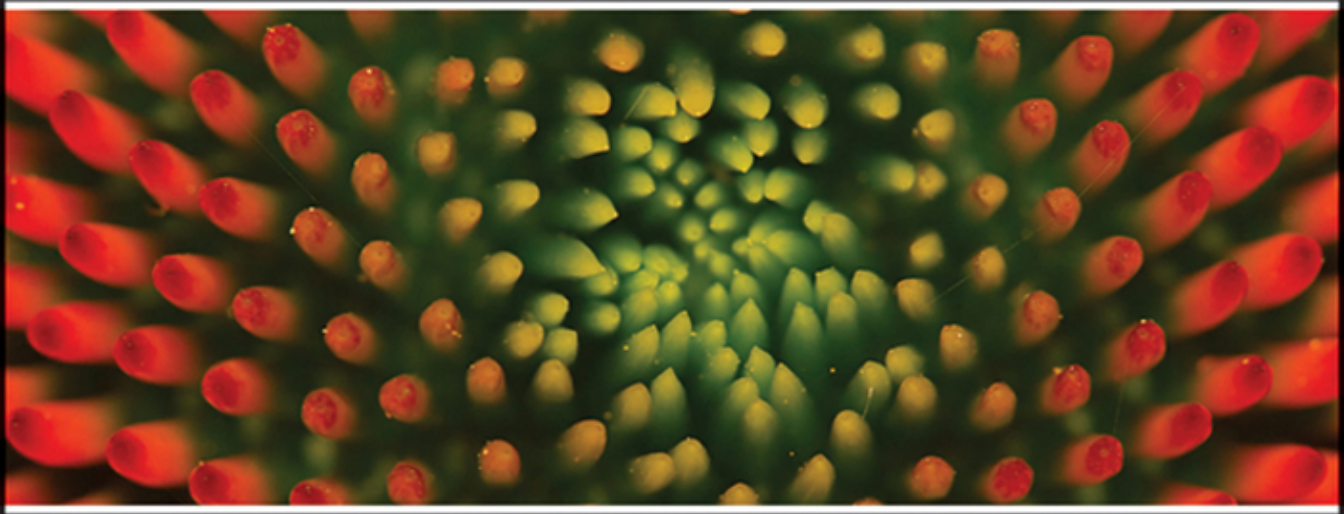
Meeting the Psychoeducational Needs *of* MINORITY STUDENTS

Evidence-Based Guidelines for School Psychologists and Other School Personnel



Craig L. Frisby

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WILEY

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This book is dedicated to Professor Thomas Oakland,
a fine human being and scholar, whose pioneering work
on behalf of serving minority children in schools
established a large footprint
for others to follow.

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CHAPTER

1

Why the Need for This Book?

In 1977, barely a decade after the creation of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), Professor Thomas Oakland published *Psychological and Educational Assessment of Minority Children*. This groundbreaking edited text, developed for a school psychology audience, was the first of its kind to focus the field's attention on minority children and issues related to (what was referred to at that time) "non-discriminatory" psychoeducational assessment.

Although school psychologists are widely viewed as top specialists in the area of individual assessment for diagnosing pupils' psychoeducational problems, the field has pursued additional areas of expertise over the decades that extend beyond individual assessment for placement in special programs. In addition, the world has changed considerably in the 35 years since Prof. Oakland's text was first published. As one example, immigration—barely acknowledged 35 years ago—is an issue that has risen to the forefront of contemporary social, educational, and political discussions. Today, more and better research informs educational practice, generally, and school psychology practice, specifically, about minority children and schooling. Unfortunately, much of what is popularly promoted in school psychology today on these important issues remains stuck in the 1970s. A simple analogy illustrates the nature of this problem.

SCRIPTED KNOWLEDGE

Large commercial theme parks (e.g., Six Flags, DisneyWorld, SeaWorld) use elaborate transportation systems, such as ferry boats, chair lifts, monorails, and bus trams, to give customers a safe, structured, and controlled means of getting from point A to point B within the park. Such rides control how many persons can ride at one time, the speed at which the ride moves, and which areas of the park are covered. Typically, a company

tour guide points out carefully selected "areas of interest," about which park officials provide "canned," company-approved stories and descriptions.

Psychoeducational issues and problems involving racial/ethnic/language minority students are choreographed for school psychology audiences in much the same way. That is, the field invents its own terms (e.g., *cultural competence*), as well as its own definitions for them; frames multicultural problems in a prescribed manner that suits particular sociopolitical agendas (e.g., eradicating disproportionalities; promoting "social justice"); dictates how multicultural issues are to be framed, interpreted, and discussed; dictates the "correct" attitudes and feelings (e.g., "tolerance," "sensitivity") that audiences should have toward problems; and carefully arranges structural contingencies that determine how programs are to be rewarded or sanctioned for the extent to which multiculturalism ideology is infused into training.

