Preparing Teachers for the Neoliberal Panopticon

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In this article we critically analyze how neoliberalism, as a political-economic discourse, uses surveillance to produce a stratified student body for economic roles. Panoptic technologies regulate schools and teachers by perpetuating an "ethics of competition" that promote a market mentality of "educational choice" while propagating educational apartheid (Kozol, 2005). We use the current U.S.A. legislation, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), as a foil for our argument and illustrate how some educators have fabricated spectacles in attempts to resist the performance pressure of neoliberal surveillance. We end our discourse by discussing pedagogical fabrications as moments of neoliberal resistance and conclude with ways teacher education might prepare educators to respond more collectively to the educational inequities produced from reducing education to an economic enterprise.

Neoliberal Economics:
Knowledge Stratification and Cognitive Segregation

Neoliberalism is a political-economic theory that de-emphasizes, or rejects, government regulation of the economy, focusing instead on achieving progress and even "social justice" by encouraging so-called free-market methods (i.e., few, if any regulations) on business operations. Neoliberalism asserts that the "divine-hand" of the market is best able to determine optimal economic and social policies, on a national and global scale, and may even bring about needed progress and social change. This economic discourse is largely dictated to dependent countries (those with few financial resources seeking economic development) by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and is characterized by privatization, austerity policies, and trade liberalization as conditions for approval of investment, loans, and debt relief. As Martinez and Garcia (2006) noted, neoliberal economics has,

> ...become widespread during the last 25 years or so. Although the word is rarely heard in the United States, you can clearly see the effects of neo-liberalism here as the rich grow richer and the poor grow poorer. Now, with the rapid globalization of the capitalist economy, we are seeing neo-liberalism on a global scale. (p. 1)

Neoliberal economics relies on the values of choice and competition, rather than values of equity and sustainability, to accomplish its goals. Dependent countries, however, have little choice about whether they adopt the privatization, austerity, and free-trade policies demanded by the IMF when they seek debt relief. Conversely, affluent countries have enormous latitude in their economic decisions. Nevertheless, according to neoliberal economic theory, the increasing national and global economic stratification that occurs in face of neoliberal policies is the result of "free" economic choices and competition (Harvey, 2005).

As a value, competition may momentarily actuate higher standards, learning, and even produce better educators, but this particular economic value is oppressive and dehumanizing when the game is rigged. And, even though democracy itself may promote more political competition than other forms of government, "harmful forms of competition occur when the rules themselves are unfair or unjust. *Invidious discrimination*, the principal ground of injustice connected with rules, would involve unequal treatment in developing and enforcing rules" (Rich & De Vitis, 1992, p. 12). Unfortunately, the assumptions of competition that the capitalist market utilize to support neoliberalism have failed to produce educational equality and instead exacerbates inequities in order to prey upon and benefit from those who have been disenfranchised. This is particularly true for students who are systematically segregated through anti-egalitarian sorting practices such as eugenics and (dis)ability (Baker, 2002) and classism, and racism (Kozol, 2005).

Economic inequalities (Global and domestic) are supported by knowledge stratification, which may also be thought of as cognitive segregation. By knowledge

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stratification, we mean that schooling certifies groups with different types of knowledge linked to specific occupations with unequal economic benefits. Throughout the last century of schooling, student abilities and subjectivities have been predetermined, ranked, tracked, and in many cases, commodified a priori. Performance learning is not about learning possibilities, but about achieving the preset accountability goals that have already determined students' "realistic" identities and circumscribed their economic futures (DeLissovoy & McLaren, 2003). Differentiated knowledges are created from an "ethics of competition" that create, legitimate, and sustain stratified economic rewards and wealth. As a result, neoliberal economic theory relies on the continued discourse of merit, progress, and choice to justify its aims—positioning itself as a "natural" occurrence of educational and economic behavior.

