

Internal Colonization, African Americans, and No Child Left Behind: The impact of education policy on academic and socio-economic achievement and the negative effects on African American students

**Senior Composition
Professor Gottlieb
Urban and Environmental Policy
April 15, 2005**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary/Abstract

Chapter 1: Introduction

- A. Chapter Overview
- B. Research Problem
- C. Research Questions
- D. Research Methods
- E. Summary of Findings

Chapter 2: Theoretical Analysis

- A. What is Internal Colonization?
- B. Internal Colonization and African Americans

Chapter 3: The Educational System

- A. Academic Achievement Issues
- B. African American Achievement Conditions in Public Schools

Chapter 4: Practical Analysis: NCLB at Work

- A. NCLB
- B. How NCLB Affects African American Academic Achievement

Chapter 5: Conclusion

- A. Suggestions on breaking the cycle of internal colonization
- B. Efforts and Ideas toward NCLB Reform
- C. Supposition

Appendix

Table of References

Abstract

Internal colonization greatly influences American society through institutionalized oppression. Internal colonization is the mechanism that divides America by class and race to sustain the wealth of an elite population. The United States education system is one institution that manipulates and delineates socio-economic status through its policies, and the way those policies are implemented. African Americans are victims of internal colonization related impacts in educational policies, the implementations of those policies, and political decisions related to the evolution of those policies. African American students academic achievement levels are typically lower than their white counterparts, resulting in an increasingly skewed academic achievement gap. Despite numerous education policy changes, African Americans continue to academically test and perform poorly in higher percentages than whites¹. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is the current education policy reform that has created many constraints on academic achievement and success in an effort to improve academic achievement for all Americans. The No Child Left Behind Act has seven components: closing the achievement gap, improving literacy, creating flexibility and reduced bureaucracy, rewarding success and penalizing failure, parental choice, improving teacher quality, and improving public school safety. NCLB aims to improve academic achievement by means of a national standard. Without incorporating internal colonization factors, NCLB will continue to fail African Americans similar to the failures associated with previous types of policies. This study analyzes NCLB's impact on African American students in the United States public school system within the context of internal colonization.

¹ the term white refers to Non-Latino populations in the United States

Chapter 1: Introduction

A. Chapter Overview

Internal colonization is the central concept used in this study regarding how governments and elites shape socio-economic conditions that influence how education policy is implemented. Education policy in turn is one factor that shapes academic achievement and influences socio-economic status. Internal colonization manipulates education policies, such as No Child Left Behind, causing low academic and socio-economic achievement among African American students in urban environments. Although education policy attempts to improve all student levels of academic achievement, because of the effects of internal colonization on African American students, many African American students find it difficult to succeed both academically and socio-economically. This creates a system of socio-economic oppression that limits African American access to quality educational opportunities. Internal colonization is the source of inequality and socio-economic oppression in the United States. The U.S. education system is institutionalized by internal colonization and continues to fail African American students in academic achievement opportunities despite educational reform attempts. The latest policy reform, No Child Left Behind, is an act that intends to improve academic achievement for American students in grade school.

I became engaged in this study after I was exposed to the concept of internal colonization during a course entitled Boundaries and Borderlands taught at Occidental College. In this class I learned a great deal about the capitalistic structure underlying socially constructed norms such as race. I wanted to conduct extensive research on internal colonization but did not receive the opportunity to do so. In addition, I always

had a passion for education policy reform and was really interested in the dynamics of the current policy reform, the No Child Left Behind Act. Growing up in various communities of various income levels I personally experienced the differences in public school education quality based on the income levels of the surrounding communities. I always felt that if every child had the resources wealthy communities had in their public schools, many low-income families would potentially have a greater chance of moving out of generational poverty. After consulting different people I decided to combine my interest in education policy reform with my interest in internal colonization.

Although I would prefer to analyze and apply this theoretical concept to the entire lower and working class populations in the United States, both past and present, because of historical racial conflicts it is almost impossible to study the socio-economic influences of low-income groups without addressing the unique racial, ethnic, and cultural impacts on the condition of such groups.

A. Research Problem

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), established as law on January 8, 2002 by Congress and President Bush, is an educational reform policy that seeks to create “accountability, local control, flexible new options for parents, and record finding for what works to see every child in America -- regardless of ethnicity, income, or background -- achieve high standards” (Rod Paige). NCLB was passed into law because:

since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act first passed Congress in 1965, the federal government has spent more than \$242 billion through 2003 to help educate disadvantaged children. Yet, the achievement gap in this country between rich and poor and white and minority students remains wide. According to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on reading in 2000, only 32 percent of fourth-graders can read at a proficient level and thereby demonstrate solid academic achievement; and while scores for the highest-performing students have improved over time, those of America's lowest-

performing students have declined ‘(National Assessment of Educational Progress 2001)’ (Department of Education).

NCLB seeks to improve academic achievement by putting “the focus on instruction and methods that have been proven to work. It makes a billion-dollar annual investment to ensure every child learns to read by third grade. And it provides the resources for reform and unprecedented flexibility so states and local communities can get the job done” (“Welcome Letter”).

The policy established by NCLB continues to be heavily debated and remains controversial. NCLB has seven components that are specifically geared towards improving public education. The first component of the act is to close the achievement gap, which represents the population of students who score below the average student on math and reading standardized tests. Under this component states are required to develop a reward and penalty system for their public school districts. Public schools are required to test students annually by state mandated exams. A percentage of students from each state will be required to take an annual national test in math and reading. If schools fail the standardized tests, they will initially be given funding; however, if schools continue to fail they will lose federal funding and students will be given the opportunity to attend other schools that have a higher level of success (“NCLB”).

The second component aims to improve literacy through reading programs. States that create a reading program will be rewarded by federal grants. The reading program must adhere to federal requirements of the “Reading First initiative to ensure that every child can read by the third grade” (“NCLB”). Therefore, those states that partake in implementing reading programs for early childhood instruction will have the option to receive funding from the “Early Reading First” program.

The third component seeks to increase flexibility in school wide programs and reduce bureaucracy in “overlapping and duplicative categorical grant programs” through combining local, state, and federal funding to improve schools. Federal funding in turn is linked when “a charter option for states and districts committed to accountability and reform will be created. Under this program, charter states and districts would be freed from categorical program requirements in return for submitting a five-year performance agreement to the Secretary of Education and being subject to especially rigorous standards of accountability” (Department of Education, “NCLB”).

The fourth component plans to reward success and penalize failure by means of increasing or decreasing federal funding. Success as described by the act is narrowing the achievement gap and improving overall student achievement over past achievement levels. Failure is the result of “a state [failing] to meet their performance objectives and [demonstrating] results in academic achievement” (Department of Education, “NCLB”).

The fifth component of the act gives parents the ability to choose public education institutions that best meet their children’s need based on school report cards. Report cards will signify the achievement level of a public school, thus allowing parents to decide if they want their children to attend a public school or receive a voucher to transfer their children to another school. To assist school choice, the act will provide funding to charter schools in order to create high quality schools. Thus schools that are doing well or are improving will allow students from poorly achieving schools to transfer and the improving schools will be compensated for the cost of new students (“NCLB”).

The sixth component seeks to improve the quality of teaching by requiring teachers to undergo more training and rewarding states that employ such qualified

teachers. To be a qualified teacher the act expects teachers to have higher levels of education. Teachers are expected to work “with institutions of higher education to improve instruction and curriculum” (Department of Education, “NCLB”). Therefore, teachers need to have a four-year college degree and an extra year of educational training in math and science.

The seventh and last component of NCLB is to provide federal funding to improve school safety. School safety is important because in order for students to achieve academically they need to feel and be safe from dangerous and harmful elements. Through the act teachers have authority to “remove violent or persistently disruptive students from the classroom” (Department of Education, “NCLB”). Schools will be funded to provide and promote safety and drug prevention programs during and after school. NCLB requires violent and dangerous schools to report its activity and provide parents with alternative school choices for their children. Those schools that train teachers to build character through lessons and activities will receive extra funding from the federal government (Department of Education, “NCLB”).

Part of the controversy surrounding NCLB concerns both its financial and developmental capacity to contribute to the academic achievement condition of African American students - particularly those attending urban public schools. This issue is important because of the academic achievement gap between black and white students in the United States urban public school system. Many African American students continue to perform poorly on standardized tests and other academic courses in comparison to white students. Statistically, a 2002 SAT score report conducted by of The College Board’s *National Report* revealed, the average combined white SAT score to be 1082

while African Americans scored an average of 865, a 217 point difference (Appendix A). It is important to research why black students continue to struggle academically and whether NCLB will negatively affect African American students and continue to neglect African American students, within the context of internal colonization. Although NCLB has positive intentions and offers a positive approach to education reform, internal colonial factors and the already existing academic achievement gap between white and black students causes African American students to stagnate in academic achievement. Because of standardized testing methods decreases in funding to remedy standardized test failure and potential punishment of schools that receive negative report cards a majority of African American students' academic needs will continue to be neglected.

B. Research Questions

What is internal colonization's role in influencing the implementation of education policy, which in turn impacts academic achievement, socio-economics, and African Americans in particular? Given these impacts from internal colonization how should education policy be reformed to help improve African American students' academic achievement levels and socio-economic status? How does NCLB work and what are the difficulties associated with its implementation? What are the associated impacts from internal colonization on NCLB? How can NCLB be reformed to prevent internal colonized structures from manipulating its mission to improve academic achievement for all students nationally? Will NCLB improve the academic achievement condition of African American students in urban schools? To what degree will the act improve academic achievement of African American students in public schools?

C. Research Methods

This study will investigate the NCLB Act, analyze theoretical debates and arguments as well as critically explore internal colonization theory and its impacts on the United States education system and policy. The research will result from collecting written sources, journals, press releases, books and organization websites that discuss and analyze internal colonization, education reform, and policy, including analytical discussions regarding NCLB.