In contemporary school psychology, multiculturalism ultimately boils down to an "everything-is-biased-against-CLD-children" message. This message has an intuitive appeal, as most students and professionals have a natural affinity for a professional identity that exposes injustices and "fights for the underdog." Although this message may have seemed new and fresh 35 years ago, it has grown increasingly more stale with each passing decade. This is because the field has the benefit of much more high-quality empirical research than it did 35 years ago, which includes clear evaluations of so-called "multicultural" remedies that have been tried (and most of which have failed) in the real world. When it comes to racial/ethnic conflicts in society, careful analyses have shown that there are no simplistic morality plays involving clear saints and clear villains. Hence, facile explanations for minority pupils' school problems that may have been persuasive decades ago are no longer persuasive to better informed researchers and scholars today.

Unfortunately, such insights have not permeated contemporary discussions of multicultural issues in school psychology. For all practical purposes, the field is figuratively held hostage by two primary messages on multicultural issues, which are as scripted and predictable as the rising and setting of the sun every 24 hours. First, racial/ethnic minority groups are viewed as "culturally exotic," which presumably requires nonminority school psychologists to learn about the odd cultural traits of different groups in order to be effective in serving them. Second, minority groups are seen as perpetual "victims" of racism, discrimination, and/or prejudice—which presumably lurks just beneath the surface of polite society, is expressed in countless subtle ways (e.g., "stereotype threat," "micro-aggressions"), and serves as the all-purpose explanation for most problems faced by minority groups in schools. The role of school psychologists, therefore, is to develop a zeal for "social justice"—which then prepares them to parachute into schools to rescue minority children from the harm that most assuredly awaits them at the hands of culturally insensitive educators.

The fundamental message of this book is that these ideas, no matter how appealing they may sound, *have nothing at all to do with actual practices that effectively help vulnerable minority children in schools*. Before discussing the material covered in this text, however, the principle of truth in advertising requires an initial discussion of what this book will *not* cover.

WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT

There exist many outstanding texts for school psychologists that describe specific academic and behavioral interventions that are effective for helping children, youth, and families in school settings. With the exception of interventions that require non–English language modifications, no credible data-based psychological theory has demonstrated that such interventions cannot also be used with minority children. *First and foremost, minority children and their families are not kitchen appliances that come equipped with a "multicultural instruction manual" for proper care and service*. Hence, this book is not an inventory of scripted how-to recipes designed to magically work with nonwhite or non-English-speaking children. Contrary to current fashions, knowing the racial or ethnic status of students—by itself—provides no useful information on their school adjustment, academic performance, or how they are to be served when they experience problems in educational settings. The reality is that many minority students adjust well and achieve satisfactorily in schools, and many do not. Therefore, knowledge of minority status alone is not sufficient for problem solving. It is the *correlates* of racial/ethnic/language status, and *how these correlated variables interact*, that must be understood before school psychologists (and other school personnel) can appreciate how best to effectively serve vulnerable children in schools.

Second, although special education issues are discussed in various places within this text when necessary, the exclusive focus of this book is not on special education. Many texts attempt to marry special education with multiculturalism, but this hybrid often seems forced and artificial. Many school psychologists were initially motivated to enter the field because of its characterization as a profession that applies psychological knowledge to helping all children in schools. Only after entering the field as graduate students did many begin to realize how special education plays a dominant role in defining school psychology roles and functions. This text departs somewhat from this tradition by addressing problems of minority children throughout all levels of the education system, which is in keeping with a simple definition of the field as the application of psychology to education, defined broadly.

Third, many school psychology students and scholars who are interested in multicultural issues find themselves attracted to ideas and insights drawn from the specialty of counseling psychology. Counseling psychology, compared to other applied psychologies,

has a reputation for showcasing prolific writing from "academic superstars" who specialize in multiculturalism. Because school psychology does not produce this same degree of sustained scholarship on multicultural issues, it comes as little surprise that opinions in school psychology are often shaped by ideas that are vigorously promoted within counseling psychology.

This book departs substantially from this tradition, for the following reason: Fundamentally, counseling psychologists who specialize in multiculturalism often place an inordinate emphasis on the deleterious effects of real or imagined "racism" (e.g., see Sidebar 2.2), which in the final analysis reflects group grievance politics and sociopolitical advocacy more than it reflects objective, empirically supported research. Although school psychology roles and functions can overlap somewhat with the roles of school counselors, much in school psychology practice simply is not easily translatable from counseling psychology. This text, in contrast, adopts the view that a better and more empirically supportable understanding of how minority children are served in schools owes much more inspiration from the field of educational psychology than it does from counseling psychology.