As evidenced with NCLB, neoliberal economic theory privileges schooling policies aimed towards socializing future workers (Reese, 2002). In fact, neoliberalism has handily crept into education to fulfill the desires of the powerful few. Apple (1985) noted,

> The right-wing social agenda has as one of its platforms the privatization of as many of our public institutions as possible, believing that the (really fictitious) 'invisible hand' of the market will regulate whatever needs doing and will provide for the common good. Not only is this conceptually and politically naïve, it is a dangerous social ethic as well. It substitutes private gain (hidden under the rhetoric of 'democracy' and 'personal choice') for the public good. We need to be quite careful not to be taken in by this. Democracy means more than choice about consumption practices. (p. ix)

It is disingenuous to assert that values of choice and competition (especially in an unequal playing field) are more likely to bring about the common good than the values of equality and equity. Nevertheless, no systematic disciplinary device has been developed to regulate the proliferation and intrusion of economic theories into schooling. In other words, neoliberal economics (as seen in such practices as unequal funding of schools) is not held accountable to its effects upon schooling. Instead, disciplinary policies have been developed to hold education accountable to the corporate sector of the State. We discuss these policies next.

Neoliberal Panoptic Discipline and "Performativity Standards" of No Child Left Behind

The dominant policy discourse over the last two decades in education has been performance accountability via high-stakes testing. NCLB is the most recent articulation of performance-accountability in the USA. The federal government created NCLB, a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act, in an attempt to answer questions about the economic performance of public education in the United States. Are educators fulfilling the neoliberal expectations for which they are paid? Are students learning what they need to know in order to advance and satisfy economic goals? If states wish federal assistance, NCLB required law-

makers to implement statewide high-stake assessment systems based on annual standardized testing. Districts and schools that fail to improve during the year are subject to various sanctions, while those that meet improvement goals are eligible for State Academic Achievement Awards. High-stakes testing, then, is a disciplinary apparatus of schooling that holds educators accountable to produce stratified student identities through simple statistical deviations of test scores. Next, we examine NCLB's overall strategy, tactics, and targets as it acts to create a differentiated student body for different market segments in the global economy.

Surveillance Technologies of the Neoliberal Panopticon

The primary strategy utilized in high-stakes testing, such as that mandated by NCLB, is that of surveillance. Just like the inmates in Bentham's panopticon were induced to discipline themselves, NCLB induces states to regulate themselves. In order to receive NCLB monies, "Each State accountability system shall…include sanctions and rewards…to hold local educational agencies and public elementary schools and secondary schools accountable for student achievement..." (NCLBb, Subpart 1, Part A, Sec. 1111, (b)(2), iii). Thus, while the federal government does not sanction or reward districts or schools, in order to receive NCLB monies, the federal government induces states to ensure that the aforementioned test scores are publicly displayed and that further awards and punishments are given accordingly. In addition, if states fail to ensure that school districts and schools perform according to NCLB guidelines, the federal government can fine states. Texas was recently fined $444,000 because parents were not notified of school's test scores and NCLB defined status in a timely manner (Lynn, 2005).

Vinson and Ross (2003) described this kind of high-stakes testing as a form of surveillance-spectacle that normalizes students and educators through coercive conformity based upon the idea of simultaneously watching and being watched. For example, a teacher in one of our earlier studies noted these effects. She commented,

> The district requires teachers to turn all their benchmark scores in 3 times a year. So, the principal will collect ours, for the whole school, and then she compiles some data, tables on the computer, to show where our kids stand for each grade-level on each unit. She takes that to the district and hands it in. (Webb, 2005, p. 199)

Surveillance is not a new schooling disciplinary apparatus, and in fact, the idea has deep educational roots (Lortie, 1975; Warren, 1968). As Foucault (1977) observed, surveillance is a technique of power that was developed more than two centuries ago for control in educational settings. In 1787, Jeremy Bentham, a British social planner and "humanitarian," developed a unique disciplinary device to control people through surveillance. Bentham declared it, "a new mode of obtaining power of mind over mind, in a quantity hitherto without example" (republished in Bozovic, 1995, p. 1). His architectural device was known as the panopticon and was to be used for controlling those deemed in most need of reform. He stated,