D. Summary of Findings

Analysts differ on the causes underlying African American academic achievement. It is quite possible that failure in academic achievement of African American students in the public school system is a result of many factors combined, not just one. Analysts believe that African American students generally lack in academic achievement because of the attitudes that education can not and will not help them out of the oppressed conditions in which they live. Some analysts further argue that African American students do not succeed in the public school system because they are institutions in which policies are geared toward and influenced by the dominant white culture and elites. These analysts also argue that the oppressive conditions that African American students endure prevent them from achieving as well as their white counterparts. Another theory is that because academic achievement levels of African American males are considerably less than their female counterparts, African American student academic achievement on the whole is less than what it would be if only African American females were studied.

In seeking to counter academic achievement gaps, the No Child Left Behind Act's goal is to improve and dissolve the current conditions of low academic achievement levels. NCLB seeks to improve academic achievement conditions through methods of

standardized testing, reading initiatives, increased funding, parental options, qualifying teachers, and public safety. NCLB can have a positive impact on African American students if it is implemented correctly by states, taking internal colonization conditions into account using both financial and community resources. However, currently the nation is in the middle of a fiscal crisis that has prevented NCLB from being fully financially implemented. Until NCLB can be fully implemented all students will be greatly challenged by its restrictions.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Analysis

A. What is Internal Colonization?

Internal colonization (IC) is a social and cultural set of mechanisms by which American society reinforces its divisions of class and race to sustain the wealth and power of its dominant elites. It is the foundation of socio-economic injustice. Internal colonization connects the processes of cultural hegemony and capitalist relations which are experienced within key social institutions such as education. Cultural hegemony, as defined by Clovis E. Semmes in the book Cultural Hegemony and African American Development, is “the systemic negation of one culture by another” (1). Capitalism as defined by the Oxford American Dictionary is “an economic system in which trade and industry are controlled by private owners”. Cultural hegemony reinforces capitalist relations and capitalism reinforces cultural hegemony by means of a dominant group’s prevailing ideas and practices of an elite population that controls the sources of wealth and power, both domestic and foreign, in the United States. Thus internal colonization represents a hybrid form of colonialism. Internal colonization is heavily rooted in the U.S. public school system. “Like other sectors of the State, schools are influenced by the conflictual nature of capitalist economic and cultural relations” (Exoo, 145). The combination of capitalism and education influenced by internal colonization mechanisms undermines the ability to achieve cultural freedom in educational settings.

Colonialism is something that is typically viewed and understood to be a system of governance and/or control by which a ruling power dominates another culture, nation, or society and thereby increases its own economic and political power. In general people tend to associate colonization to a state of affairs between ruling powers and “third

world” nations, however, the effects of colonization are much more complex. Aime Cesaire observes “between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft,...contempt, mistrust, arrogance, self-complacency,...brainless elites, degraded masses. No human contact, but relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a classroom monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production” (21). There are many examples of the kind of relations Cesaire describes between the wealthy and poor within modern day American society. Forced labor, intimidation, pressure, police, theft, mistrust, and etc. for example, encompasses immigrant exploitation in sweatshops and trafficking that represent two visible forms of colonization found in American social and economic life. There are many instances of such relations that Cesaire points out among American citizens regardless of culture and race.

Where colonialism takes on a cultural dimension is where particular forms of indoctrination and other more subtle forms of manipulation can be found. Many Americans passionately believe that they are able to potentially “pull themselves up by their boot straps” to achieve wealth and that America is the “land of opportunity”. These beliefs are a deep seated part of American culture. But adherence to such beliefs can contribute to the perpetuation of injustice and oppression. “Even as much of what we now recognize as culture was produced by the colonial encounter, the concept itself was in part invented because of it. Culture was also produced out of the allied network of processes that spawned nations in the first place. Claims about nationality necessitated notions of culture that marked groups off from one another in essential ways, uniting

language, race, geography, and history in a single concept” according to Nicholas B. Dirks (3). When American students are educated in grade school about U.S. history many things are not mentioned or studied that were parts of the formation of the United States of America. American children are given a dominant groups’ belief in unlimited opportunity that in turn serves to establish the cultural hegemony that masks as well as perpetuates oppression and exploitation. For example, if you believe you can succeed but issues of class and race barriers are not addressed then you end up internalizing the dominant ideology. “Pressures are placed on schools, in particular, in assisting in the development of an efficient, hierarchically organized labor force while at the same time instilling a belief in democratic and egalitarian principles” (Exoo, 146). The power elite, those who govern society through the power of wealth, institutionalize the education system under internal colonial rule and manipulate culture by socio-economic control.

Internal colonialism is a systemic configuration that intertwines cultural hegemony and socio-economics. “If colonialism can be seen as a cultural formation, so also culture is a colonial formation. Culture was fabricated for the means and the ends of colonial conquest, and culture was invented in relationship to a variety of internal colonialisms. Culture became fundamental to the formation of class society... and to developing discourses of race, biology, and nationality” (Dirks, 3). The United States of America thrives on the underprivileged in its own cultural society as well as in other cultural societies. An elite population has governed both political affairs and cultural norms throughout U.S. history. “Western colonial nations did not simply exploit colonized nations for economic profit, but depended upon the process of colonization and colonial rule for securing the nation-state itself: developing new technologies of state rule,

maintaining and deepening the ruptures of a classed...bringing both colonialism and culture back home” (Dirks, 4). Both the colonizer and colonized fall victim to colonial culture regardless of power dynamics. The colonizer must also live among the rules of a colonized society just the same as the colonized. Although the colonizer may have more socio-economic freedom the toll of oppression and degradation weighs heavily on all who must live in a society that depends on oppressed populations for sustained wealth.

B. Internal Colonization and African Americans

African Americans have been greatly impacted by internal colonization in the United States. From slavery to the Civil Rights Movement, Jim Crow to Affirmative Action, African Americans have been oppressed and indoctrinated to accept a condition of inferiority, subordination, cultural degradation, and economic deprivation. African Americans have endured many things and worked extremely hard for equal rights and racial justice. Incorporation into the American mainstream is one of the many things that African Americans seek to achieve. In the process of seeking such inclusion African Americans have assimilated into the dominant cultural, social, and economic structures. In modern times the fight for equality has been more about socio-economic access and less about race. Race continues to be a very important issue in American culture and society and the fight for racial justice is very important; however, there is an underlying condition, internal colonization, that is the root of a great deal of injustice both racially and socio-economically.

As civil rights continued to be granted over time many African Americans were able to advance socially and economically. Both a black middle and upper class grew out of new opportunities. Along with the opportunities that became available, arose issues of

legitimacy related to those opportunities. “Legitimacy involves gaining recognition and respect for one’s perspectives, beliefs, and actions. It is a necessary component of all behavioral systems. Because cultural hegemony tends to negate self-conscious and self-defined institution building among African Americans, legitimacy, as a mediating process, becomes problematic” (Semmes, 93). Internal colonization is the system that indoctrinates African Americans into seeking legitimacy from the dominant American culture. The goal of achieving socio-economic status equal to that of the dominant class is the key to the quest for legitimacy among African Americans in the United States. Clovis E. Semmes points out that “as African Americans interact in the broader society, they encounter structured power differentials that tend to force a shift in the sources of legitimacy and the significance of those sources. Status or social worth and the self-concept may become subject to a more intense reward system determined by dominant society reference groups and needs” (94). The struggle to overcome oppressive conditioning of the past and oppressive conditions in the present has led African Americans to fight for the same privileges of the dominant racial group. Pursuing “white” socio-economic privilege creates an achievement structure dependent on white legitimacy and internal colonial indoctrination. In fact all Americans who are of lower socio-economic status are also subjected to similar legitimacy conditions, notwithstanding racial divides.

The African American middle and upper class populations are influenced by the process of internal colonization and therefore alienate themselves from blacks of lower socio-economic status. However, middle class African Americans are not exonerated from ruling class discrimination. “Concomitantly, the more precarious economic status

of black members of the middle class makes them more vulnerable than their white counterparts to economic downturns, government budget cuts, and changes in affirmative action policy” (Reed, 5). Yet middle class African Americans do not associate with lower class African Americans outside of a unifying, institutionalized racial discriminatory factors. African Americans who are not socio-economically well off continue to suffer from a great deal of oppression, discrimination, and degradation. Bell Hooks notes,

nowadays, practically every public representation of blackness is created by black folks who are materially privileged. More often than not they speak about the black poor and working class but not with them, or on their behalf. The presence of a small number of privileged black folks who continue to work for justice, who work to change this culture so that all black people can live fully and well, is often obscured by the dominant white culture’s focus on those who are fundamentally opportunistic and/or corrupt. These conservative black elites, chosen and appointed to positions of authority by the mainstream, not only take charge of interrupting and shaping public policy that will affect the lives of underprivileged black folks, they police black folks who do not agree with them or support their agendas. That policing may take the form of preventing folks from getting jobs, getting heard if they speak and/or write publicly, or deploying various forms of psychological terrorism. More individual black folks than ever before are entering the ranks of the rich and upper class. Allegiance to their class interests usually supersedes racial solidarity. They are not only leaving the underprivileged black masses behind, they collude in the systems of domination that ensure the continued exploitation and oppression of the poor. (95)

The root of this factor is again internal colonization where class and race are divided, where dominant power strongholds are strengthened by a capitalistic economic structure that depends on an underclass population for survival. One of the most established institutions that disseminate the interest of a ruling class power is the United States educational system. Through the education system America has mainly been subject to the influences of internal colonization.