CHAPTER CONTENT

Returning to the earlier commercial theme park analogy, the purpose of this book is to permit readers to disembark from the scripted tour and walk freely about the park, drawing one's own conclusions and exploring areas unhindered by "Do Not Enter" signs.

Multiculturalism ideology is currently the primary vehicle through which graduate students in school psychology (and other related applied professions) first learn about issues and problems of minority groups in schools. Toward this end, various facets of multiculturalism ideology are analyzed in detail in **Chapter 2**. Multiculturalism ideology so permeates preservice training that audiences are usually unaware that what are promoted as "truths" are little more than ideological talking points. Audiences simply assume that if their professional organizations or university trainers promote an idea, and repeat it often enough, then it must be true, and it has a prescriptive right not to be questioned or challenged. With rare exceptions (e.g., see Frisby, 2005a, 2005b), multiculturalism ideology is never treated as an object of scrutiny in its own right, nor is it ever examined directly in order to test the validity of its implicit assumptions. When this is done, *the irony is that multiculturalism ideology contributes next to nothing that informs school psychologists (and other school personnel) about practices that are found to actually help minority children in schools*.

Quack Multiculturalism is the name given to a particular brand of multiculturalism that promotes falsehoods and distortions, yet amazingly continues to be promoted as received wisdom in the field. The primary theme of the chapter is that multiculturalism is fundamentally a sociopolitical ideology. It is not—as many would presume—a science,

nor does it necessarily represent "best practices" for school psychologists. Quack Multiculturalism is not to be confused with research and practices that have been found to actually help minority children in schools, thus readers are encouraged to keep these two concepts separate.

Minority children are raised in a variety of home and neighborhood environments, some of which include the structure, nurturing, support, and freedom from chaos that is conducive to school learning, and many others that do not. Within every country on the face of the globe, social class is an extremely important scientific variable that has been shown to be empirically related to many social outcome variables. In most (but certainly not all) cases, social class supersedes race/ethnicity as a powerful predictor of schooling outcomes. Yet inexplicably, this variable receives almost no attention in the published literature in contemporary school psychology. The purpose of the material discussed in **Chapter 3** is to showcase the role of social class and home/neighborhood environments in contributing to social and educational outcomes for minority children.

Minority children are not homogeneous in the school settings in which they are educated, which is another variable that is all but ignored in Quack Multiculturalism. Even when home/family environments may not be ideal, variability in the educational philosophies, instructional practices, and curriculum offerings of schools play a crucial role in the quality of educational experiences that minority children receive. The material in **Chapter 4** discusses these important differences in the contexts for school learning, which can help readers better understand the proximal factors that influence psychoeducational outcomes for minority children.

To understand the relationship between classroom instruction and school learning, while pretending to ignore the role of general cognitive ability, is like trying to bake a cake without using flour. School psychologists, more than any other school professionals, should know that individual differences in cognitive ability is the one psychological variable that is most highly predictive of individual achievement in school and beyond. Because of the contentious politics surrounding this issue, however, school psychologists have largely ignored their professional responsibility to apply what research clearly indicates about the relationship of this important variable to instructional practices and school learning. The material in **Chapter 5** explicates these relationships.

School psychologists are also widely considered to possess (at least in principle) more measurement and testing expertise than most other school professionals. As testing and assessment experts, they should not be intimidated by claims that standardized testing is biased against minority groups who are native-born English speakers. The field has given an open forum to this claim in previous decades, which has produced no substantial evidence or valid arguments against the use of standardized testing in education. As shown in **Chapter 6**, however, there is still a role for school psychologists (and other school personnel) in helping minority children in the context of testing and assessment

practices in schools. Properly trained school psychologists are uniquely positioned to help schools in accessing and choosing the proper test accommodations for limited English speakers. School psychologists can lend their expertise to schools' efforts to help minority students prepare for, and perform to the best of their abilities on, classroom and schoolwide standardized tests.

Without a basic level of behavioral discipline, students cannot learn in schools. There is no magic formula for disciplining children differently as a function of their racial/ethnic group membership. However, when a critical mass of minority students with poor behavioral socialization skills are present in a school, fundamental structural changes in school organization and school policies are required. The material in **Chapter 7** has shown that good discipline and classroom management can occur in schools where the principal is freed from the kinds of bureaucratic constraints—present in most public schools—that make learning all but impossible.