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> whether it be that of punishing the incorrigible, guarding the insane, reforming the vicious, … instructing the willing in any branch of industry, or training the rising race in the path of education: in a word, whether it be applied to the purposes of perpetual prisons in the room of death, …or manufactories, or mad-houses, or hospitals or *schools* [emphasis added]. (Bentham, 1787 in Bozovic, 1995, p. 1)

Bentham's panopticon arranged inmates in architectures that allowed them to be constantly monitored; however, the inmates themselves could not view their surveillers and, thus, could not tell whether, or when, they were being watched. This architectural arrangement produces effects of continuous surveillance that coerces inmates (through the threat of punishment) to be obedient. Foucault (1977) noted that this spatial arrangement produced surveillance that 'circulated' within a social body and coercion was exercised through these organizational relationships. Foucault (1977) described the effects of surveillance by describing how people regulated themselves in proportion to promises of being seen. He stated,

> Hence the major effect of [surveillance is] to induce in the [employee] a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action, [creates conditions] which the employee should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (p. 201)

For at least forty years, the education practice of teacher surveillance has been advocated. Warren (1968) believed that teachers should be surveiled because they easily said one thing but did another. Warren hypothesized that surveillance was a more effective way to hold teachers accountable than merely acquiring symbolic verbal acceptance of school policy. Surveillance provided administrators efficient ways to coerce teachers through "the expectation of punishment for failure to conform to an influence attempt" (p. 953). Lortie (1975) also noted the use of surveillance and coercion in his landmark study thirty years ago. Neoliberal accountability as seen through legislations such as NCLB is one of the most pervasive iterations of surveillance technology thus far applied to schooling. Accountability schemes are designed to coerce teachers by inducing self-regulation through surveillance coupled with threat of punishing sanctions (Foucault, 1980). We discuss this apparatus of coercion next.

Coercive Aspects of the Panopticon: Accountability Terror and the Differentiation of Students

In this section, we take a moment to illustrate how surveillance coerces teachers to perpetuate the sorting of students. In short, we note how educational accountability schemes, like NCLB, utilize fear and terror through the continuous measurement of students' and teachers' academic performances. For instance, in one of our earlier studies teachers discussed the pressure of continuous surveillance through testing and the resulting feelings this produced.

> The test scores are published. They're on radio; they're in the news, on the television.

> They are in the newspapers—I'm hypersensitive to it, being it's my job [at stake], but they're everywhere. They're on the Internet. They compare the schools to different schools. (Webb, 2005, p. 199)

Coercion produced through explicit governmental monitoring of performance data is understood in many professional fields as "data surveillance." Explicit monitoring of performance data is accompanied with threats of school closure, school reconstitution, teacher dismissal, and penalties of reduced school income. Lyotard (1984) defined coercion attempts in education as threats of "terror." He stated,

> By terror I mean the efficiency gained by eliminating, or threatening to eliminate, a player from the language game one shares with him. He is silenced or consents, not because he has been refuted, but because his ability to participate has been threatened. The decision makers' arrogance consists in the exercise of terror. It says: 'Adapt your aspirations to our ends—or else.' (pp. 63-4)

NCLB combines coercive surveillance with unequal funding to regulate curricula differentially given the disparity of school and district resources throughout the U.S.A. (Wong, 1996). While NCLB gives lip service to equality by advocating that "all children meet the challenging state student academic achievement standards," schools must accomplish this without equal funding. NCLB is quite clear about this: "nothing in this title shall be construed to mandate equalized spending per pupil for a State, local educational agency, or school" (NCLBa, Part I, sec. 1903 (a)(2); sec. 1906). Taken together, surveillance, coercion, and unequal funding combine to regulate schools differentially. Schools with few resources and with students who suffer from economic deprivation are expected to produce student test scores similar to affluent schools whose students' families have a plethora of economic resources. The disciplinary apparatus of NCLB stratifies students and educators ("low-performing" and "high-performing") by demanding that these labels be applied to schools on the basis of their test scores. In an attempt to avoid the label, "low performing", schools with few resources narrow the curriculum to the point of "teaching to the test"—a pedagogical phenomenon that reduces pedagogy to attempts to ensure passing test statistics. Additionally, this narrowing of the curriculum to produce the appearance of equality (by making the test scores of a few subject areas equal) actually produces a further stratification of knowledge as other subject areas are sacrificed to dominant subject areas reified by test score requirements.