C. Internal Colonization and Education

Internal colonization affects many institutions within American society, however, education is the key to how the condition is experienced, and it is the systemic institution that greatly influences our society from early childhood to adulthood. The process of education in America has a socio-economic bias that divides society into class structures. Samuel Bowles asserts that “the halting contribution of U.S. education to equality and full human development appears intimately related to the nature of the economic structures into which the schools must integrate each new generation of youth” (53). The education system is an institution that aims to provide American children with fundamental tools that is supposed to prepare them for contributing to the nation’s economy and society. Contribution to the U.S. economy and society includes and demands a working class in order for the economy to sustain itself. As documented in the book Democracy Upside Down,

the accumulation function of schools is related to the interaction between knowledge and people in the institution. It refers to the ways in which educational institutions provide support for the social division of labor in our society and the relentless search for profit. Schools thus not only allocate knowledge; they allocate people as well. ‘Cultural capital’ is distributed in such a way that students are allocated to their ‘proper’ place in society. What this process does...is to roughly reproduce a hierarchically organized labor force and class, race, and gender inequality (Exoo, 148).

Therefore some fundamental tools that are provided in schools are geared towards selected members of U.S. society to create subordination and obedience to capitalist authorities.

The quality of education oftentimes determines the value of such contributions given by any individual in society. Citizens who lack marketable skills and validated educational experiences are in many ways devalued in the American economy. Samuel Bowles articulates this paradigm in the book Schooling in Capitalist America.

The economy produces people. The production of commodities may be considered of quite minor importance except as a necessary input into people production. The people production process - in the workplace and in schools - is dominated by the imperatives of profit and domination rather than by human need. The unavoidable necessity of growing up and getting a job in the United States forces us all to become less than we could be: less free, less secure, in short less happy. The U.S. economy is a formally totalitarian system in which the actions of the vast majority (workers) are controlled by a small minority (owners and managers). Yet this totalitarian system is embedded in a formally democratic political system which promotes the norms - if not the practice - of equality, justice, and reciprocity. For the political system, the central problems of democracy are: insuring the maximal participation of the majority in decision-making; protecting minorities against the prejudices of the majority; and protecting the majority from any undue influence on the part of an unrepresentative minority. For the economic system, these central problems are nearly exactly reversed. Making U.S. capitalism work involves: insuring the minimal participation in decision - making by the majority (workers); protecting a single minority (capitalists and managers) against the wills of a majority; and subjecting the majority to the maximal influence of this single unrepresentative minority. (Bowles, 54)

The capitalistic culture of American society dictates the educational framework by which American children are taught. These parameters have marginalized different socially constructed racial groups to live as second class citizens through processes of internal colonization.

Though the working majority habitually supports and maintains the internal colonial structure, partially out of fear and self interest, the power/elite constructed payoff is consumption. Those who do not have endlessly seek to have the material goods that the wealthy have obtained and those who are wealthy seek more material wealth. Where socio-economics and education connect is where class begins to solidify its own boundaries and rites to access to opportunities both social and economic. The degree to which one is educated greatly determines the outcome of one's socio-economic position and material possessions. "Schools also lay the groundwork for the later acceptance of the drudgery of work as necessary 'to obtain a meaningful life in the sphere of buying

and consumption'. Such an emphasis on consumption, as a kind of light at the end of a week's travel through a monotonous and dreary tunnel, serves the requirements of capital accumulation as well. The structure of capitalist economics rests on a constant demand for consumer goods and for individual ownership of them" (Exoo, 148). Race also is a very important factor within the dynamics of class but even within racial groups the class structure commonly models the structure of the ruling class system. The ruling class system functions as a catalyst for others to follow. "For the institutions of economic life do not work mechanically and mindlessly to produce social outcomes, but rather change and develop through the types of class relationships to which they give rise. The educational system is involved in the reproduction and change of these class relationships and cannot be understood by simply 'adding up' the effects of schooling on each individual to arrive at a total social impact" (Bowles, 67). Therefore inequality arises and spawns injustice toward social groups based on class and race. It is easy to delineate power and socio-economic status among those individuals who are easily recognizable within society more different than the dominant power/elite group.

The extent of socio-economic stratification varies upon many factors. However, the main cultural understanding relies on and the belief that if one works hard enough one too can acquire and share ruling class power. The educational system creates and establishes class privilege. It validates citizen's right to climb a socio-economic ladder above those who are unable to receive an adequate educational background. Samuel Bowles notes, "the educational system legitimates economic inequality by providing an open, objective, and ostensibly meritocratic mechanism for assigning individuals to unequal economic positions. The educational system fosters and reinforces the belief that

economic success depends essentially on the possession of technical and cognitive skills - skills which it is organized to provide in an efficient, equitable, and unbiased manner on the basis of meritocratic principle” (103). There is consciousness of ruling class control over the educational system; unfortunately, it continues to wield dominance over the self interests of the dominant white culture.

Chapter 3: The Education System

A. Academic Achievement Issues

The No Child Left Behind Act is an important issue because of the historical and current struggle American children has had with learning within the public school system. Improving academic achievement has been and is a point of contention under NCLB that generates many debates on policy issues. A major challenge to the public education system in the United States has been the academic achievement gaps between different groups of children. Although there are substantial disparities within the public education system many Americans believe that education is a vital resource to secure a healthy future not only for their children but the country as well. Richard D. Kahlenberg, author of *All Together Now*, argues that “the central argument made in favor of free, universal, and compulsory education is, of course, that the public has a strong interest in ensuring that all of society’s children are educated. Virtually every state constitution provides for public education to create productive workers, self-governing citizens, and loyal Americans” (Kahlenberg, 12). Despite the desire to provide universal education to all children, many children are often poorly educated by the public school system and graduate from high school unable to compete in the labor force for adequate jobs that provide decent wages and benefits. This dilemma has caused and continues to cause great concern for the future of the American labor force.

That future is impacted by the poor performance of the public education system. Many children who come from lower income families are not given the opportunity to attend higher education institutions. In today’s market workers are more likely to be required to have a greater level of education. Meanwhile students from middle and upper

income families are better able to compete within an increasingly competitive labor force that demands more knowledge of technology and other modern advancements.

The gap between the rich and poor grows over time. In first grade, the reading achievement gap between average students in high-poverty and low-poverty schools is 27 percentage points; by eighth grade, the gap is 43 points... The lower levels of achievement among the poor translate into lower levels of attainment (length of schooling), including high school graduation. Among high school students graduating in 1992, 86 percent of high-income children were academically qualified for admission to a four-year college compared with just 53 percent of low-income high school graduates. In part because of this lack of educational preparation (and in part because of tuition barriers), poor and working-class students are one-half as likely to attend four-year colleges as those from the top income quartile (28 versus 66 percent) and four times as likely to end their education with high school (40 versus 10 percent)... (Kahlenberg, 15-17).

Typically, lower class and working-class citizens do not have access to equal public educational opportunities that the upper class and the middle-class have access to.

Working and lower class children tend to have less equal access to educational opportunities that supports academic achievement than that of middle and upper class children. When it comes to African Americans, race and socio-economic status are often interconnected. The NCLB goal is to improve academic achievement despite socio-economic conditions and create equal access to education through standards and services.

According to Geraldine Coleman, author of *Issues in Education*, there are thirteen factors that affect academic achievement. The following factors will be used in this paper to measure academic achievement influences and NCLB success among low income African Americans.

1) Socioeconomic status - The lower the student's socioeconomic status, the harder academic achievement becomes. First, public schools that are located within lower socioeconomic areas tend to have less money and resources than those in more affluent areas. This occurs because most public schools receive funding from property

taxes collected from the residents of their community (not California). For California, the disparities are found in parent support, time commitments, PTA-type funding, etc.

Communities that have a greater number of lower-income households tend to collect lower revenues; thus those public schools within that community receive less funding even with additional federal funding. Federal funding usually is not enough because of the lack of resources and services offered in lower-income communities. Much of the federal funding allocated to these schools goes towards free and reduced-cost meals, buses, testing, and simple maintenance of decaying facilities. According to Coleman, economic re-segregation caused by “white flight” has caused many public schools to lose funding resources. As affluent whites and minorities moved out of inner city areas to the suburbs, those urban neighborhoods that were left behind lost a great deal of revenue as family incomes decreased.

2) Transiency - Many students who change schools throughout their education oftentimes have a much more difficult time adjusting to new academic structures. A 1993 Journal of American Medical Association study confirmed the problems associated with student and family mobility. “The study found that children who move frequently are 50 to 100 percent more likely to have to repeat a grade, and experience delayed growth or development, behavior problems, and learning disabilities” (Coleman, 37). Since public schools vary on curriculum requirements and textbooks, many students who move several times throughout their education are left behind in their studies.

3) Attendance - Some public schools receive allocations of funding based on attendance; in such cases many public schools suffer from a lack of resources. Coleman states, “there is a high positive correlation between school attendance and academic

achievement” (40). Students who have a higher percentage of absences typically are those struggling with academic achievement.

4) Home responsibilities and circumstances - For those students who have a great deal of responsibility at home, such as contributing income or caring for younger siblings or elderly/sick relatives, academic achievement is often very challenging to maintain.

“Many students have been thrust into the role of miniature adult. They may be responsible for caring for a disabled or infirm parent or getting younger siblings off to school and caring for them until parents return home from work...still others are left to fend for themselves and younger siblings when drug or alcohol addicted parents lose sight of their responsibilities” (Coleman, 41). Students that are impacted by unfortunate circumstances beyond their own control and responsibility are often lacking in academic achievement. Some students coping mechanisms inhibit them from learning and succeeding academically. For those students who already contend with learning disabilities and a lack of support are even more likely to face challenges in achievement levels.

5) Fear of success - The pressure of succeeding affects many students because of the stress or challenge that parents and teachers put on success. “Tresemer (1977) studied this phenomenon and identified three reasons why individuals may avoid success. Individuals may avoid success for the following reasons: (1) fear that success may require the individual to reassess their view of themselves; (2) fear of being rejected [by peers and relatives]; (3) fear that their ability would not meet the extra demands created by success” (Coleman, 42).