The presence of organized youth gangs in schools with significantly large minority enrollments has a way of making a mockery of schools' best efforts to promote a safe and orderly academic environment. The serious problems caused by school crime and youth gangs focus discussions on what is most important: the physical safety of students, teachers, and staff. There is nothing overtly "multicultural" about what schools do to combat these problems, because most interventions adopted by schools involve basic protections for students whose learning and development is compromised by the presence of gangs, crime, and delinquency in schools. Most school psychology programs barely acknowledge this problem in discussions of multicultural issues. The material discussed in **Chapter 8** is designed to introduce school psychologists (and other school personnel) to this issue, and to show how schools can effectively respond to this difficult problem.

School districts enrolling large numbers of racial/ethnic minority and immigrant children find that they must devote considerable resources to within-district programs to combat vexing social problems (e.g., criminal activity, teen pregnancy, drug abuse, lack of services for immigrant newcomers) that undermine the ability of students to benefit from their educations. School psychology students may be quite surprised to discover that, rather than minority students being underserved in schools, many school districts are quite intentional and proactive in developing programs specifically targeted to combating these social problems. The material in **Chapter 9** provides a more in-depth discussion of exemplary programs for minority students in select districts around the country.

Chapters 2 through 9, when considered as a whole, generate specific guidelines, principles, and recommendations that need to be carefully considered if school psychology desires to move forward and become a key contributor to national discussions about improving psychoeducational outcomes for minority children. These ideas are

discussed at length in **Chapter 10**. This needed direction is two-pronged: (1) the field needs to seriously reconsider, and in some cases abandon, modes of thinking that have consistently proven to result in hopeless dead-ends; and (2) there are new directions to pursue that are more empirically sound, yet are linked more closely to the practices of schools that are successful in educating large numbers of minority children.

Many terms and concepts could have been defined and explained in greater detail, but this would have interrupted the flow of the text if these definitions were included in the chapters. The book concludes with a concise **Glossary**, where key terms are defined and explained in greater detail for readers.

Lastly, the book includes certain features to help readers navigate the text and locate sources more easily. The book makes extensive use of highlighted Sidebars, which are self-contained explanations or illustrations of key concepts that can be read separately from the main flow of the text. In an effort to keep current, a conscious effort was also made to include information sources and examples that can be accessed more easily from the Internet. At the end of most chapters, additional resources are given that supplement the main concepts discussed in the text.

CHAPTER

2

The Problem of Quack Multiculturalism

> Advocacy is different from science.... For the zealous advocate, cause and effect are predetermined to serve one's interests. An advocate need not even believe a cause or effect that she claims; her goal is to persuade others to believe it. An advocate searches not for probable causes and effects but, rather, for merely plausible ones—ones that others are willing to believe.... The desired outcome is neither truth nor understanding, but conversion—getting others to view a situation in a manner that serves one's own interests.
>
> —Phelps & Gottfredson, *Correcting Fallacies About Educational and Psychological Testing*, 2009, p. 250
>
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WHAT IS MULTICULTURALISM?

Graduate students in applied psychology and education are typically first exposed to discussions about the school problems of cultural minority children and youth as filtered through the ideological lens of *multiculturalism* (Banks & Banks, 2004; Jones, 2009; MacCluskie, 2010; Pedersen, 1999; Ravitch, 2007; Steinberg, 2009). As a popular term in the applied social sciences, *multiculturalism* has been defined differently in different contexts. For school psychologists, multiculturalism is the name given to a sociopolitical philosophy that, for better or worse, functions as the de facto ideology of the National

Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA)—as these pertain to racial/ethnic/language minority issues. If asked to spontaneously define this term, rank-and-file school psychologists would most likely mention phrases that they have heard endlessly repeated in their professional readings—namely, that multiculturalism has something to do with "valuing diversity," "being sensitive to cultural differences," or developing "cultural competence," to name a few.

TYPES OF SUPERFICIAL MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism is a sociopolitical ideology that is fundamentally designed to shape and modify attitudes and perceptions. Before embarking on an in-depth analysis of the central tenets of this ideology, it is necessary to first describe the more superficial manifestations of multiculturalism as they are experienced by the general public and professional educators. These superficial manifestations of multiculturalism, called Boutique, Kumbayah, Light-and-Fluffy, and Bean-Counting Multiculturalism, are briefly described as follows.

Boutique Multiculturalism

An elementary school hosts a Back-to-School Night where parents can visit their child's school, chat with teachers, and see displays of various arts-and-crafts projects that the students have been working on in their home classrooms throughout the school year. This year, the theme is Learning Around the World. Here, parents can visit different classrooms, each of which focuses on a particular country in the world. In one classroom, parents are greeted with the sounds of indigenous Mexican music playing from a CD player. The teacher's aide dresses in a colorful knit poncho, while the head teacher wears a beautiful Jalisco dress. The room is adorned with the Mexican flag and various pictures of Spanish bullfights, flamenco dancers, and Mexican architecture. On tables throughout the room, various string and percussion instruments used in Mexican folk music are displayed. Parents can also sample chile, salsa, fajitas, and other Mexican food dishes that the children have made at home and brought to school. At each table, children (when prompted) will read a paragraph or two on Mexican history and culture that they have practiced. Other classrooms in the school feature similar presentations of Swedish, Nigerian, and Taiwanese cultures.

