics indicate that community colleges prepare students for different class, race, and gender based destinies. Many of the better technical and vocational programs prepare students for paraprofessional and middle-level jobs that offer few, if any, opportunities for advancement. Other vocational programs prepare students for low-tech, low-wage jobs. Advocates of vocational education, in high schools and community colleges argue that technological change and specialization produce new middle-level jobs requiring higher levels of skill and training than traditional working-class jobs. Pincus argues that most middle-level jobs are traditional working class jobs -- clerical and blue-collar. "The status of middle-level jobs is often exaggerated; most of these jobs involve only modest skills, little if any decision-making power, and few opportunities for advancement" (Pincus 1980, 354).

US Bureau of Labor Statistics projections through 2005 show that highly skilled, high-tech jobs will be at a premium; low-wage, low-tech jobs will be abundant in the future. Pressure mounts on the complex structure of higher education to sort students for class positions in the hierarchical occupational structure. Nothing indicates that class, race, and gender are becoming any less important in the selection process. Also, there is little to suggest that equality of opportunity will occur.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This research examines persistent patterns of educational inequality based on class, race, gender, and region. It shows that education is not a neutral institution, but one that functions in the context of political, cultural, and social inequalities and plays a role in maintaining and legitimating those inequalities. Historically, powerful interests have dominated and controlled most efforts to reform public education in the United States. Whether reform initiatives originate from popular movements, such as the African American and Populist struggles of the 1890s, and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s, or from powerful political constituencies, such as the business-led reform of the 1980s, elites ally to maintain varied institutional forms of public education to codify, to certify, and to control official knowledge.

Following Reconstruction, Southern states, including North Carolina, established systems of public education for the first time, long after their Northern and Western counterparts. From the outset, they created dual systems. Racially segregated schools allowed officials to “economize” on expenditures for black schools to increase funds for white schools, but all schools were under-funded. In the 1890s, Southern states established separate land-grant colleges for the education of African Americans and coordinate colleges for white women. These racially and gender-segregated institutions expanded access to higher education for blacks and women, but did not offer them the

same kind of education available to white men. Also, women and African Americans were denied admission to US medical schools at the turn-of-the-century. Ultimately, the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Movement pressured the US political system for education reform. Civil Rights litigation and legislation "dismantled the most egregious forms of racial oppression" (Morone 1990, 251), including most legal barriers to equal education, but failed to create equity.

New legislation did not eliminate all barriers nor did it prevent the development of new mechanisms to control access to education. Coordinate state colleges for women disappeared, but racially segregated state-supported colleges and universities remained. At the primary and secondary school level, testing and tracking provided "objective" criteria for placing disproportionate numbers of African American youth in lower level academic classes and disproportionate numbers of white youth in academically gifted classes. *The Bell Curve* (1994) and other "scientific" publications attempt to justify racial and class inequality. Today, sexual harassment of female students commonly occurs in middle schools, high schools, and in universities (Orenstein 1994). Although women now outnumber men in higher education enrollments, they continue to concentrate in gendered fields of study. Disproportionate numbers of women major in English and Biology, but very few attend Engineering and Dentistry schools. Also, rising costs of higher education and cutbacks in student loans force many working class students to attend community colleges which may divert them from four-year colleges.

As a result of policies and practices that limit educational opportunities through more subtle means than overt segregation and discrimination, students who found

themselves in disadvantageous positions at the beginning of the twentieth century remain there at the end of the century. Poor and minority students, especially African Americans and Latinos, as well as Southerners, find themselves at the bottom of most measures of educational attainment. These children continue to perform badly, not because they cannot learn, but because they go to poor schools, or because they are tracked into an academically and culturally impoverished curriculum.

Key Propositions

The 15 key propositions identified in Chapter I help summarize and explain the evidence of mediated inequality presented in the preceding chapters. They help clarify the role of elites in education reform and the relations between education and the wider social structure in the context of the historical world system.

Proposition 1. *The position of the US in the world-system, and the position of the South in the world system, affects education policy considerations.*

Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 to support vocational education, partly in response to business pressure to make US education more competitive with Germany. In the post World War II era, international political pressure as well as the American civil rights movement influenced the Truman and Eisenhower administrations' decisions to support ending *de jure* segregation (*Brown v. Board of Education*). At the end of the 20th century, concerns about foreign competition influence debates about vocational and technical education, equality of opportunity, and education reform.

Presidents Bush and Clinton have held education summits involving governors and CEOs to discuss these issues (Mitchell 1996).