6) A lack of interest - “For students who have not met with academic success or otherwise have been made to feel like social outcasts, interest in learning is easily abated. The level of our self-esteem is in part predicted on the measure of our successes” (Coleman, 43). Many students lose interest when they feel they have not completely grasped all of the materials, met expectations of their teachers and parents, and are thereby passed on.

7) A lack of parental support - Coleman believes “we live in a society where many families are dysfunctional, leaving kids psychologically and physically vulnerable. Where families fail, schools have had to pick up the slack” (46). When parents are unable to help their children with homework, and many are unable or do not deal with the many academic and social challenges their child may face, student achievement lags. Parental involvement is essential to the academic development and achievement of students. Since academic success is very much linked to emotional support, those students who are unable to receive emotional support tend to perform more poorly than others.

8) Preoccupation with fads or lack of necessities - As Coleman stated, “we live in a society where one’s worth and social standing are often measured by material possessions. Even young children are often preoccupied with designer label clothing. By the time children reach the teen years, this issue has taken on mammoth proportions” (46). The lack of necessities creates a lack of esteem for students, especially in high school. For many students clothing necessities are often determined according to what their fellow peers wear. If a student does not have the ability to purchase good clothes and

shoes they begin to feel deprived and focus less on academics and more on how to attain necessities. Those concerns lead to the next issue, work responsibilities.

9) Work responsibilities - Students who work are often unable to keep up academically. Most teenage students work (Coleman, 48). Of those that work a few hours after school, academics are not heavily affected. For those students that work many hours, academics are often sleep deprived and thus makes it harder for students to achieve. The reason why students work varies. "Some students must work to assist the family financially. Some work to earn money for college that would otherwise be a dream deferred. Many others work to acquire nonessentials such as cars, clothes, and electronic equipment. Regardless of the reason, when work tops the list of priorities, school performance often suffers" (Coleman, 48) for those students who have to work school becomes a greater challenge when more time and energy is put into earning money to pay for necessities for not only themselves but for other family members as well.

10) Organic causes - Coleman states, "there is an interesting phenomenon that occurs in children who in the early stages of life do not receive adequate human contact and stimulation in the form of touch, cuddling, or being spoken to. Research has shown that those seemingly innocuous scenes of parents holding, cuddling, playing with, rocking, and talking to infants are essential to the development of attention, language, memory, perception, kinesthetics, and, in general, human emotion" (50). Those students who are deprived of affection are more likely to be anti-social or have behavior challenges that interfere with constructive academic achievement. Therefore these

students are typically going to need additional attention in class from causing disruptions or simply existing in silence and neglect.

11) Affiliation with deviant subculture - Some students who are neglected by parents and their surrounding community resort to acquiring attention in a negative way. “At the extreme, students may gravitate toward deviant subcultures or gangs. The gang replaces the family in fulfilling their emotional needs...there is a positive correlation between academic failure and students who are actively involved in deviant peer subcultures” (Coleman, 51). Although many students do not stray as far as gang or heavy criminal activity for emotional support or attention, some do. Obviously if a student partakes in deviant activity their academic performance is impacted heavily. In fact most students who belong to gangs or commit serious crimes drop out because of an arrest or other circumstances.

12) A failure to master basic concepts - Students who do not feel they are ready to move on to other concepts feel left behind as they move up into the next grades. “Students often fail to achieve out of frustration borne of years of being passed along to the next grade level without having mastered the basic concepts of the core curriculum” (Coleman, 53). There have been many cases where students reach the twelfth grade and still do not know how to multiply and divide, read at a fourth grade level, or have a difficult time understanding basic elementary assignments.

13) Family values - According to Coleman “when parents feel education has failed to elevate their status, education loses its purposefulness, and this attitude can be passed along to children. Families in which few members have completed high school and who live in neighborhoods or communities where this is the norm are often devoid of

appropriate role models necessary to project a picture of a brighter future” (54). This issue may stand as a barrier between students and academic instructors who do not know how to reach or encourage students to do well or show that they have a chance to improve their life through academic achievement.

Standardized Testing

The public policy approach to improve academic achievement issues has been through standardized testing. Nationwide, school districts are required to implement standardized tests in order to improve public education and to measure how public school students perform. Standardized testing is intended to notify parents, teachers’ school administrators, and the government about how well students are doing so that students that test poorly can receive extra help in order to achieve the level expected nationally. Although standardized testing is meant to be helpful it has become a twisted bureaucratic procedure that makes public school education even more difficult to succeed. In his book, *Why National Standards and Tests?*, John F. Jennings explains:

there was no ‘truth in teaching or learning’ in many schools. Teachers and students could only guess, sometimes with limited guidance, what they were supposed to know to be deemed successful. The reason for this lack of connection between the test and the curriculum was that accountability had been moved to the state level but the decisions on what ought to be taught had been left at the local level. The politicians-governors and state legislators-had responded to public displeasure with the public schools by instituting new tests in an effort to get better results from the schools. But few policymakers had moved to define first what results were to be expected from these tests: the academic standards had not been openly debated, defined, and disseminated. The reasons for this ‘disconnect’ lies in our nation’s history. The U.S. Constitution embodies the idea that government should be limited in its powers and that the closer the government is to the people, the better it will function. In education, this has meant that although states have authority over the schools, the power to determine the content of education has usually been delegated to local school boards. And because there are 14,000 or so school districts in the country, there is great variation in the education being offered to students. (4)

With such dilemmas and confusing methods, states could not develop a strong enough curriculum or even expectation of their students that could be measured or put to any legitimate test. Thus the creation of a national standard stemmed from the need to establish a clear goal of academic achievement.

During the early 1990's President George H.W. Bush sought to establish a clear goal of academic achievement that could be expected from all of America's youth in public schools. In his efforts, President Bush planned to raise the standard of academic achievement. "The central elements in Bush's crusade would be national goals, national standards, and a national test to measure progress toward achieving those standards. These goals, standards, and tests were to be the first ever adopted for the United States... What brought about this change in perspective was an impatience with the school reforms of the 1980s" (Jennings, 9). After President Bush's initiative public schools nationally began to change and adapt to a new national standard. Among some of the national standards were strict guidelines to achieve goals such as 90% graduation rates from high school. States began to implement these guidelines in order to achieve on the new national standard. "In addition to mandating that students take more academic classes, states had expanded testing to determine whether to promote students, had lengthened school days and years, had raised teacher salaries, had toughened teacher certification and entry requirements, and had more closely monitored school performance, according to the Consortium for Policy Research in Education" (Jennings, 10). These requirements were a positive step toward improving academic achievement. However, they were short lived. Eventually students from low income families were tracked toward low academic achievement standards, teachers' salaries no longer increased as

inflation increased, teacher certification and entry requirements dwindled as the demand for more teachers increased, and school testing failed to take into consideration environmental and learning conditions of lower income students.

B. African American Achievement Conditions in Public Schools

Will NCLB improve the academic achievement condition of African American students in urban schools? To what degree will the act improve academic achievement? This chapter aims to analyze African American students' academic achievement in public schools. The ideal to providing free national public education for children was deeply rooted in the vision of the United States by its founding fathers. "Jefferson proposed universal education to promote 'the selection of the youths of genius from among the classes of the poor,' and declared 'We hope to avail the State of those talents which nature has sown so liberally among the poor as the rich, but which perish without use, if not sought for and cultivated'" (Kahlenberg, 13). Currently despite the sentiments of Jefferson, many poor and minority children are not given an equal opportunity to explore their talents on the same level as others.

African American academic achievement conditions have evolved in a more positive direction since desegregation was mandated under *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Nevertheless, today, the African American academic achievement gap is a subject of great concern and debate. So what causes African Americans to suffer from an academic achievement gap in America's public school system? Social class status, racial segregation, teacher expectations, cultural differences and conflicts, language differences, and community forces are a few factors that dramatically impact academic achievement levels among African American students. Some analysts believe the achievement gap is

a result of a feeling of hopelessness caused by a lack of evidence that an education can and will “inform, or alter one’s self-perception or one’s status as a member of an oppressed group...” (Perry, 11). Some analysts link the “gap” to cultural differences between African Americans and the dominant group, whites, who primarily operate as well as control academic policies and institutions. Others make the argument that academic achievement is very important in African American culture and “doing well in school, and pursuing learning...is always accomplished in the face of considerable constraints, whether the impoverished condition of the school, the absence of a local high school, laws that made it a crime to teach slaves to read and write, or a teacher’s or school’s ideology of African-American intellectual inferiority” (Perry, 49). Instead the argument is that “the terms of the group’s incorporation into the host society and the group’s social position in that society predict and explain school performance,” (Perry, 59) essentially education is geared towards the needs of white students and therefore prevents African American ‘social mobility’. The fact that education is deemed to be extremely important and academic achievement tends to be particularly low among African Americans is a cause for great concern.

According to Rosa A. Smith, author of *Saving Black Boys*, black boys find themselves in even more of a critical academic place. “Among the many children in America who are at risk and likely to lack success in school-most often because they lack authentic educational opportunities-the African American male student stands alone in terms of the accumulation of negative factors affecting his future. The evidence is startling, and the sum of all these negative factors alarming” (Smith, 49). Various educators, parents, politicians, and others carry different perspectives on the issue of

academic achievement and the gap between African Americans and whites, as well as how it should be addressed.

National statistical data collected by Smith reveals many discrepancies between African American boys and academic achievement.

Special Education: Black boys in 2000-2001 made up 8.6 percent of national public-school enrollments. They constituted 20 percent of those classified as mentally retarded, 21 percent of those classified as emotionally disturbed, 12 percent of those with a specific learning disability and 15 percent of those placed in special education. Twice as many black boys are in special education as black girls, a fact that rules out heredity and home environment as primary causes and highlights school factors.