In addition to narrowing the curriculum of poor schools, NCLB legislation makes it more likely that students will receive copious training in answering multiple-choice questions. For example, when Connecticut asked to reduce the number of grades in which students are tested so that they could use the more expensive hand-scored tests which allowed for greater diversity in responses, they were told either to use multiple choice type tests or to use their own money to help pay for testing students during those years mandated by NCLB (Archer, 2005). States, schools, and school districts with few resources and who use federal funds provided by NCLB are induced (i.e. coerced) to use multiple choice tests—many of which

have been brokered by the federal government and the curriculum companies beforehand (Miner, 2004). Development of attributes such as creativity, synthesis, and divergent-thinking do not enhance multiple test scores. Instead, convergent-thinking is required in order to select the one correct answer out of those provided (Sacks, 2000). As a result, principals and teachers are more likely to increase the use of didactic, or 'drill and kill,' pedagogy in order to encourage the convergent thinking necessary for doing well on the multiple choice tests. And thus, we see the sort of thinking and knowledge appropriate for local service work being inculcated in children who historically have been underserved by schooling systems.

Such a schooling system mass produces docile workers for an increasingly service-based economy. On the other hand, affluent schools and school districts whose students come from affluent families are more likely to receive Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status and not be as strongly coerced into test-driven curricula and pedagogy. Not surprisingly, schools with few resources (and whose students are of color and/or suffer from economic deprivation) are more often deemed *in need of improvement* than those with ample resources (Tracey, et al, 2005; Tuerk, 2005) and thus, likely to narrow the curriculum in an effort to improve test scores and avoid sanctions. Much like dependent countries are coerced into adopting austerity measures and privatizing public services, states, districts, and schools with few financial resources are coerced into accepting NCLB mandates and then teaching a curriculum that will enable them to avoid sanctions. Affluent states do not suffer the same degree of coercion in reference to adopting NCLB, and affluent districts and schools have more resources for achieving the mandated NCLB test scores without sacrificing other curricular areas.

Educational Implications of Neoliberal Economics

Student stratification is achieved largely by controlling the actions of teachers. Surveillance effects target teachers to conform their practice to knowledge differentiation in accordance with neoliberal ideology. We next illustrate how some educators have responded to surveillance of their work. In an effort to resist the neoliberal "gaze," some educators have created pedagogical fabrications to refract the appropriate image during the surveillance of their work. We play on the term "performance standard" and introduce the idea of *performativity standards* instead as a way to discuss some of the ways educators are resisting such neoliberal practices. It is important to note that performativity standards are short-term resistance practices and we conclude by suggesting ways teacher education can prepare educators to better resist neoliberal tactics that sacrifice schooling and students for economic gains of elite sectors of the State.

'Performativity' Standards: Educational Fabrications

If I don't believe in what I'm teaching, then I will subvert it. I will change it. When the doors are open they will see something different than when the doors are closed.