Proposition 2. *Alliances between elites in the Northeastern United States and elites in the South profoundly affected education policy.*

Contrary to foundation reports and other documents that explain the role of philanthropists and business elites who funded the SEB and the GEB, elites outside the South were not disinterested humanitarians. Some foundation reports suggest that philanthropists bowed to state and local elites, deferred to the demands of Southern racists, and reluctantly discriminated against African Americans in their contributions to Southern education during the first half of the twentieth century. Supposedly, they resigned themselves to accept separate and unequal facilities. Evidence suggests that industrialists outside the South, as well as Southern landowners, recognized that race could be used to undermine the power of labor in the South (Tomaskovic-Devey and Roscigno 1996, 566) and to strengthen the power of capital. The Smith-Hughes Act, supported by US business, ensured government and business support for a differentiated curriculum to produce a stable work force among immigrants in the North and blacks and whites in the south. These decisions not only supported a racial split-labor market (Bonacich 1972), but also supported a gendered division of labor as well as class divisions.

This study shows that alliances between Southern elites and national elites, not only the intransigence of Southern agrarian elites, defined the work of the SEB, the GEB, and the role of the federal government in education reform in most of the first half of the

20th century. These alliances also affected the implementation of desegregation in North Carolina and other Southern states after *Brown v. Board of Education*. Early in the 20th century, alliances between national corporate investors and Southern growth elites fostered outside investment in the South. At mid-century, these alliances protected outside investment in the South in the midst of racial conflict. At the end of the 20th century, Southern growth elites continue to promote outside investment, and to find pragmatic solutions to local education problems.

Proposition 3. *Among elites, hegemony binds together a "bloc" of diverse, competitive, and sometimes conflicting groups. Contradictions can be resolved and new "blocs" can be created through compromise and consensus.*

At no time have elites in the South, or outside the South, acted as monolithic, cohesive, or homogenous blocs of social actors. At global, national, regional, and state levels, elites engage in competition and conflict. Divisions among elites vary in each period under investigation. At the end of the 19th century, growth elites in North Carolina allied with investors and philanthropists outside the South to pursue state-directed modernization and universal education. They competed with more conservative elites who supported agricultural interests in economic and educational matters and opposed state-led modernization. North Carolina's growth elite contended with the agricultural elite, but dominated state politics. North Carolina's growth elite, sensitive to the requirements of modernization, preferred to maintain social control through consensus rather than coercion. They appeared "progressive" in contrast to the traditional

agricultural elites who dominated most other Southern states, such as Mississippi. By the 1950s, North Carolina's pragmatic political approach to state-led growth and "universal" education fueled the success of the Research Triangle Park and minimized the disruptive effects of desegregation orders. But sections of the state, including much of Eastern North Carolina, and Monroe, where the borders of the "Black Belt" and the "Sunbelt" converge, created problems between growth elites and conservatives. Conflicts involving Governor Hodges and Robert Williams, particularly the "kissing case," affected education policy and economic development strategies.

In recent years, new divisions among elites have emerged within Sunbelt areas such as Charlotte. Established growth elites disagree with newcomer corporate elites on the quality of public education and the direction for education reform. Both groups agree on the importance of state-funded vocational education in high schools and community colleges to train workers at state expense. Both groups share a "modernizer" ideology (Luebke 1990, 18). Paradoxically, Charlotte's school crisis in the 1980s revealed that newcomer elites preferred segregated vocational schools, but established elites preferred desegregated comprehensive schools (Ray and Mickelson 1993). The Chamber of Commerce acted to resolve conflicts and to build cohesion between newcomers and local growth elites while supporting desegregated schools. Conservative elites also remain powerful in North Carolina, particularly those who are involved with tobacco, swine, and poultry production. The ideologies first associated with agricultural elites, now supported by religious and political conservatives, remain powerful factors in education reform and economic development debates.

Proposition 4. *Public schools, along with families and churches, operate as agents of social control. Dominant groups use coercive and consensual means to maintain social control and to re-negotiate educational settlements.*

Elites alternate between coercive and consensual means to maintain social control. In the 1890s Southern state governments used coercion to deny African Americans the rights of citizenship, then legitimated their actions through literacy requirements. The promise of universal education helped build white consensus across class divisions for one-party rule. At mid-century, NC Governor Hodges asked African Americans to comply with "voluntary" segregation following the *Brown* decision. The legislature created a legal means to close the schools if African Americans failed to comply, but continued resistance in North Carolina and the nation pressured federal and governments to continue the re-negotiation process.