Expulsions and Suspensions: Despite representing only 8.6 percent of public-school enrollments, black boys comprise 22 percent of those expelled from school and 23 percent of those suspended.

Dropouts: While between 25 percent and 30 percent of America's teenagers, including recent immigrants, fail to graduate from high school with a regular high-school diploma; the dropout rate for African American males in many metropolitan areas is 50 percent.

Graduation Rates: Nationally, 50 percent of black males (as compared with 61 percent of black females, 80 percent of white males and 86 percent of white females) receive diplomas with their high-school cohort. In some urban districts, 30 percent of black males are in special-education classes, and of the remaining 70 percent, only half or fewer receive diplomas.

Juvenile Incarceration Rates: For whites under 18, 105 out of every 100,000 are incarcerated; for black youths the rate is three times as high, 350 per 100,000. More black males receive the GED in prison than graduate from college.

Unemployment: According to the 2000 census, the percentage of black youths 16 to 19 neither employed nor in school was 24.7 percent, nearly twice the national average for this age group and six times the national unemployment rate (Smith, 50).

NCLB requires all students, including African American males, to undergo a series of tests that are implemented by states. This is the most heavily monitored requirement because it can greatly impact students positively or negatively. African

American males can benefit from testing because they will have the opportunity to receive additional support and services to help them achieve successfully. On the other hand, if the tests are used in any other means other than for progress, African American males will suffer from the inaccurate results. Although NCLB can be helpful it should consider the conditions behind Rosa Smith's statistics and Geraldine Coleman's points, such as socio-economic status, transience, home responsibilities, fear of success, lack of interest and parental support, and work responsibilities, among others. If these factors are not incorporated into policy standardized testing becomes another discriminatory measure that disadvantages low income and minority students.

Chapter 4: Practical Analysis [NCLB at Work]

A. NCLB

Many Americans know the No Child Left Behind Act to be an initiative of 2001 proposed by President George W. Bush to improve the quality of public education and academic achievement. Actually NCLB began about ten years earlier with President George H.W. Bush. In fact the roots of NCLB can be located within the first President Bush's 1991 education plan. According to John F. Jennings,

on April 18, 1991, President Bush...announced his new education plan at the White House. He stated his belief that the time had come to establish world-class standards for what children should know and be able to do in five core subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and geography. A system of voluntary examinations would also be developed for all fourth-, eighth-, and 12th-grade students in these five core subjects. The issue of report cards showing the academic performance of all schools, school districts, and states would be encouraged...These elements of national standards and examinations were the fundamental building blocks for the Bush-Alexander plan to 'construct an entirely new and radically different education system over time' (19).

The plan was called the America 2000 program and was, also supported and implemented by the Clinton administration. It was designed to bring all children up to an acceptable academic achievement level by the year 2000. John Jennings states that the National Council of Education Standards and Testing felt "national standards were necessary, according to the council, to ensure educational opportunity for all Americans, especially those not now doing well in school because they are held in low expectations. Second, standards were needed to enhance the civic culture, especially because the population was growing increasingly diverse. And third, raising standards would enhance America's economic competitiveness through improving the quality of human capital" (23). From the 1980s through the 1990s it was clear, to both Bush and Clinton, that the United States

public school education needed to be reformed to improve academic achievement but the question had become how, and what was the most effective way to do so.

The No Child Left Behind Act (2001), proposed by President George W. Bush, sought to solve the issues of academic achievement in the public school system. As the act was created and implemented NCLB became the answer to Congress for the most effective way to approach academic achievement issues. Although NCLB was passed and began to be implemented nationwide, many people began to debate how the Act affects the students, teachers, and schools in the U.S. Some oppose the Act mainly because they feel it does not meet the needs of the students, teachers, and schools. Others support the Act because they feel that teachers and schools should be held accountable for their students' academic achievement as well as the need for a standard that measures and insures achievement.

Component #1: Closing the Achievement Gap

The first component, closing the achievement gap, is meant to create high standards and accountability for students. Although these efforts and attempts have positive aims, the actual implementation of the act has not been well implemented to account for the many issues in today's public schools, such as financial resources.

Authors, Jay Mathews and Rosalind Helderman, of the article *Educators Decry Law's Intrusion, Not Its Cost* both express that it is "half-right...[that] the federal No Child Left Behind law is intrusive and expensive...educators said that their objection to the law is over being told how to determine whether their student, and their schools, are performing well, and that they are less concerned about the expenses involved--mainly the costs of the intricate record-keeping the law requires for tracking the test scores of several ethnic

and economic groups of students” (1). NCLB has pushed the burden of financing its required testing on states, which has created a great strain on state budgets that are already currently undergoing fiscal crises.

Another significant problematic issue with NCLB is that it does not account for students with severe disabilities and immigrant backgrounds.

The most damaging part of the federal No Child Left Behind law – [is] the annual testing of nearly all disabled and limited English-speaking students...The law lets schools test limited English speakers in their native language for up to three years, [but as the Washington D.C. superintendent stated] that approach is too expensive because dozens of different languages are spoken by their students. In addition, many recent immigrant students are not literate in their native tongues. (Mathews, 1).

Standardized testing can be a great tool to measure academic achievement and improve academic achievement; however, if the test does not consider all of the challenges students may have, the test becomes more damaging than helpful to academic achievement. Some African American students, especially those from low-income areas, often have learning disabilities that go un-noticed and un-treated. Besides money, there is also a lack of services and professional teachers to support mentally disadvantaged students. The issue with NCLB is that part of its foundation is built upon standardized testing to measure schools need for improvement. “The No Child Left Behind law sticks a ‘needs improvement’ label not only on schools whose whole student bodies fail to reach annual improvement targets but also on schools that have even a single subgroup of students-such as disabled or LEP-that fails to reach its target” (Mathews, 1). Establishing the fact that a school needs to improve is important, and can be helpful. Signaling struggling schools and students that need more attention is very beneficial to the U.S.

education system if funding and other resources are then provided to help improve academic achievement levels.

Component #2: Improving Literacy by Putting Reading First

The second component of NCLB is aimed at improving literacy through reading, focusing on early childhood instruction. This component is a positive step towards addressing the academic achievement challenges students face by working with students at earlier stages of their fundamental growth. In her article *The Best Investment We can Make* Author Ayelish McGarvey

explains that although the federal Head Start program has done an admirable job helping at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds, child development experts now universally agree that learning really begins at birth, which means that the best time to begin helping the disadvantaged children succeed academically is before they enter school. Moreover, she criticizes President Bush's marquee program, No Child Left Behind Act, stressing that while the programs such as Early Reading First program under such law sets its sights on the hard skills of literacy and focus on easily quantifiable outcomes; the policy completely neglects disadvantage preschool children's emotional and developmental needs (42).

In this context, NCLB's methods to measure academic achievement once again can be seen as having gaps that can be harmful instead of helpful to students.

Component #3: Expanding Flexibility and Reducing Bureaucracy

The third component of NCLB emphasizes flexibility and expanding freedom from bureaucracy. This component is devised to reduce onerous federal and state paperwork and unnecessary middle layers of bureaucracy that tie up funds and limit access to resources. Margaret Goertz and Mark Duffy offer an interesting argument that is critical to this issue. Goertz and Duffy first believe that "most states must expand the size and scope of their assessment programs... this expansion has major cost and capacity consequences for states. Although the federal government has promised aid to cover the

expense of developing these assessments, states must absorb the additional cost of administering and scoring the tests” (8). Again a lack of enough financial support from NCLB has created a great deal of financial pressure on states.

Second, the debate over the third component of NCLB is whether or not one test can really measure academic achievement. Although testing students is better than doing nothing, it is important to make sure the test is fair and thoroughly analyzed to encompass all areas of achievement (Goertz and Duffy). The third component addresses how states will be able to balance out results when rewarded or penalized. “While states will face many technical and political problems in responding to the stronger and more prescriptive accountability provisions of the NCLB Act, the law does take steps to bring student and adult accountability into greater balance” (Goertz and Duffy, 9). Finally, Goertz and Duffy believe that “the capacity of the system to support change in practice” (9) will be very challenging for teachers and schools to adapt to. Teachers and schools will be challenged to keep up with the rigor of academic achievement while also trying to stay on top of NCLB standardized testing requirements. These issues are still found to be very difficult for many states to contend with, especially while most states are undergoing their own significant budget crises.

Component #4: Rewarding Success and Sanctioning Failure

The fourth component, rewards and penalties, creates an enormous strain on states that is both positive and negative. The idea to reward states that are successful and penalize states that are unsuccessful can be an important approach. States should be held accountable for their education systems. On the other hand, how states are rewarded and penalized is a difficult task that should be carefully developed. “The most frequent

complaint is the administration's failure to honor its funding commitments...the under funding complaints are accompanied by studies indicating that the states' costs of meeting NCLB requirements are running far beyond the money that the federal government is providing" (Schrag, 39). Denying states financial support when they fail to meet requirements is one thing but on the other hand the inability to reward states that are successful contradicts the purpose of the reward--penalty program. Until the program is perfected to do what it was intended to do it cannot be properly analyzed.

Component #5: Promoting Informed Parental Choice

Component five addresses offering parents more options for their children's education. This is also another important approach if it would actually work in a way that actually helps parents provide their students an opportunity to achieve at higher levels. There is little conclusive evidence as to whether vouchers and charter school improve academic achievement. Yet, there is much significant uncertainty as to what will happen when students who are excelling are moved to better schools and those who are not are left behind. In addition there is great significant uncertainty as to how much the academic achievement of a student who is performing below the national set level will improve if moved to a better school (Yglesias). If parental choice is really going to work to help improve academic achievement it is important that it is done on a case-by-case situation that will really help the children who are in the program.