So if I don't believe in what I'm teaching, or what I'm told to teach, then I won't do it. I'm putting on—I'm doing two sets of lesson plans. Kind of like keeping two sets of books—you have the set of books for the auditors and you have the set of books that you're really doing your stuff. (Webb, 2006, p. 206)

Ball (2003) described the complexity involved with this type of resistance:

There are indications here of the particular performativity—the management of performance—which is 'called up' by inspection. What is produced is a spectacle, or game-playing, or cynical compliance, or what one might see as an 'enacted fantasy,' which is there simply to be seen and judged—a fabrication. (p. 222)

Ball further notes the elicitation of these performances by "accountability" surveillance (2001):

…there is not so much, or not only, a *structure* of surveillance, as a *flow* of performativities both continuous and eventful. It is not the certainty of being seen that is the issue. Instead it is the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, by different means, through different agents; the 'bringing-off' of performances—the flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded. (pp. 211-212)

For instance, the teacher above knew his teaching was monitored. However, he executed a specific performance when his classroom door was open. This public performance is what Ball (2001) considered a "fabrication"—a performance created for the sole purpose of being seen and evaluated. This teacher's fabrication challenged a major premise of neoliberal accountability—that is, this performance was constructed rather than a "genuine" episode of pedagogical prowess. This teacher knew he was being watched and he was determined to control others' views of his practice. Pedagogical fabrications, then, are strategies that attempt to reclaim teachers' practice from the coercive effects of neoliberal surveillance. For instance, below are two teachers discussing different pedagogical fabrications developed in order to resist the neoliberal gaze:

I'm rushing around like a loony today trying to put together this exam results display she [the headteacher] wants…. I didn't have any data to do it with and I've had to collect that and then I've had to find a way to of presenting the results in a way that looks good. (Ball, 1997, p. 332)

I keep portfolios of the kids' work and I assess quite frequently and so the principal assumes that I'm a good teacher. She's popped into my classroom [unannounced] and asked me 'how are you going to teach this-and-this' and 'how are you going to assess it.' Kind of this bullshit thing we do. And you know, I'm prepared now. I show her the portfolios. Mind you, I don't have to show *what's in* the portfolio—just the idea that I have a portfolio [indicates to her that] I'm on the ball. I don't take out the [evidence] to show, for instance 'here are the writing pieces and here's evidence for reading and math.' No, just the idea that I've got the portfolio and it looks official—it's got the kid's name on it, it's got my name on and it's got the principal's name on it. She assumes that I'm on top of things. She said to me one time, 'Well good, I don't have to worry about you.' (Webb, 2006, pp. 206-7)

Closing the classroom door is a well-known and ubiquitous strategy used by teachers to escape the gaze of surveillance. However, rather than escaping the gaze, pedagogical fabrications are elicited by the gaze. Pedagogical fabrications are created to be seen and judged—Baudrillardian (1981) signs circulated within panoptic accountability systems of schools. Teachers create fabrications to control surveillers' perceptions of their work; they are strategies to refract the accountability gaze. Pedagogical fabrications are evidence of teacher resistance born from the panoptic gaze, used in order to refract the effects of so-called performance accountability (Webb, 2007). Pedagogical fabrications momentarily shape surveilers' impressions—throw a wrench in the panoptic machine—and as such, "define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggle, and of an at least temporary inversion of the power relation" (Foucault, 1977, p. 27). Below is an additional example of an educational fabrication:

> The most obvious status-builder at our school is walking in the hallways. More importantly, "do you have control of your children?" If you have control of your children then you're a good teacher. Forget about your knowledge base. I mean that's really a quick and dirty strategy that the principal and other teachers use to [evaluate] teachers. When I see somebody walking his or her kids in the hallway quietly I don't necessarily think, 'that's a good teacher.' People believe [however] that teachers who have trouble with their kids in the hallways are the ones who have trouble managing their classroom. The logic is they can't teach because they can't manage the kids. So that's a quick and dirty strategy [to uphold the appearance of good teaching]. And no one has to go into classrooms to see, you know. (Webb, 2006, p. 208)

While pedagogical fabrications are an endemic form of teacher resistance, they raise important questions of pedagogical authenticity and pedagogic judgment (Coulter & Wiens, 2002). What is pedagogically 'real' or 'authentic,' and what is not? Jeffrey (2002) identified the psychic strain on teachers when using fabrications and described teachers as possessing "multiple selves" and "restructured identities," while Ball (2003) noted crises of performativity act as a kind of "values schizophrenia" for teachers. Two teachers, below, described their feelings about subjecting students to fabrications.