Churches and families, as well as schools, stressed the subordination of women, the obedience of workers, and the "place" of blacks. Vocational education -- especially agricultural education for black males and rural white males, and home economics for women-- helped create consensus for traditional roles. The socializing structures of southern society minimized the need for overt control and physical coercion but did not eliminate them. Such measures as legal segregation, involuntary institutionalization and sterilization, and extralegal violence have been employed when needed. Periodically, curricular reform, i.e., vocational and technical education, and institutional expansion, i.e. community colleges, create new educational settlements, but they offer unequal opportunities.

Proposition 5. *Popular demands for education reform sometimes bridge race, class, and gender boundaries. These reform efforts help change policy, but may fail to make education more inclusive and tend to increase elite cohesion.*

Education offers the potential for groups to cross racial, class, and gender boundaries to demand equal benefits, but reform efforts may achieve limited success. The first mass movement for public education in the South came from African Americans who joined with white Republicans and Populists to incorporate the idea into state constitutions (Anderson 1988, 19-20). This political coalition supported public education for poor whites, blacks, and women. They won control of the state legislature and the governor's office in North Carolina. The Democratic Party used racial violence to regain elective office, but they consolidated their victory and won consensus for one-party rule by linking their white supremacy campaign to promises of universal education. Subsequently, elites structured the public education system to provide different types of education on the basis of class, race, and gender distinctions.

At mid-century, African Americans won a significant US constitutional battle with *Brown v. Board of Education*. NC elites delayed meaningful segregation, but ultimately, desegregation took place, allowing African Americans and other minorities to realize significant gains. NC elites also benefited by learning to "manage" desegregation conflicts and to pursue growth. In the 1980s, support for public schools weakened among popular, grass-roots groups in North Carolina and the nation. The weakening of popular support for public schools, along with economic restructuring, strengthened the cohesion of elites and increased their power in the public arena of education reform.

Proposition 6. *Patterns of educational inequality occur throughout the 20th century.*

Schools play an important role in legitimating the structure of inequality which remains intact despite decades of reform.

Michael Katz (1971, 106) concludes that by 1880 American “public education was universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratically arranged, class based, and racist.” Additionally, it was sexist. Early in the 20th century, the Southern Education Movement promoted this model of “universal education” to create a stable work force. At the end of the 20th century, “savage inequalities” between low-wealth and affluent school districts are increasing, and access to the best universities has become increasingly stratified and gentrified.

The ideology of equality of opportunity legitimates personal outcomes as well the persistence in educational and occupational inequality that occurs from one generation to the next, “through the individualization and internalization of responsibility for one’s class position” (Finley 1992, 244). School experience “explains” and makes socially reasonable the future success of students from more affluent family settings, and the “failure” of students from poor, working class, and minority backgrounds (Anyon 1980, 203).

So-called meritocratic standards, i.e., tracking and testing, legitimate inequities and make them appear inevitable (Pincus 1980, 354).

Proposition 7. *Ideological consensus is a mechanism for mediating inequality in public education.*

The ideology of “choice” in public education involves notions of individualism, competition, and the free market and obscures complex issues affecting inequality. An individual’s early socialization, family education and income, and knowledge about the educational marketplace influence his or her choices. Academic or vocational choices, community college or university choices, and field of study choices are influenced by complex social forces. But political structures also affect choice. In the 1950s Southern states created “freedom of choice” plans. From the perspective of Southern state and local elites they were legal and “effective.” From the perspective of Southern black students, “freedom of choice” merely substituted token desegregation for substantive compliance with the *Brown* decision. African American students exercised their right to choose to submit an application to attend a white school, but political decisions limited the number of acceptances. In the 1990s, proponents of state or federally funded “school choice” recommend vouchers as a panacea for current school problems. Others caution that students may choose to apply to alternate public schools or private ones, but ultimately, political decisions limit choice. Henry Giroux warns that “choices without power and justice become meaningless or simply repressive to large parts of society” (Torres 1998, 150).

Proposition 8. *Discourse about education reform tends to stress the purpose of public education as employment, equity, or empowerment, not social justice.*

Reformers express different views of education’s role as a means to attain employment, equity, or empowerment. Efforts to increase competitive pressures in

schools tend to reinforce the advantages of the privileged and to exclude minorities and the poor. Proponents of equity usually fail to question assumptions about race, class, and gender that dominate school curricula as well as testing and tracking. The empowerment prospective questions who benefits from school knowledge and advocates reorganizing school knowledge and expanding benefits. But all of these approaches fail to question the assumptions underlying the structure of inequality in public education and to consider the broader role of education in a democratic society. The emphasis on individualistic notions of success or failure in a hierarchical system of education contradicts the principles of social justice.

Proposition 9. The rhetoric of education reform focuses on expansion and universal access which obscures the use of mechanisms to limit access and exclude people from educational opportunity. It also diverts attention from social, economic, and political inequalities.