This is one of many examples of what Fish (1997) labels *Boutique Multiculturalism*, characterized by "the [superficial or cosmetic] multiculturalism of ethnic restaurants [and] weekend festivals" (p. 378). In short, Boutique Multiculturalism touts an appreciation of diversity that is analogous to the *It's a Small World (After All)* boat ride at the Magic Kingdom Disney World theme park. Readers are encouraged to consult Wise and Velayutham (2009) for a more detailed treatment of Boutique Multiculturalism in everyday life.

Kumbayah Multiculturalism

"Kumbayah" is a simple, hymnlike folk song popularized by demonstrators and activists in the civil rights and world peace movements of the 1960s. In more recent times, the word is evoked as a euphemism for a naïve and utopian vision in which all ethnic and cultural groups worldwide cast aside their differences and join hands in celebration of universal peace and brotherhood (e.g., see Stern, 2009; Weiss, 2006). Because Kumbayah Multiculturalism has never existed anywhere on the globe in real life, it must be artificially manufactured in visual images promoted by advertisers. Thus, television commercials often display multiracial/multiethnic groups interacting harmoniously in everyday settings, even if such images are not nearly as common in real life (Associated Press, March, 1, 2009). It has become standard protocol for the covers of National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) publications to feature groups of camera-cute children smiling, hugging, playing, and laughing together, all of whom represent a United Nations visual array of racial and ethnic diversity. In short, Kumbayah Multiculturalism dreams of a world where every group's cultural values and traditions will be respected by every other group, and intergroup tensions are effortlessly overcome in the service of cross-cultural mutual understanding and unity (for an example of Kumbayah Multiculturalism, see the website for the World Parliament of Religions at http://www.parliamentofreligions.org).

Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism

In many professional training programs, multiculturalism is not viewed as an area of investigation that is taken seriously enough to be subject to the normal standards of empirical analysis, scholarly debate, or principled criticism. Rather, multiculturalism is viewed as a philosophy that is so noble and inspirational that it is exempt from the rough-and-tumble intellectual scrutiny commonly afforded to other topics and movements in professional school psychology. No effort is made to seriously grapple with the difficult and complex subject matter involved in the intersection of race, ethnicity, and education (or to learn from those disciplines that have done so).

Rather, the primary objective of Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism is to promote pithy slogans and catchphrases that sound good to the ears, and for audiences to feel good about themselves for promoting them (e.g., "celebrate multicultural diversity," "teach tolerance," "promote social justice"). Despite their endless repetition in professional newsletters and training materials, the tenets of Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism rarely reflect what people really think, what they plainly see or experience with their own senses, or what has been discovered from actual research. Rather, the truths of Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism reflect mere repetition of what has been overhead or said by others, ideas that are felt to be right (or ought to be right) to believe "in one's heart," or

beliefs that are to be publicly endorsed in order to be accepted by one's professional peers or to be seen as a good person.

Therefore, the ultimate objective of Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism is to avoid any penetrating analyses or discussion of harsh realities that might be upsetting to audiences, or at least might cause them to think about things that they would prefer not to think about. Influential political constituency groups must not be angered, and care must be taken to ensure that opinions/viewpoints are monitored and drained of any insights or information that is too controversial for mass consumption. Light-and-Fluffy Multiculturalism sees little need to bore audiences with the specific details of how multicultural principles are actually implemented in school settings, or analyses of whether they actually work as they are supposed to. All that is necessary is to endlessly recite, or at least encourage allegiance to, hackneyed platitudes, soothing bromides, and feel-good pleasantries.

Bean-Counting Multiculturalism

Bean-Counting Multiculturalism is the name given to the manner in which businesses, educational institutions, and government agencies respond to federal and state affirmative action mandates (see Greenhut, 2003; Sowell, 2004). Here, an agency, business, or university training program becomes multicultural simply on the basis of a specified proportion of persons from underrepresented groups that are hired/admitted into the program, business, or agency. In order to document compliance, the employer or training program must quantify the racial/ethnic breakdown of its employees or applicants, displayed in the appropriate tables and/or charts. School psychology training programs that are accredited by the APA or approved by NASP are required to submit such information on a regular basis, where successful numbers supposedly show that the program "recognizes the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of psychologists" (Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, 2010, p. 16).