Component #6: Improving Teacher Quality

Improving teacher quality is an important goal that is essential to improving student achievement. The major challenge to improving teacher quality is funding. If teachers are expected to improve, then the cost to provide resources for improving

teacher quality will go up because of training and salary expectations that will make training worthwhile. Creating incentives is challenging when teachers already have to contend with stressful expectations and job requirements while receiving low wages and short hours. As Richard Rothstein has noted, “the new law’s incentives are distorting teaching as well. Rational teachers in many states have begun to focus most of their attention on those students who are just below the proficiency point, because only their improvement is rewarded in the accountability system... The most surefire way to show annual progress and avoid sanctions is to aim for a small improvement, which is all that’s necessary, from the nearly proficient group” (46). Some teachers do need to improve and receive more qualified training, but at what price is NCLB willing to provide sufficiently for these enhancements. If teachers are going to have higher expectations they should also be well compensated for their efforts.

Component #7: Making Schools Safer for the 21st Century

This portion of NCLB has been the least discussed and thought about. Many educators and others have not expressed much concern about the provisions NCLB plans to create to make schools safer. It is not clear whether everyone is concerned with the more problematic laws or is simply satisfied with the plan. The only serious issue is the same for the school safety component, as with all others: namely funding. Until the funding matter is resolved, one way or the other, the challenges of NCLB will continue to hurt academic achievement even more so than support it.

B. How NCLB Effects African American Achievement

“The typical African American student scores below 75 percent of white students in standardized tests” (Bali & Alvarez, 486). Knowing that the statistics on the

achievement issues of African Americans is as poor as it is, it is important to understand why low academic achievement continues to digress as new policies and initiatives are passed in an effort to improve such issues. NCLB will be analyzed in regards to positive and negative possible impacts on African American students. The analysis of the No Child Left Behind Act is divided by each component of the Act.

Component #1: Closing the Achievement Gap

Accountability and high standards is what the Department of Education believes is necessary to improve academic achievement. Accountability means to reward and penalize public school systems that are or are not doing their job, based on a national standard. This policy can have a positive impact on African American students only if the penalized public schools do not directly or indirectly penalize their students. If this process does not penalize students it can be an available method to improve schools for all students. However, failed or penalized schools should also be given extra support to change the underlying factors that have caused it to be penalized in the first place. As Geraldine Coleman argued in relation to the importance of socio-economic status, if schools are penalized and students are not compensated for their socio-economic status and parental support, those students attending penalized schools will in fact be left behind.

Annual academic assessments - represents the focus on improving reading and math achievement. The idea of testing students regularly to identify their achievement level is a valuable method to find out how well students are doing. Standardized testing can reflect areas and subjects that students may need help. Standardized testing can also aid in determining how well students are learning in the classroom. Yet, standardized tests do not take into consideration, as part of their evaluation process, such key factors as

transience, attendance, home responsibility and circumstances, fear of success, a lack of interest and parental support, preoccupation with lack of necessities, work responsibilities, organic causes, affiliation with deviant subculture, a failure to master basic concepts, and family values. Many African American students in urban public schools often suffer from these exterior conditions. In spite of this, as the Principal of Washington D.C.'s Thurgood Marshall Academy (TMA) Douglas Tyson pointed out, "testing should be matched with what is being taught." If standardized tests do not cover what students have been taught, it is an unfair method to use for any purpose. Another possible problem with standardized testing is if it takes away from the lesson plan or curriculum designed to educate students appropriately. Beth Bulgeron, TMA's NCLB Compliance Officer, feels standardized testing, as a diagnostic tool is a positive effort towards improving academic achievement issues only if the test is addressed. However, Bulgeron expressed that Standardized testing is "not a good way to teach material." In any case, standardized testing can be a positive approach if it effectively evaluates student achievement.

Component #2: Improving Literacy by Putting Reading First

Focus on Reading in Early Grades is an excellent approach to improving academic achievement of African American students. Programs such as Head Start have proven to be very effective tools in aiding academic success of students. In fact, if more attention were focused on aiding African American students earlier on, there would be less of an academic achievement gap and a higher percentage in test scores. The new Reading First initiative appears to be a great program to improve African American student academic achievement.

Component #3: Expanding Flexibility and Reducing Bureaucracy

Increased funds to schools for technology, reduction in bureaucracy, and Title I flexibility are all excellent approaches to improving academic achievement. African Americans as well as all other students can benefit from these efforts. Schools will be given better opportunities to educate their students as they feel needed. The greatest dilemma to this effort is the lack of funding that states are actually receiving from NCLB. Many states are discovering that they have to pay a higher percentage of the costs to stay within the constraints of the act. Schools that are able to have access to more services and resources to address their needs without a great deal of bureaucratic paper work will definitely benefit from NCLB. When services are needed to support programs for students in need of greater attention schools now will have the flexibility to make changes accordingly.

Component #4: Rewarding Success and Sanctioning Failure

Rewarding schools that close the achievement gaps, holding states accountable for achievements and establishing consequences for schools that fail to comply with the national standard is an excellent approach to academic improvement. Again, it becomes a matter of funding. Schools that should be rewarded and schools that need support are both unable to operate under NCLB because of a lack of available funding. Unfortunately there is a direct need for financial support in NCLB. Without funding support services will not be provided. Academic achievement involves the thirteen conditions Coleman identified, but without money and services supporting academic improvement while addressing those factors, the goal to reach a standard of achievement by the year 2012 will not be accomplished. If there is no money to support the act, it will

no longer be effective in improving academic achievement nationally for African American students and others.

Component #5: Promoting Informed Parental Choice

Offering school reports to parents, charter school options and other school choices such as vouchers can motivate public school institutions to improve their curricula to the needs of their constituents. Tommy Wells, an elected Washington D.C. School Board member, believes that school choice is a very effective means to challenge public schools to meet the conditions for achievement. On the other hand Wells “believes [in] standardized testing so that we know where we are but it is pointless to have a voucher system.” Pro choice can be another positive effect on academic achievement among African American students, but it might be challenging for African American parents to uproot their children to other schools away from their homes in search of better academic opportunities. Also, as Coleman suggests, the issues with transience, attendance, etc... must be accounted for. Parents should have choices, except the choice should be made within and involving the public school their children attend. Those children who have a lack of parental support are also neglected by this component of the act. If a parent is unable or unwilling to place their child in a successful school then the student is going to continue to continue to not achieve academically. Public schools should be held accountable and parents should have choice, but they should be accountable and have choice to change the structure of the public school. Instead of fleeing to other schools in search of a better academic curriculum, the struggling and problematic schools must be invested in.

Component #6: Improving Teacher Quality

Qualified teachers, funding that works, and a strengthened academic curriculum are very important and possibly positive ways to improve academic achievement. But what is a qualified teacher? Many teachers can be required to be highly trained, skilled and educated but is NCLB going to compensate these teachers for their efforts and expenses in acquiring these qualifications? The answer currently is no, African American students can definitely benefit from high quality, qualified teachers, but again NCLB does not provide the monetary incentive. There also needs to be qualified counselors on each public school's campus to address issues pertaining to academic achievement such as attendance, home responsibility and circumstances, a lack of interest of fear of success, organic causes and affiliation with deviant subcultures. Beth Bulgeron expressed that requiring qualified teachers is unfair because different areas demand different things from teachers such as teaching more than one subject. To provide funding is the only way to create programs that work and strengthen academic curriculum needs. Funding and support from parents, teachers, communities, and the nation is also vital.

Component #7: Making Schools Safer for the 21st Century

Teacher protection, promoting school safety, rescuing students from unsafe schools, and supporting character education are outstanding goals and a very positive effort that will positively affect many African American students who attend congested urban schools that are in high violent areas. "Data on homicides and suicides at school show there were 32 school-associated violent deaths in the United States between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000, including 24 homicides, 16 of which involved school-aged children" (NCES). The only challenge to these efforts is, once more, funding. Also, to

transfer students from unsafe schools to alternatives can create a problem as well. Those students left behind in violent schools then become violently concentrated and even more dangerous. Instead, there needs to be supportive services that attend to the needs of these problematic students. As Coleman acknowledges, many academic achievement issues pertain to familial and socio-economic conditions. The real effort should be to gain control of the dangerous and violent environmental conditions and students.

Summary

Over all, African American students can achieve academically through the theories NCLB sets forth. The real issue and challenge is whether NCLB can follow its own goals and provide the benefits it was established to provide. There are specific components that can be changed about NCLB to help rather than hurt African American academic achievement. These could include for example, improving or corrected standardized tests to reflect what has been taught within the different public school curriculums.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

A. Suggestion on Breaking the Cycle of Internal Colonization

How do we break the cycle of internal colonization and meet the needs of African American students in urban public schools? Breaking the cycle of internal colonization is difficult. Many African Americans who have successfully achieved upper class status often perpetuate internal colonization and neglect the needs of lower class African Americans. This elite population tends to ignore socio-economic injustices, although they are attentive to racial discrimination issues. Bell Hooks eloquently acknowledges this tendency explicitly when she asserts:

significantly, even though a growing majority of privileged-class black folks condemn and betray the black poor and underclass, they avoid critique and confrontation themselves by not focusing on their class power. All black people know that no matter your class you will suffer wounds inflicted by racism, however relative. Fewer black people know intimately the concrete everyday ways class power and privilege mediate this pain, allowing some black folks to live luxuriously despite racism. Sadly, to escape this pain or to shield themselves from the genocide that is assaulting black masses, they surrender all transformative forms of racial solidarity in anti-racist struggle to protect their status and public image by pretending that they know best and are best positioned to protect the collective public good of all black people irrespective of class. (98)

It is important to challenge elite African American individuals who continue to accept mainstream socio-economic arguments and ideologies. Adapting to an “existing white supremacist capitalist patriarchy” (Hooks, 99) is not success and must not be viewed as such. It is vital that African American elites part with the status quo and use their influence to improve socio-economic conditions of the lower class populations through equitable opportunity promotion and by addressing the different components of internal colonization.