Pressures for school reform exist throughout US history because “reforming the public schools has long been a favorite way of improving not just education but society” (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 1). Today, “faith in the redemptive qualities of the educational system and its capacities to influence positive changes in the job market and in the society” convinces parents, community leaders, and government officials to contest public education and to demand reform (McCarthy 1993, 292). In earlier periods, faith in the redemptive qualities of education fortified Horace Mann’s insistence on Common Schools, inspired African American hopes for inclusion in American society, and encouraged

postbellum Southern prospects of economic recovery. Despite many positive outcomes for the public good, “the utopian tradition of social reform through schooling has often diverted attention from more costly, politically controversial, and difficult societal reforms. It is easier to provide vocational education than to remedy inequities in employment and gross disparities in wealth and income” (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 4).

Proposition 10. *The decentralized “federalist” state structure in the United States mediates inequality. Education reform battles shift among nation, state, and local governments. These shifts often support the status quo and delay substantive reform.*

The decentralized or “federalist” state structure of the United States mediates inequality in public education and operates to maintain the status quo. After Reconstruction, Congress failed to pass the Blair Bill and to support public education in the South when the region lacked financial resources. Debates about the federal government’s lack of constitutional authority to intervene in state matters supported the status quo. In 1917, when Congress enacted the Smith-Hughes Act to support vocational education throughout the United States, the issue of states’ rights was not raised. In the 1950s the US Supreme Court ended *de jure* segregation, but Congress failed to fund Civil Rights legislation to enforce the court ruling until the 1960s. Since the 1970s, the US Supreme Court has returned cases on funding inequities to the states. In North Carolina, state court challenges to funding inequities have been unsuccessful and the legislature has not been willing to change the two-tiered funding system.

Proposition 11. *The rhetoric of "local control" obscures the role of elites at all levels of government and can be confused with the idea of popular democracy.*

Paradoxically, state and federal officials stress their commitment to "local control" in education matters, yet evaluate math and reading scores by national norms, and allocate positions in higher education according to nationally competitive college entrance exams. State governments certify teachers, approve curricula, adopt texts, and distribute state and federal (block grant) tax dollars. Local governments clean buildings, pay teachers at or above the state minimum, purchase library books, computers, laboratory equipment and playground equipment and build classrooms according to their ability to raise funds and their willingness to support education (Kozol 1992, 212-213; Wrigley 1992, 10).

Public acceptance of property taxes as a major source of local funds and the ideology of "local governance" as the source of policy in a decentralized system, allow variable standards and the expression of local biases to affect provision of education and other services (Weir, Orloff and Skocpol, 1988). The notion of local funding creates inequitable financial burdens and inadequate educational opportunities for citizens in low-wealth districts throughout the 20th century. The Rosenwald Fund is one example of imposing a double tax on African Americans to support "public" schools early in the twentieth century. For 100 years, the poor have paid a disproportionate burden of expenses, and have received less than their share of benefits from public schools.

Policymakers often use the term "local control" as if it were synonymous with "popular democracy" in their efforts to reform public schools. But popular democracy and local control are not the same. In most cases, local control means that local elites

govern. These elites often perceive that their interests are more similar to the interests of state and national elites than to the interests of diverse groups in the local community. They also may see the perpetuation of inequality in their own best interest. Popular democracy, on the other hand, refers to making political decisions accountable to the local community. The idea of making education policymakers more accountable to diverse, local communities is appealing.

Proposition 12. *The tax structure mediates inequality.*

The current school finance system in the United States, established early in the 20th century, relies on a state supported “minimum” or subsistence allotment supplemented by local property tax revenues. The formula guarantees an “equal minimum” education to every child within a given state. Property valuations in rich districts exceed those in poor districts, generating unequal tax revenues which fund public education and other public services. “By relying on local property owners and guaranteeing only minimum financial support to any given district, the states established a systematic bias against the poor” (Carnoy and Levin 1985, 10). This systematic bias remains intact at the end of the 20th century despite a barrage of court challenges, including the *Leandro* decision in North Carolina. The system works to the disadvantage of children living in property-poor schools districts. These low-wealth districts cannot meet the standards of property-rich districts in the same state, even when they tax themselves at a higher tax rate. Despite court challenges, discrepancies in per pupil expenditures between rich and poor districts persist, further perpetuating inequality.

Recent research indicates that funding discrepancies between rich and poor districts are increasing in North Carolina. The tax structure creates additional inequities when state officials maintain low tax rates to lure footloose industry to the South and offer tax abatements. These tax policies not only limit occupational opportunities to low-wage industry, but also limit funding for education.