All of these examples readily come to mind when school professionals encounter the term "multiculturalism." Nevertheless, a deeper and more penetrating analysis is required in order to understand how multiculturalism ideology has influenced the training of psychologists and educators over the decades. In doing so, this discussion begins first with *what multiculturalism is not*. Then, the six essential doctrines that collectively constitute multiculturalism ideology are discussed.

WHAT MULTICULTURALISM IS NOT

A careful understanding of what multiculturalism is requires first a fundamental understanding of what multiculturalism *is not*.

Multiculturalism Is Not a Science

"Science" refers to knowledge describing reliable truths and the operation of general laws, which are discovered and tested through what has come to be known as the scientific method. Here, observation and experimentation are employed to describe and explain the human behavior of individuals and groups in particular contexts. In the social sciences, science begins with the formulation of theories about human behavior, from which a large number of clear, specific hypotheses can subsequently be tested. Hypotheses are tested using a wide variety of experimental designs and the statistical analysis of measurable and observable data. Good theories enable clear hypotheses to be tested, supported, or disconfirmed, which in turn helps researchers to interpret their empirical findings within a meaningful context. Bad theories are stated in a manner that is so vague or imprecise that specific hypotheses cannot be formulated (let alone tested). Even when bad theories are stated in a manner that allows verification, such theories consistently fail to be supported. When scientists living in different continents (or operating from widely different political orientations) arrive at similar conclusions from continuously replicated and well-conducted research studies, then this increases consumers' confidence in that scientific knowledge base.

Scientific research can be distinguished from unscientific methods, which formulate knowledge claims based on appeals to authority, popular opinion, ideological biases, custom and tradition, or wishful thinking (Ruggiero, 2001). In contrast to knowledge gained through the scientific method, much of the so-called knowledge base of multiculturalism is a "received wisdom." That is, multiculturalism begins with a set of propositions handed down from multicultural writers or professional organizations as to how one should view the world, and the correct attitudes, feelings, and opinions that approved professionals should have toward particular multicultural topics. The acceptable role of research within multiculturalism ideology is not to discover objective truth, but to arrive at conclusions that can ultimately support and reinforce the ideology (see Table 10.3). When use of the scientific method yields data that *contradicts* the received wisdom of multiculturalism ideology, the data is summarily dismissed or ignored by multiculturalists, and the methods used to generate the data are denigrated as inherently biased (e.g., see Jensen, 1982, response to Gould, 1981).

Multiculturalism Is Not (Necessarily) "Best Practice"

The term *best practices* suggests that a variety of applied practices have been evaluated in real-life settings, and one or more practices have been shown—through either experience and/or research—to yield the best and most reliable outcomes. Journal articles and best practices chapters on multicultural issues in school psychology texts are replete with variations on the following core claims (see Martines, 2008):

a. School psychologists must be culturally competent in order to effectively serve cultural minority clients.
b. Cultural minority students are best served with culturally sensitive or culturally appropriate interventions.
c. In order to work effectively with culturally different families, the school psychologist should evaluate his or her own cultural biases.

In regards to statement *a*, no published systematic program of research, of which this author is aware, has (1) arrived at a consensus definition of cultural competence that enjoys universal acceptance among school psychologists, (2) identified appropriately standardized and psychometrically sound instruments for measuring cultural competence, or (3) demonstrated that those trained in cultural competence are more effective with English-speaking culturally different clients (or whose practice leads to better outcomes) compared to those who are not (see Frisby, 2009). In regards to statement *b*, no published systematic program of research has demonstrated how interventions discussed in mainstream school psychology texts cannot be effective (when applied in their original form) with English-speaking culturally different children. Conversely, no systematic research demonstrates that all English-speaking children (who experience difficulties in schools) within a particular ethnic/racial group require the same culturally modified interventions. Regarding statement *c*, no systematic program of research supports the assumption that culturally different clients have substantially different values *in all areas* compared to the values held by school psychologists. Furthermore, no well-replicated studies have shown that caregivers with biases different from their clients actually harm them in observable ways. The bottom line is that these claims, like many claims in the multicultural school psychology literature, reflect a received wisdom rather than conclusions that have been verified through rigorous, scientific research studies.

THE DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF SOCIOPOLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Multiculturalism shares many features in common with other social or political ideologies. As indicated in the opening quote of this chapter, the overall objective of a sociopolitical ideology is to persuade audiences to do something, believe something, feel something, or develop an attitude in favor of the ideology's pet agendas. The distinguishing features of sociopolitical ideologies are briefly described in the following sections.