> The more they [administrators] emphasize something that I don't believe in, the more I become paralyzed and ineffectual. I'm teaching something I don't agree with. I'm being forced to teach in a certain way [a fabrication]. I try to do the other one [authentic teaching] in a way that's not drawing the attention of the administrators too much, but it becomes paralyzing. You find yourself wallowing instead of teaching. And, so, the kids become the real losers with teachers who don't believe what they're doing. (Webb, 2006, p. 209)

> My first reaction was 'I'm not going to play the game', but I am and they know I am. I don't respect myself for it; my own self-respect goes down. Why aren't I making a stand? Why aren't I saying, 'I know I can teach; say what you want

> to say', and so I lose my own self-respect. I know who I am; know why I teach, and I don't like it: I don't like them doing this, and that's sad, isn't it? (Jeffrey & Wood, 1998, p. 160)

Over time, fabricating pedagogy will leave educators fabricated. Cynical compliance, enacted fantasies, and unconscious performances will always haunt educators and policymakers alike—not to mention the students who experience those fabrications. Given that the purposes of schooling conflict with corporate capitalist democracies, fabrications will continue to be "quick-fixes" that educators use to refract neoliberal surveillance (Webb, 2007). It is clear that if we are going to address social inequalities in schooling we must address the very privitist, neoliberal, and structural conditions that are created and maintained by subordinating education to corporate economic interests.

Preparing Teachers for the Social Inequalities in Neoliberal Education

The use of pedagogical fabrications signal that some educators are willing to resist the neoliberal discourse of economic performance. In this sense, educators are willing to struggle for *something* related to education other than preparing students for jobs. Are pedagogical fabrications an appropriate strategy for resisting dehumanizing and stratifying accountability schemes? We do not believe that fabrications will benefit students or teachers in the long run. So we ask: What sorts of resistance strategies can teachers use to reclaim their lost autonomy and at the same time benefit students? How are teacher education programs preparing educators to teach in light of the growing disparities in democratic education? How are teacher education programs preparing students to teach within powerful economic frameworks regulating teachers' work? To help answer these questions we suggest some practices developed by Mussman (2006) to help educators address neoliberalism and its effects on education. These activities help students develop collaborative skills as they develop an understanding of their own positions within the neoliberal society and their future roles as educators within such a society.

The following activities are designed to counter teacher-insularity by promoting teacher-collaboration as a way to cope with neoliberalism. As such, these activities are discussed in terms of how they foster cooperative politics and self-identity formation of both the individual and an autonomous group of educators. The following activities were designed for an upper level course in teacher education.[1] It is important to note that the following practices are discussed with students in relation to course readings[2] and in relation to terms that operate politically in schooling[3] and society. These readings and concepts help pre-service teachers understand social inequalities that they may not have experienced in their own day-to-day lives, and that are often connected to education policy that tries to hold education accountable to market values, rather than holding industry accountable to democratic educational values.

Authentic Teaching: Expectation Letter

One activity used to help students understand neoliberalism is to write a letter to the instructor in which they define three things: (a) what their expectations are for the course; (b) where they see this course going; and (c) what they ultimately want to get out of the course. In writing this letter, students bridge from being individualistic and passive students into cooperative student teachers who are invested in the course and who negotiate their interests with others. These letters provide students with their first attempts to articulate their own sense of education and its worth in their lives.

Authentic Teaching: Collaborative Classroom Values

Another important activity is to collaboratively create a list of classroom values that students and instructors model for each other. These shared values range from logistics (be on time and be prepared for class) to prohibitive things (turn off cell phones, don't talk over others) to issues of respect (listen to others, respect opinions, be friendly). Shared values help pre-service teachers define their own expectations that allow them to be responsible to themselves and accountable to each other.