Proposition 13. *Knowledge is power. In capitalism, knowledge, much like land and capital, is a source of wealth and power (Bell 1974, 20).*

The recognition that knowledge is a source of wealth and power greatly influenced late 19th and early 20th century decisions to create the Capon Springs Conferences on Education in the South, the black land-grant colleges, coordinate education, the General Education Board, the Smith-Hughes legislation, and the professionalization of medicine. Vocational education, as well as the professionalization of medicine, institutionalized the “reproduction of a stratified class structure in American society based on both race and class” (Takaki 1993, 207), and stratification based on gender.

At the end of the 20th century, knowledge is more valued as a source of wealth and power, and efforts to control this resource are more intense. Typically, throughout the 20th century, policy elites claimed to be “taking the schools out of politics” by delegating decisions to “experts.” “In the process they did not, of course, eliminate politics, but they acquired formidable power: to set the agenda of reform, to diagnose problems, to prescribe solutions, and often to influence what should *not* be on the agenda of reform” (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 8). Also, policy elites influenced what appeared on

research agenda (Stanfield 1985, 187). In this manner, many issues are not defined as problems, and never become part of the discourse on reform. Nonetheless, "where issues do begin to emerge, the expert may possess the power to define them. Increasingly in social conflicts the power struggle is not simply one of who prevails in the resolution of an issue but also in who prevails in measuring its very existence" (Gaventa 1993, 28).

Today, the "experts" cite standardized test scores and employer satisfaction as the critical measures of school performance. Widespread acceptance of these measures, along with acceptance of "international competition" as the goal of education, not only allows powerful interests to determine the agenda for education reform, but also permits them to select issues for scholarly research. Subsequently, sociologists of education tend to "take" problems posed by educators and policymakers for research rather than to "make" them (Young 1971). Specific problems considered germane to the field are taken for granted: the need for vocational education, the failure of working class students, the high drop-out rates among minority students, the feminization of the nursing profession, the underemployment of college graduates, the absence of African American students from doctoral programs, and the persistence of regional educational differences. Sociologists routinely document enrollments, drop-outs, tracking, mobility, literacy, attainment, and credentialism for groups, cohorts, and regions. By treating these issues as "natural" or "given," without addressing their historical origins, "such enquiries [sic] do little more than provide what is often a somewhat questionable legitimacy to the various pressures for administrative and curricular 'reform'" (Young 1971, 2). Ultimately, naturalizing these

issues serves to legitimate unequal opportunities and unequal outcomes. It does not contribute to understanding them (Heaney 1993, 41-42), or to changing them.

Proposition 14. *Ideologies of race, class, and gender help legitimate the links between knowledge and power.*

Many scholars take it for granted that Southern women enrolled in home economics courses in large numbers because of regional traditional ideologies about the role of women (Rury 1991). A reexamination of the history of vocational education shows that most young women, particularly black women, were forced to take home economics and denied other curricular choices. Southern women resisted taking home economics, as they did in the rest of the United States. Young women took these courses because they lacked alternatives, not because Southern women were more likely to aspire to traditional homemaking roles than non-Southern women. Education helped define their roles as wives, mothers, and workers. It also limited their academic and occupational opportunities.

Ideologies of the cult of "true womanhood," separate spheres, the black child/savage, and religious obedience to authority have been used to deny equal educational and occupational opportunities to women, blacks, and poor people. Early in the 20th century, these ideologies justified training women teachers to become "servants of the state," not independent pedagogues; building vocational schools for the higher education of African Americans, not academic schools; and educating the children of millworkers only through the middle school years, not through high school.

Today religious conservatives promote traditional ideologies on the role of women. Also, “a powerful offensive is under way to make social Darwinism sociobiology, and the ‘scientific’ justification of racism and social inequality again respectable in academic circles” (Mandel 1995, 80). *The Bell Curve* (1994) recommends allocating additional resources to the “cognitive elite” and reducing funds to the “cognitively disadvantaged.” Because low-income, African American, and Latino/Latina students are disproportionately represented in classes for low-achievers, and middle class white students are disproportionately represented in “gifted” classes, there are obvious implications for who will hold access to knowledge and power in the future.

Proposition 15. *Knowledge of the educational marketplace, or lack of knowledge, is a mechanism for mediating inequality.*

Children from working class and minority families are over-represented in vocational education at all stages in the education process -- primary, secondary, and post-secondary. Typically, they are not well-informed about the consequences of vocational education for their educational and occupational futures. Community colleges, the lowest tier of a complex system of higher education, enroll disproportionate numbers of low-income, female, and minority students. The concentration of these students is based on inequalities in test scores, financial resources, and knowledge of the educational marketplace.