When it comes to American public education we are failing the majority of our children. Ignoring cultural aspects of African American student development continues to be responsible for academic achievement failures. No Child Left Behind does not take into account cultural, socio-economic, and environmental conditioning that prevents academic success. If NCLB does not counteract these social and cultural conditions it will become another contemporary policy that tracks students into lower socio-economic status. “The very structure of public education and the philosophies that have guided its development and implementation have neglected to recognize and incorporate salient features of black culture and the black experience in America” (Reed, 68). NCLB attempts to empower parents with an ability to make a choice as to which schools their children attend. This empowerment is detrimental for the parents who truly need empowerment. This policy adjustment does not support parents of lower socio-economic status who work many jobs and are in no financial position to send their children to schools farther away from their neighborhood.

NCLB attempts to empower teachers through the reduction of bureaucracy, increased benefits for excellent qualification and increased student achievement on standardized tests. Unfortunately these restrictions have become more of a restraint to teachers. Teachers are not empowered at all; in fact they are held to sometimes impossible demands and are often blamed for unsuccessful test scores. This policy change gears both the teacher and student toward test based learning. It does not explore the alternative needs of individual students (particularly where internal colonization factors come into play). In order to empower parents, teachers, administrators, and students, NCLB must collaborate, cooperate and build relationships of communal

responsibility. “Involving parents in planning and implementation helps make the program culturally sensitive and parents and staff more accountable” (Reed, 69). When society is held responsible for public education beyond individual accountability but towards community accountability, public education would shift toward a greater demand for excellence with the support to ensure excellence. Empowering African American students through education to break the barriers established through internal colonial modes of capitalistic operations and educating them to think critically about the well being of all and the harms of capitalistic greed can break the cycle of exploitation.

B. Efforts and Ideas Toward NCLB Reform

After discussing, analyzing and criticizing major issues regarding African American Achievement and the No Child Left Behind Act, it is necessary to also discuss possible solutions to the gaps that have been identified. There is not any single solution that can fix all conditions that inhibit African American student success. However, there are some interventions that may improve matters of academic achievement. Author Theresa Perry’s theory for improving African American achievement is through a bottom up, not a top down, approach. She believes that:

the conversation about Black education, when it does occur, and when the controlling categories are ‘urban’ or ‘poor,’ usually centers on grade-level performance rather than high academic achievement. The dominant group tends to lead this conversation with African Americans participating at the margins or on the terms of the prevailing discourse. Thus it is no surprise that schools are not organized as intentional, counter hegemonic communities and that there is an absence of spaces or programs in predominantly white or multiracial institutions that are organized to forge the identities of African-American students as achievers, literate, and a people with a rich intellectual tradition. In the post-Civil Rights era, the school is usually conceptualized singularly as an educational institution, failing to understand that for school to be a powerful institution for

African Americans, it must also function as a cultural, social, and political institution (Perry, 99).

The bottom up approach Perry suggests is a good way to approach any situation. To involve African American students, parents, and communities in the education policy changes in order to begin creating and conducting positive changes that work is the only way academic achievement can really be achieved among African American students.

I would contend in light of Perry's arguments, that the task of achievement for African-Americans in the post-Civil Rights era is more complicated, as Perry puts it, for the following reasons:

- Schools or spaces in schools are not intentionally organized to forge identities of African American students as achievers.
- Schools provide few spaces that are intentionally designed to buffer African-American students from the day-to-day experience of racism in the school, and from the explicit and subtle impact of the ideology of Black intellectual inferiority.
- Schools are not likely to have a narrative that is counter to the 'narrative of openness and opportunity,' one that talks about Black achievement in the face of constraints and limits.
- Schools make few attempts to systematically organize occasions to create desire, to inspire hope, to develop and sustain effort optimism, or to intentionally create multiple contexts that socialize students to the behaviors that are necessary for them to be achievers.
- There is a conspiracy of silence about how racism in and out of school blunts effort optimism.
- African-American parents, as the first generation of African-Americans to experience racism and its impact on achievement in an allegedly 'open and integrated' society, might possibly not have figured out how to develop institutional formations and pass on psychological coping strategies to their children that respond to this new context (Perry, 99).

The solutions for improving African American academic achievement are rooted in the activities of social groups, such as families, friends and communities. Inactive

parental and communal involvement in the public school system often undermines positive efforts toward quality schools. Many middle and upper class families and communities complain and then organize to improve their local public schools when they feel their children are not receiving an adequate education. African American communities of “lower class” status must join together and organize to improve academic achievement levels for their children. “The most important thing schools, families, and communities can do is to figure out how to develop among African-American children and youth *identities of achievement*. And social identities are constructed in groups. Although there are obviously things that parents can do to help their children develop identities of achievement, the most powerful location for this work in the context of peer group” (Perry, 100). This method has worked against academic achievement, in such cases that Geraldine Coleman described as affiliation with deviant subculture, fear of success, home responsibility and circumstances, family values, lack of parental support, organic causes, and preoccupation with a lack of necessities. These social groups can nevertheless be used to promote achievement.

The question now becomes how? According to Perry, “community-based programs, churches, and schools must figure out how to deliberately pass on to African-American youth the African-American philosophy of schooling...Reenergizing and passing on to the next generation of African-American children the African-American philosophy of education is essential ” (101). The previous examples seem positive; however, do Perry’s solutions promote segregation and isolation of African American students from others? Can focusing on African Americans in these ways create a separation between African Americans and other ethnic or cultural groups?

Perry's solutions do not promote neither segregation nor isolation of African American students from others because of the deep-rooted conditions African American students endure that requires a secure self and cultural intellectual identity.

In order for African-American children to achieve in school, they have to be able to negotiate three distinct social identities: their identity as members of a caste-like group, their identity as members of mainstream society, and their identity as members of a cultural group in opposition to which whiteness historically and contemporarily continues to be defined...African-American youth have to be capable of dealing with the dilemmas that emerge from the socially constructed contradictory nature of these identities, as well as those inherent in the identities themselves (Perry, 105).

It is important for the No Child Left Behind Act to adopt and adapt some of its requirements and expectations toward the specific needs of African Americans as well as other groups. The idea of a national standard is positive but it needs to be taken a step further to encompass specific conditions, such as those that Coleman point out, that effect academic achievement both culturally and socially.

The No Child Left Behind Act is in a crucial position and has an important role to play in the future of the United States public school education system. African Americans children in the public school system have to be given the opportunity to achieve equally to all other groups. "Under the new 'No Child Left Behind' Act...teachers' and administrators' rewards and sanctions now are tied to the annual progress of schools toward eliminating the achievement gap by 2014. Before NCLB, teachers and other education professionals in some states could be rewarded for general progress...now, education professionals must ensure that all students succeed" (McMillian, 25). NCLB must go beyond national standards and work towards improving academic achievement through the root causes behind the failure of academic achievement.

As author Rosa A. Smith introduced the African American male academic achievement crisis, author Monique McMillian introduces possible solutions to solve this matter. McMillian believes that “educational professionals cannot frame African American achievement within the context of the racial gap. Contrary to NCLB, this racial-gap framework disengages and suppresses African American achievement by reinforcing low expectations” (27). Addressing the African American achievement gap based on race is very damaging for both African American students and whites to progressively overcome and move beyond racial stigmas. “Instead of emphasizing an achievement gap, educational professions must focus more on the treatment gap...if teachers and administrators start framing these achievement patterns as a treatment gap, it might cause them to focus on African American schooling experiences and would remove the stigma from African American students” (McMillian, 28). The No Child Left Behind Act is an excellent start to discussing and addressing the real conditions involving the United States public education system. Nevertheless, the nation must not stop at continuous criticism of the act, instead we need to move progressively forward to figure out and implement positive solutions to the issues involving academic achievement, for not only African Americans but also all students who are not achieving. Therefore it is important for society to address the root causes of poor academic achievement and assume responsibility for the community schools’ in which we live in and around. Only we as a society can really make the necessary changes to improve the public education system.

C. Recommendations

The approaches needed to facilitate deconstructing internal colonization practices would require a series of comprehensive adjustments to NCLB. Such adjustments would include funding and resource allotments, community support and inclusion, as well as recognition of internal colonization factors. Although I have conducted theoretical research on the topic of internal colonization and the No Child Left Behind Act, I am not admit that I am not an expert on education policy reform and therefore offer an opinion based on the confinement of my research and experience.

Closing the Achievement Gap

It is important to balance high standards and accountability with fair and equal allocation of responsibility. The education of American children must be the responsibility and priority of American society, not just teachers, administrators, and policy makers. It is vital that school or student failure be addressed by the community in which that student and school are located. Standardized testing must incorporate the environment and conditions of each student. It should be the responsibility of teachers to allocate exams according to the curricula and student ability for example, language barriers, learning disabilities and cultural differences should be accommodated and included in all curricula and standardized testing measures. Standardized testing should only be one form of measuring academic achievement levels. Student achievement should be measured according to other abilities outside of reading, math and science. It is extremely important that teachers receive the support and training to do their jobs properly. It is necessary for teachers to have freedom to teach without being subject to exclusive reliance on standardized testing preparation. In order to break the hold that internal colonization practices have on disadvantaged students, the education system

must be cognizant of the achievement differences among various cultures, races, and ethnic groups as part of any measurement of success. Success needs to include such differences and teach students using their cultural and environmental experiences that could then be incorporated into a national curriculum. Finally African American students should have access to counseling guidance resources as they develop academically. For example, Charles E. Flowers proposes using a, “student development facilitator” (Appendix B), as one mechanism to instill positive attitudes toward academic achievement.