It is useful to revisit values throughout the quarter, adding certain items when someone violates a value. This introduces collective responsibility and allows students to share ownership of the class by holding each other accountable to the norms and values related to their education. It is also an important feature of the class because they will be teachers very soon, with their own, implicit or explicit, classroom values. As such, the process of identifying and maintaining shared values allows teachers to learn about educational accountability as professional responsibility to educational values rather than to neoliberal forms of surveillance that mask ulterior forms of economic accountability in education.

Uncovering Inequity: What Does Privilege Mean to You?

An in-class writing assignment allows students to understand themselves and recognize their varying degrees of "privilege" and "entitlement." After they have had a chance to write about their own social mobility, we ask them to share their definitions of "privilege" with the class. Some students believe that privilege is a result of hard work, rather than the institutionalized advantages afforded to them through class, race, gender, sexuality, and ability. This assignment helps students understand how they are situated within broader economic and neoliberal frameworks because it allows them to see how their own expectations and understandings have been shaped by economic hegemony and how they might reproduce these power dynamics once they become certified teachers.[4]

Student Collaboration: Group Facilitations on Power

Throughout the term, students facilitate a class period in small groups. Group facilitations examine different power dynamics within the classroom around various themes (gender, race, sexual orientation, etc). These small group facilitations give students opportunities to teach difficult topics related to neoliberalism (i.e., competition, stratification, choice, etc.). In addition, students work together and teach their peers, rather than youths, which enable them to develop a community politic, or a group ethos, related to acting upon inequity. As such, peers are more critical and are able to recognize problematic teaching methods, which reinforce earlier attempts of holding each other accountable to authentic teaching practices rather than test scores or other synthetic forms of educational accountability (e.g., performance, achievement, etc.). These small group facilitations are a pivotal point of each students' experiences within the degree program; not only are students challenged to work with their peers, they also acquire experience teaching about difficult topics which helps them to uphold their commitment to education and equality rather than to economic principles of testing and sorting.

Collaboration: Educational Performances

Finally, students work in groups to create an educational performance—a poem, a rap, a drawing, a political cartoon, a commercial, or a skit. Each group is assigned one of four concepts: freedom, justice, democracy, or peace. This collaborative effort allows the students to creatively express their hopes and frustrations with the state of inequality in American schools fostered by neoliberal ideologies and practices. This collaborative activity prepares students to work together across disciplines rather than situating them along traditional divisions of subject matter that are easily manipulated by the neoliberal ideology to segregate teachers and students. The performances also provide for genuine, or authentic, attempts at conveying educational matters and provide for a broader discussion about the problematics of educational performativity highlighted earlier. Pedagogical fabrications as presented above are dangerous performances, because they do not rest on substantial educational values. This activity provides students ways of thinking about their teaching performances and provides them with ways to be responsible to their educational values rather than accountable to scripted performances elicited by neoliberal testing regimes.

Reflections on the Activities

Most students enjoy the course and see it more than just a "required course." They "enjoy coming to class everyday," see "people … becoming more comfortable with one another … [to] let us all learn as much from our classmates as we do from all other sources." Students write that they are "stimulated mentally" and that "we will reflect back on this class and the experience it gave us later on in our profes-

sion." They feel that course environment allows all students to "share their opinions without the fear of criticism" on "all big issues that are being faced everyday in the classroom." Some students "didn't expect this class to be such a collaborative effort" but see a direct corollary to what goes on in this classroom to how they will "work towards a less prejudice society." The students want to know how to "deal with inequalities" in their future schools, but often don't have the tools or language to deal with them. By addressing the ideologies and effects of neoliberalism in this course students strive for a "clearer understanding of schools today and the way things work in society." Many students leave the class with a desire to *work with other teachers* to counter the individualizing effects of neoliberal policy.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the last two decades, technological advances in communication and transportation have given the U.S.A. access to capital, labor, and economic resources around the world. This global access to economic markets has been paralleled by the ascendance of neoliberalism that has exposed workers to an unprecedented degree of foreign competition. One effect of neoliberalism has been the outsourcing of manufacturing and IT jobs. The majority of jobs left in the USA are service jobs. Robert Reich, the former US Secretary of Labor states: "[local service] jobs aren't, to a large extent, threatened by globalization or technology, and they are abundant, but they are also among the lowest paying jobs" (quoted in Bowdoin Campus Life, 2002, p. 1). The apparatus of surveillance embedded in NCLB is well-suited for fitting historically educationally underserved students neatly into the rather large intellectually undemanding, low-paying niche created by an increasingly centralized and stratified national and global economy supported by neoliberal policies.