These variables -- test scores, money, and knowledge of the educational marketplace -- correlate with each other and with social class (Davies and Guppy 1997,

1420; Karen 1991, 220). Students from lower middle and working class families may not understand that their “choice” of a college preparatory or vocational curricula, or their “choice” of a community college or a state university may limit their future life chances. Students from higher middle class and professional families are more likely to understand the significance of these choices and benefit from this knowledge. The ideology of opportunity helps mediate these inequalities.

Implications for Education Reform

Robert Kuttner, writing for *Business Week*, observes that “improving the schools and reforming job training are...relatively easy. The hard part is improving the kinds of jobs that the economy offers” (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 39). Currently, the biggest demand for new workers occurs in dead-end jobs like nurse’s aide, janitor, and fast-food worker, but business leaders publicly support education reform to promote academic achievement and to make the US work force more “competitive.” The business-led education reform debate tends to scapegoat educators, to discount disadvantaged students, and to blur understandings of changes in the labor market (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 38-39). The rhetoric of “competitiveness” focuses not only on global markets, but also on standardized testing. The goal of all competitiveness seems to be economic gain. Current debates fault schools for failing to produce students with high test scores and failing to ensure economic gain for students and for the United States in the global economy. Tyack and Cuban warn:

When the purposes of education become narrowed to economic advantage, and the main measure of success is higher test scores, an easy next step is to regard schooling as a consumer good rather than a common good. Then it is logical to propose alternatives to the common school such as an open-market system of schooling in which parents are given vouchers to send their children to any school of their choice, whether private or public. One of the claims of voucher advocates is that the market system would eliminate the supposed inefficiencies of democratic governance (Tyack and Cuban 1995, 140-141).

The view of education as a consumer good appears in John Hood's editorial written for *Triad Business*, a North Carolina business publication. Hood is president of the John Locke Foundation, a public policy think tank in Raleigh. His article criticized and opposed Governor Hunt's recommendation to the legislature for raising teacher salaries to the national average. Hood claimed that raising teacher salaries will not improve student performance. With government, he said, unlike private industry, you do not always get what you pay for because in government, "a lack of accountability, competition and performance measures combine to erase the link between money and results" (Hood 1996, 5). Hood wants school administrators to think more like businessmen and engineers.

To support his argument, Hood compared state government spending increases to automobile price increases. The cost of both has increased about 300% in the past two decades, but increases in quality are dissimilar. New cars are safer, cleaner, and more economical. In 20 years, deaths per mile fell 50%, harmful emissions declined by 87-92%, and fuel economy doubled. Car buyers get a lot more for their money now than they did in 1975, but taxpayers do not. During the same 20 year period, SAT scores did not

change, a majority of high school students tested below proficiency standings in core academic subjects, and a “sizeable percentage” of high school students failed the new high school competency exam. Hood adds that the number of families on public assistance grew, the number of children born out of wedlock increased, and the number of single parent households doubled in only ten years. He implies that schools are at fault.

Hood explains that “cars have been re-engineered to meet higher standards of performance,” and automakers must compete with other producers. Governmental institutions, on the other hand, do not use measure performance and do not have to compete. He proposes that instead of increasing spending, “we need to go back to the drawing board and re-engineer the institutions themselves” to increase the authority of local school boards, to increase school choice and non-public alternatives, and to declare educational enterprise zones in the worst performing school districts (Hood 1996, 5).

Hood endorses a market logic of “instrumental rationality” (Torres 1998, 150) associated with the employment or excellence perspective on education reform. Hood views education as a consumer good, not a public good. He rejects the benefits of education that cannot be measured in narrow, instrumental terms and conveniently overlooks the role of the public sector in regulating automobile safety, in building highways, and in maintaining low gas taxes. He uses the language of business efficiency and the expertise of engineering to justify removing education from politics, and invokes the name of local governance to make it sound democratic.

Jonathan Kozol challenges Hood and all who have forgotten the role of education in promoting the public good. He stresses the importance of equity in an article written

for school administrators. “The best favor the school administrators of this nation could and should be doing for our children is to advocate courageously against the juggernaut of business-minded, profit-driven, and commercial forces that threaten to privatize our public schools or simply turn them into public instruments of private greed” (Kozol 1997, 4).

Kozol derides the idea of private-public partnerships in school reform because businesses have lobbied powerfully against school taxes and equity and view children only as “future cogs within the world of industry and enterprise” (Kozol 1997, 4). He criticizes curriculum guides that “promote the virtues of a sharp-edged and competitive ethos at the cost of any emphasis upon compassion, gentleness, unselfishness, or moral generosity” (Kozol 1997, 4-5). He resents that advocates for children must frame their arguments in business terminology, “not in terms of simple justice and fair play to children...” (Kozol 1997, 5).