An Ideology Must Exaggerate Its Own Importance in Order to Motivate Followers

Committed believers in ideologies believe that they are fighting for lofty, righteous goals, which if obtained have profound consequences for humankind. This fight

gives life meaning and purpose for those who are looking for an organizing set of beliefs that would enable them to feel proud about their chosen profession. Thus, it is not unusual for sociopolitical ideologies to be framed as indispensable for fighting injustices (e.g., statistical inequities, racism, poverty, discrimination, prejudice, unfairness, cultural misunderstanding). In reality, these societal problems have existed ever since human beings have existed, and they will continue to exist as long as human beings continue to exist, regardless of what ideologies try to do to "fight" them. Nevertheless, ideologies excite supporters with the hope that these problems can be easily eradicated or solved, if only as many people as possible can be convinced to rally around the righteous cause. This casts supporters of the ideology as "saviors" who will rescue victims from the harm that supposedly will be inflicted on them by those who do not believe in the ideology.

An Ideology Must Oversimplify Life's Complexities

No one scholarly discipline is sufficient by itself to permit learners to fully understand life in all of its nuances and complexities. History, education, psychology, sociology, psychometrics, anthropology, political science, humanities, and economics all contribute in their own specialized manner to understanding a complex and confusing world. Even within any one of these disciplines, numerous subdisciplines war against each other, each with its own arguments as to why its particular way of viewing a set of phenomena is better than another competing viewpoint. Add to this the staggering complexity of human beings, where individuals are uniquely characterized by their own constellation of ability strengths and weaknesses, temperament/personality makeup, unique upbringing, life experiences, and personal convictions that guide them in making life choices. People cannot be persuaded to believe in and follow an ideology if they have to struggle to understand and appreciate all of these complexities. Hence, ideologies must portray the world with the least amount of ambiguity, so that the moral/philosophical battle lines can be drawn more sharply. Stated figuratively, ideologies view life in "black and white." In the ideologue's universe, there are no greys, mauves, crimsons, or pastel colorings. This kind of thinking leads to single-issue politics, where ideologues convince themselves that winning a single issue (e.g., banning IQ tests for special education eligibility determination) will magically revolutionize the world according to their ideals.

Ideologies Have Their Own Unique Lexicon

Ideologies must invent their own unique lexicon, partly to allow members to communicate ideas more parsimoniously, but also to designate who belongs (or does not belong) in the club. New words and concepts are invented out of thin air (e.g., *people of color*, *tolerance*, *cultural competence*, *social justice*, *homophobia*, *CLD children*) and

then given their own specialized meaning by supporters of the ideology. If these new concepts are repeated often enough, they become so entrenched in the thinking of ideologues that it is difficult to believe there was a time when these words or concepts did not exist. Loaded words then lead to bumper sticker sloganeering, which reminds followers of the correct thinking required by the ideology (e.g., "Practice Tolerance," "Celebrate Diversity," "Equity with Excellence," "Differences are not Deficits," etc.).

Ideologies Must Enforce Conformity

In order for an ideology to accrue political power, its followers must be numerous, and all of them must think the same way and hold the same attitudes. Nonconformity threatens the cohesiveness of a movement, and may encourage others within the ideological movement to criticize its views or to defect to the other side. In various ways, some more subtle than others, the ideology must communicate the message that conformity will be rewarded and nonconformity will be punished. The potential threat of nonconformity to the ideology is increased if followers are allowed to think for themselves and arrive at their own conclusions. Therefore, the ideology must ensure that this does not happen. This can be accomplished in many ways. Ideologues will often promote the inherent virtue of the ideology, while demonizing those who either disagree with, do not follow, or engage in activities that threaten the ideology (e.g., see Sidebar 10.7). Followers must be kept from accessing research or other outlets that present cogent arguments for opposing viewpoints. More often, such opposing viewpoints are simply ignored by promoters of the ideology as if they do not exist. In other situations, reality must be continually reinterpreted for followers in order to model the correct way to perceive events. If followers see something plainly with their own eyes that undermines the ideology, supporters must spin and/or re interpret what is plainly seen in ways that support the ideology.

SIX ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES THAT CONSTITUTE MULTICULTURALISM IDEOLOGY

Sidebar 2.1 summarizes the standard "party line" promoted in school psychology concerning multiculturalism issues. Each talking point within the multicultural party line includes a set of implicit assumptions. These, in turn, lead to philosophies of training that are also fraught with implicit assumptions. Such assumptions are rooted in implicit doctrines that characterize multiculturalism ideology. These six interlocking implicit doctrines are described as follows (for an extended discussion and critique of these doctrines, consult Frisby, 2005a, 2005b).