Given the intrusion of neoliberal ideology, it is vital that teachers reclaim their position as political buffers from which to protect communities from state and federally mandated economic intrusion. Accountability frameworks should develop educators' discretion, and, by inference, increase their professional autonomy to ensure freedom of thought in the democracy (Gutmann, 1999). Students must trust teachers to educate them about their world, to critique and transform their world, not simply train them for employment. In addition, new accountability frameworks should be developed that hold state governments accountable to adequate funding of schools. Such potential frameworks could capitalize on economists' growing suspicion of school choice (Stern, 2008) and competition (Sasseen, 2008) as insufficient concepts by themselves to improve schooling.

Additionally, further research can help us to develop better federal, state, and local accountability frameworks—such that they are not punitive instruments of surveillance that exacerbate the very conditions they were developed to ameliorate. We need more research on what school factors lead not only to higher levels of learning for all demographic groups of students, (using a diverse means of evaluation), but to higher teacher and student morale in the schools. This type of research would

promote policies that improve the experience of teaching and learning as part of a general program for closing the achievement gaps between different demographic groups of students.

For example, research shows that teacher morale is key to promoting higher levels of learning for students, but we need more research on what sorts of school policies improve teacher morale, their expectations of students, and their empowerment as agents in their work arena. And further, how those factors might differ in regards to the different teaching and learning situations encountered by teachers and students. In addition research is needed on the connection between what happens in colleges of education and the degree to which teachers are prepared to confront and not only survive, but resist and flourish within the hostile teaching environments caused by high stakes testing. By flourish, we mean that teachers are able to be authentic in their teaching such that they engage kids of all types in authentic learning rather than choosing between performance fabrication and the rote learning that promotes the convergent thinking conducive to passing standardized tests. A final area of study would concentrate more research on specific strategies to assist teachers to communicate with the public and state legislatures and help them understand that one-size-fits-all testing coupled with punitive sanctions largely destroys the democratizing processes and effects of schooling.

Notes

[1] Course was originally designed by Professor Roger Collins in 1980 and was entitled Social Inequalities in Schooling which was a required course for pre-service teachers who wish to teach within Ohio's public school system.

[2] Baldwin (1988), Bambara (1972), Fricke (1993), Hanssen (1998), Herzog (1994), Malcolm X (1964), Sadker & Sadker (1994), Warfield (1982), and Zola (1982).

[3] We believe that it is important for students to define these terms and concepts and provide examples themselves. A partial list includes: matrix of oppression, structural violence, discrimination, commodification, misogyny, patriarchy/paternalism, tolerance vs. acceptance vs. appreciation, actualization, pejorative, empathy vs. sympathy, systematic (liberal) vs. individualistic (conservative), structural violence, race, equity, equality, hegemony, privilege, segregation, integration, "equal opportunity," freedom, justice, democracy, peace, misogyny, stereotype, prejudice, (internal) colonization/3rd World, etc., marginalization, overt/systemic racism, testifying, internalized oppression/hatred, accomodationist, sexuality/gender/sex, sexual orientation, hermaphroditic, intersexed, homo-, hetero-, bi-, -sexual, trans-, -vestite, -sexual, -gender, homogeneity, heterosexism/normativity, homophobia, symbolic inversion.

[4] McIntosh (1989) is a powerful resource for this activity. *Level Playing Field* is another activity with iterations online, including one by a religious organization, http://www.womenoftheelca.org/resources/levelplayingfield.html.

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