Kozol’s call for equity, moral justice, and fair play reminds reformers that education is a public good. “The interests of business and the interest of a good society are not, by any means, the same....Business needs team players who are not resistant or iconoclastic and do not waste precious time with metaphors or ethics. But society needs prophets, poets, trouble-makers, saints and rebels, beautiful dreamers, glorious eccentrics” (Kozol 1997, 6). He welcomes business support to “end the separate and unequal schooling system that denies our poorest children all those opportunities you give to your own children” (Kozol 1997, 6). He asks business to help “in dismantling the racial segregation that you’ve faithfully sustained and bring back the jobs that you have willingly exported from the neighborhoods in which our poorest children live” (Kozol 1997, 6).

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) also seeks equity and challenges the “excellence” or employment perspective. The AAUW Report, *How Schools Shortchange Girls* (1992, 11), criticizes the official reports of the 1980s for failing to include gender as a category in defining reform issues. It cites a report published by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS), *Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at Risk* (1985) which specifically mentions race, class, culture, and sex.

Who are the children at risk? They include a large proportion of young people from poor families of all races. They include minority and immigrant children who face discriminatory policies and practices, large numbers of girls and young women who miss out on education opportunities routinely afforded males, and children with special needs who are unserved, underserved, or improperly categorized because of handicap or learning difficulties (AAUW 1991, 11-12).

The NCAS report is the only report of the 1980s that directly addresses Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibiting sex discrimination in education programs receiving federal funds (AAUW 1991, 12). It demonstrates how issues do not become part of the discourse on reform when “expert” commissions and reports do not define them as problems. Gender equity was not defined as an issue in most reports. The AAUW took action by publishing *How Schools Shortchange Girls* (1991) and other documents addressing gender equity.

A third perspective, the empowerment perspective, considers education to be more than employment or equity. “While public education may be useful as an industrial policy,” Deborah Meier says, “it is *essential* to healthy life in a democracy” (Tyack and

Cuban 1995, 140). Bob Moses, a former civil rights leader, agrees. In 1964, Bob Moses led Freedom Summer, taking college students to Mississippi to educate and to register black voters (Jetter 1993, 29). His goal then was to open a closed society to African American voters. Today, his goal is to open another closed society, the world of educational opportunity. As founder and director of The Algebra Project, Moses sees math literacy as the key to citizenship in a democratic society. "The question we asked then was: What are the skills people have to have to master to open the doors of citizenship? Now math literacy holds the key" (Jetter 1993, 29). Without algebra, the door to college and to most professions is locked. Many blacks and Hispanics never take algebra at all. If they do take algebra in high school, it is too late to get on the college math track. Moses wants to expose every child to algebra in middle school.

The Algebra Project attempts to build consensus around educational outcomes for all children (Moses et al. 1989, 429). It teaches children to develop mathematical thinking through their own experience. The technique is vintage 1964. Then, Freedom School volunteers used examples from sharecroppers' own experiences to teach history and writing. Now, algebra students learn to think and 'speak' mathematically by tackling problems in daily lives. The philosophical link between Freedom Summer and the Algebra Project is universal access. Moses says, "It wasn't the right to vote for a few people,...it was the right to vote for everybody" (Jetter 1993, 29).

The Algebra Project began in 1982 when Moses began teaching his daughter at home. Soon it grew to include friends and classmates in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It also involved teaching parents to help children with their school work. In 1992, Bob

Moses and David Dennis, co-founder of Freedom Summer, returned to Mississippi to found the Delta Algebra Project of Mississippi. Moses fears that children living in the Delta who lack critical thinking skills will be “tossed by the wayside,” like their parents and grandparents, the sharecroppers of the 1960s. “They didn’t have the citizenship requirements of their age....And so they were serfs absolutely without power. What is happening now is that we are watching the new serfs emerge” (Jetter 1993, 30).

Moses won a “genius” grant from the MacArthur Foundation to support his grass-roots organization, the Algebra Project. Teachers, administrators, and even economic development leaders in Appalachian coal towns expect the Algebra Project to boost math literacy and economic development. They share the view that math literacy is for everyone. They reject the “expert” view that algebra is for a few students and vocational or general math is for everyone else. They show that literacy and critical thinking skills are empowering, that excellence without equity is undemocratic. Bob Moses, and participants in the Algebra Project, have not lost faith in the redemptive qualities of education, but they may have lost faith in the redemptive powers of the education system. Like African Americans in the postbellum era, Moses and others associated with the Algebra Project hope for inclusion in American society. Rather than pursue utopian dreams or fabricate a rhetoric of reform, they confront the problems of universal access and empowerment at the grass-roots level.