Improving Literacy by Putting Reading First

Improving literacy by putting reading first is essential to the development of students. However, such programs as Early Reading First should not neglect other early childhood education needs. Such programming must be inclusive of enriching children’s lives through the arts, creativity, cultural tolerance and responsibility. In addition to inclusive programming, funding needs to be allocated to support the necessary resource demands of such programs as Head Start, which has proven successful yet remains subject to budget cuts during fiscal crisis. Programs such as Upward Bound must be supported to enrich students’ lives and create an avenue of academic achievement excellence. (See Appendix C)

NCLB

Expanding Flexibility and Reducing Bureaucracy

Preventing states from having the bulk of the burden of unnecessary bureaucratic processes must encompass additional resources for administering and scoring standardized tests. Eliminating one level of bureaucracy and creating another is not

eliminating unnecessary steps but simply shifting it. It is important that funding is allocated to account for these constraints in order to create flexibility and reduce bureaucracy.

Rewarding Success and Sanctioning Failure

Rewarding successful academic achievement levels and sanctioning unsuccessful academic achievement levels can represent a form of internal colonization that disadvantages both schools and students. It is important to recognize a low achieving school; however, the method to improve low levels should involve direct evaluation of the problems associated with such low achievement conditions and addressing them school by school, class by class, and student by student. To reward successful achieving schools can represent a type of bribery. To give more support to an already achieving school can also waste funds and resources. It also creates an atmosphere for parents and communities to run away from their responsibility to failing schools by encouraging them to place their children in less problematic schools instead of working to improve the conditions of the failing school. Successful schools should be recognized for doing well but should not be overcompensated over other more needing schools.

Promoting Informed Parental Choice

Informing parents of the conditions and academic achievement levels their children are subjected to is important. On the other hand, giving parents the choice to move their children to other schools is a negative option. Typically low- income families are going to be less likely than their wealthier counterparts to send their children to better schools that are not located in the neighborhood or community in which they live. Such informed choice must create parental and community action towards improving the

school that is deemed failing. Teachers, administrators and parents must be encouraged to work together to improve the quality of education within the school's community.

Improving Teacher Quality

Teachers need to be empowered to creatively and strategically instill good academic practices. In order for this to work teachers must be fairly compensated for their work. Many classrooms and teachers lack resources to provide a healthy learning environment for students. Teachers should be well trained to teach different cultures, ethnicities, and racial groups. Teachers should be required to attend training seminars or classes that encourage positive counseling methods to enrich the lives of their student populations. Rather, lower class room size to create more individualized teaching structures or collaborating with other staff and or teachers' support systems must be established. Teachers must be recognized for their hard work and valued by society for doing well.

Making Schools Safer for the 21st Century

The reasons underlying unsafe schools usually connect to the conditions of its surrounding community and the struggles of that community. To increase school safety, community safety must be increased. It is necessary for schools to become a beacon of community partnership and leadership. Schools should be used to bring individuals of a community together to discuss not only the well being of students but the well being of the community.

Appendix

Table of References

Articles:

- 1) Anonymous. "What do school boards need from NCLB?" The Education Digest vol. 69 issue 3 (Nov. 2003): 31.
- 2) Bali, Valentina A., and Michael R. Alvarez. "Schools and Educational Outcomes" Social Science Quarterly vol. 84 issue 3 (Sept. 2003): 485+.
- 3) Borosage, Robert L. "A National Task" The American Prospect vol. 15 issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 35+.
- 4) Franke-Ruta, Garance. "Aiming High" The American Prospect vol. 15, issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 54+.
- 5) Goertz, Margaret, Mark Duffy. "Mapping the Landscape of High-Stakes Testing and Accountability Programs" Theory Into Practice 42.1 (2003): 4-11.
- 6) Haberman, Martin. "The Pedagogy of Poverty versus Good Teaching" Phi Delta Kappan vol. 73 (1991).
- 7) Hochschild, Jennifer. "Public schools and the American Dream" Dissent fall 2001.
- 8) Kohn, Alfie. "Only for my Kid: how privileged parents undermine school reform" Phi Delta Kappan April 1998.
- 9) Lara-Cinisomo, Sandraluz, Anne R. Pebley, Mary E. Vaiana, Elizabeth Maggio, Mark Berends, and Samuel R. Lucas. "A Matter of Class" Rand Review Fall 2004.

- 9) McGarvey, Ayelish. "The Best Investment We Can Make" The American Prospect vol. 15 issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 42+.
- 10) McMillian, Monique. "Is No Child Left Behind 'Wise Schooling' for African American Male Students?" The High School Journal vol. 87 issue 2 (2003-2004): 25-33.
- 11) McMillon, Gwendolyn T. and Patricia A. Edwards. "Why does Joshua Hate School...but love Sunday School?" Language Arts Nov (2000).
- 12) Nocera, Joseph. "How the Middle Class has helped ruin the Public Schools." The Washington Monthly, Sept/Oct. (1990).
- 13) Noguera, Pedro A. "Confronting the urban in urban school reform" The Urban Review vol. 28 Nov. 1, 1996.
- 14) Rothstein, Richard. "Testing Our Patience" The American Prospect vol. 15 issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 45+.
- 15) Schrag, Peter. "Bush's Education Fraud" The American Prospect vol. 15 issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 38+
- 16) Smith, Rosa A. "Saving Black Boys" The American Prospect vol. 15 issue 2 (Feb. 2004): 49+.
- 17) Sunderman, Gail L., Christopher A. Tracey, Jimmy Kim and Gary Orfield. "Listening to Teachers" The Civil Rights Project (September 2004).

Books:

- 1) Anyon, Jean. Social class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1997.

- 2) Appleton, Nicholas. Cultural Pluralism in Education. New York: Longman, 1983.
- 3) Artz, Lee, Bren Ortega Murphy. Cultural Hegemony in the United States. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2000.
- 4) Banner-Haley, Charles Pete T. The Fruits of Integration. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994.
- 5) Berliner, David C., and Bruce J. Biddle, The Manufactured Crisis. Perseus, 1996.
- 6) Blauner, Robert. Black Ghetto as Colony.
- 7) Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. Schooling in Capitalist America. New York: Basic Books, c.1976.
- 8) Cesaire, Aime. Discourse on Colonialism. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000.
- 9) Coleman, Geraldine. Issues in Education. Westport, Connecticut: Bergin & Garvey, 2001.
- 10) Cruse, Harold. The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual. New York, Morrow, 1967.
- 11) Delpit, Lisa. Other People's Children. New York, The New Press, 1995.
- 12) Delpit, Lisa. The Skin that we Speak. New York: New Press, 2002.
- 13) Dirks, Nicholas B. Colonialism and Culture. University of Michigan Press, 1992.
- 14) Domhoff, G. William. The Powerst That Be. New York: Random House, 1978.

- 15) Exoo, Calvin F. Democracy Upside Down. New York: Praeger, 1987.
- 15) Ferguson, Ann Arnett. Bad Boys. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001.
- 16) Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Seabury Press, 1970.
- 17) Foner, Philip Sheldon. American Socialism and Black Americans. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1977.
- 18) Gilroy, Paul. The Black Atlantic. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- 19) Giroux, Henry. Border Crossings. New York N.Y.: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, inc., 1992.
- 20) Hooks, Bell. Breaking Bread. Boston, Mass. South End Press, 1991.
- 21) Hooks Bell. Where We Stand. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- 22) Jennings, John F. Why National Standards and Tests? SAGE, 1998.
- 23) Kahlenberg, Richard D. All Together Now. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press c.2001.
- 24) Kelley, Robin. Race Rebels. New York: Free Press, 1994.
- 25) Ladson-Billings, Gloria. The Dream Keepers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, c1994.
- 26) Massey, D. S. and N.A. Denton. American Apartheid. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- 27) Oakes, Jeannie. Becoming Good American Schools. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

- 28) Oakes, Jeannie. Tracking, Inequality, and the rhetoric of Reform. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
- 29) Ogbu, John. Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb. New Jersey: Erlbaum Assoc., 2003.
- 30) Ogbu, John. Minority Education and Caste. New York: Academic Press, 1978.
- 31) Ogbu, John. The Next Generation. New York: Academic Press, 1974.
- 32) Reed, Wornie L. African-Americans Essential Perspectives. Westport, Connecticut: Auburn House, 1993.
- 32) Reed, Wornie L. The education of African Americans. New York: Auburn House, 1991.
- 33) Semmes, Clovis E. Cultural Hegemony and African American Development. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1992.
- 34) Shor, Ira. Empowering Education. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- 35) Steele, Claude. Young, Gifted, and Black. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.
- 36) Stent, Madelon D, William R. Hazard, and Harry N. Rivlin. Cultural Pluralism in Education. New York, N.Y.: Appleton-Century-Crofts Education Division Meredith Corporation, 1973.
- 37) Tabb, William. Political Economy of the Black Ghetto. New York: Norton, 1970.
- 38) Taylor, William L. Hanging Together. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971.

39) Thorpe, Earl E. The Mind of the Negro. Baton Rouge, La. Ortlieb Press, 1961.

40) Villegas, Ana M. School Failure and Cultural Mismatch: Another View. Simon and Schuster inc., 1994.

41) Watkins, William H., James H. Lewis and, Victoria Chou. Race and Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001.

Online Sources:

1) “Department of Education”. <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=pb> and <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/welcome/index.html> February 23, 2004.

2) “National Statistics on Education & Equity Issues, By Race and Ethnicity”. <http://www.maec.org/natstats.html> April 2, 2005.

3) “NCLB”. <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/presidentplan/proposal.pdf> February 22, 2004.

4) “School Safety”. <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=49> March 31, 2005.

Interviews:

1) Bulgeron, Beth. Personal interview. March 2004.

2) Tyson, Douglas. Personal interview. March 2004.

3) Wells, Tommy. Personal interview. April 2004.