Education Reform and Social Justice

Education is essential to a healthy life in a democratic society. Public discourse about education reform should not be limited to a narrow discussion of the need for technically proficient and economically competitive labor. Ideally, public discourse about reform should address the role of schools in creating a prosperous, just, and democratic society. Practically, much discourse minimizes the notion of social justice and emphasizes an individualistic notion of success in a capitalist society through a hierarchical system of education. This research shows that the modernist, individualist, universalistic paradigm “always saw difference as a threat to democracy and order” (Torres 1998, 150). Public education, and the promise of education reform, have been used to exclude or to devalue the experiences of different groups, “or to incorporate them in terms that suit the dominant group” (Connell 1994, 140-141). Despite the appeal of the equity and empowerment approaches, their attempts to address the shortcomings of the employment or excellence approach, and their potential to expand opportunity, they fail to question many of the assumptions underlying the structure of inequality in public education.

Discourse on education reform should include principles of social justice to establish education reform goals and to measure success. Using the principles of social justice, differences of race, class, gender, and region become the “basis for negotiation, for communication, and for the ongoing construction of democratic public life” (Torres 1998, 150). In the past, these differences often became the basis of exclusion from educational opportunity and from the political process. The present emphasis on an English-only, monocultural curriculum for bilingual students and students from other cultures threatens

to perpetuate exclusion and inequality. In the future, recognition of these differences can contribute to a more democratic deliberation of the need for education reform.

A democratic approach to education reform will involve taking into account the history and experiences of other groups and revising the “hegemonic curriculum” (Connell 1994, 140). It will require demystifying the tax structure and other mechanisms that perpetuate and legitimate inequality. It will require broadening access to “expert” information and to public institutions of education. It will require de-tracking school curricula and students to ensure equality of opportunity.

The evidence shows that elite efforts to expand public education, and to respond to popular demands for reform, have failed to create universal access or equality of opportunity. Greater citizen participation in the political process, at local, state, and national levels, will help formulate critical questions concerning the construction of knowledge, the organization of schooling, and the distribution of power. Citizens must bring a discussion of social justice to public discourse about education reform. Then, parents, teachers, and students will help define the issues and design policies to address them. These democratic reforms will enable schools to equip students with the economic and political understanding they need to acquire improved educational opportunity and access.

Failure to pursue social justice and to expand citizen participation in education reform will lead to increasing inequality. In the near-future, Michael Apple expects privatization and choice programs to grow at the local level. These programs will produce more poor schools for poor inner-city and rural kids, and better schools for relatively

affluent kids in other areas (Torres 1998, 39). Subsequently, the political right's response to increasing inequality, school failure, and economic change will be to continue to "export the blame" (Torres 1998, 41) to race, class, gender, and region. They will continue to attack the very notion of public life and support their claims with questionable "scientific" evidence.

Rather than continue to attack the notions of public life and public good, it makes sense to consider the democratic possibilities of difference and social agency. To do so requires rejecting the current system of producing "probable destinies" through a hierarchical system of education and adopting the principles of social justice and universal access. It will raise serious questions about the vocationalization of education at all levels -- primary, secondary, and postsecondary education. Ultimately, questions about the democratic possibilities of education will raise issues about economic restructuring and changes in the capitalist world-system that tend to be obscured by debates about education reform.

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VITA

Wanda Rushing Edwards, a North Carolina native, graduated from the Union County Public Schools, then attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She received a B. A. degree in History and an M. A. in Sociology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. At UNCG, she was inducted into Alpha Kappa Delta. She worked with a public school/community arts program designed to ease the tensions of desegregation, and a juvenile delinquency prevention program in Winston-Salem, NC. As a consultant for the North Carolina Justice Academy and the North Carolina Department of Justice, she wrote newsletters for public school teachers and co-authored a state-adopted ninth grade social studies text, *Learning the Law*. She taught in community colleges, and taught five years at UNCG as a Sociology instructor before entering the Doctor of Philosophy program in Sociology at the University of Tennessee. At the University of Tennessee she was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi, and received an Outstanding Graduate Student award. She became Associate Editor of the *Journal of Oromo Studies*. Also, she worked as a research assistant with the National Evaluation of the USDA Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community Project. She received the Doctor of Philosophy degree August 1998.

Wanda Rushing Edwards accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Memphis beginning August 1998. She will be associated with the Center for Research on Women and the Department of Sociology.