Sidebar 2.1 The Multicultural "Party Line" in School Psychology Training

U.S. society, for a variety of reasons, is becoming more culturally diverse (operationalized by racial/ethnic/language differences) with each passing decade.[1–3] Cultural differences, and schools'/educators' inability to adapt to or understand them, are largely responsible for disproportionate psychoeducational problems, school underachievement, and disproportionate rates of special education placement among certain racial, ethnic, and language groups in U.S. schools.[4,5] In order to be properly prepared for these changes, school psychologists are obligated to immerse themselves in new training that leads to *cultural competence*.[2,6,7] Cultural competence, as defined by national and state school psychology professional associations and multicultural experts, will presumably lead to new knowledge, greater insight and sensitivity toward cultural differences, better interpersonal skills, the more frequent use of culturally sensitive assessments, and new attitudes in serving the psychoeducational needs of CLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) children in schools.[8,9] When integrated into existing school psychology training and practice, training for cultural competence will result in the reduction of inappropriate practices and improved outcomes for CLD students in schools.[9–12]

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The Group Identity Doctrine

According to this doctrine, schoolchildren are seen as little more than members of identity groups typically defined by race, ethnicity, social class, and/or language. Each group has a prescribed role in Marxist-inspired morality plays (e.g., ongoing conflicts between the "advantaged" against the "disadvantaged," the "victims" against the "victimizers," the "oppressed" against the "oppressors," the "dominant culture" against the "subordinate culture"; see *Marxism* in Glossary). Under multiculturalism ideology, school psychologists are led to believe that promoting certain generalizations about these groups presumably prepares school psychologists to understand or have greater insight into the psychology of individuals who belong to such groups (e.g., see White, 1984). This doctrine assumes implicitly that whatever characteristics define the group (e.g., race, ethnicity, social class, or language) are valuable for explaining the psychoeducational problems of, or providing the appropriate interventions for, individuals who belong to these groups (Jones, 2009).

The Difference Doctrine

According to this doctrine, differences among racial/ethnic/language groups are presumed to be so profound and mutually exclusive that a proper understanding of, and service to,

these groups requires "different" culturally specific assessment instruments, "different" culturally specific classroom instructional methods, and "different" culturally specific counseling and intervention techniques (e.g., see Bernal, Trimble, Burlew, & Leong, 2003). This reflects a belief in *Culture × Treatment Interactions* (see Sidebar 2.9 and Glossary). Based on such ideas, training programs operate under the unchallenged assumption that whatever is culturally different about groups is presumed to be more important and necessary to learn compared to what is culturally similar about groups. This doctrine either ignores or explicitly discourages research that compares groups on a common/universal standard, or even may go so far as to deny that such common/universal standards exist.

The Equity Doctrine

"Equity" has become a near-sacred word in multiculturalism ideology, and as such, there are two applications of its meaning. In the noncontroversial application, equity is viewed as a *process* where children from all groups are treated equally and fairly in the context of schooling and psychoeducational services. In the controversial application, equity is viewed as a *product*—brought to fruition only when children from different groups achieve equal outcomes (e.g., in academic attainment, special/gifted education placement rates, test scores, or discipline referrals). Here, it is implicitly assumed that the lack of equity (i.e., equal outcomes) is *prima facie* (on its face) evidence of the presence of bad testing/teaching practices, mistreatment, misunderstanding, or discrimination (Harry, 2006). Some training programs frame this problem as an issue of "social justice" (see Trainers of School Psychologists, *Trainer's Forum Newsletter*, Vol. 28, No. 4). Under this doctrine, school psychologists are socialized to consider advocacy for "outcomes equity" to be a moral imperative for the profession.

The Inclusion Doctrine

This doctrine is best known by its ubiquitous buzzword *diversity*. Here, it is assumed that the highest value to which school psychologists should subscribe is for educational outcomes to be sufficiently diverse—where racial/ethnic/language groups are "included" in outcomes according to their proportional representation in broader society. Training programs and professional organizations for educators thus encourage this doctrine by constantly reminding students that they must "celebrate," "value," or "embrace" diversity in order to have the proper mindset toward personal and professional growth in their field. The word *diversity* has come to imply *a particular type of diversity*—that is, one that emphasizes outward physical racial/ethnic characteristics (e.g., see O'Connor, 2010). Thus, a collection of physically identifiable Hispanic, Black, White, Asian, and disabled individuals are viewed as a prime example of diversity, whereas a group of white fiscal conservatives, white independents, white communists, white libertarians, and white liberal Democrats would not be considered as an example of diversity. If an outcome does

not display a sufficient degree of racial/ethnic diversity, then the outcome is vulnerable to charges that it is practicing "exclusion" rather than "inclusion" (e.g., see Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008; Wallace & Eriksson, 2006).

The Sensitivity Doctrine

According to this doctrine, members of the "majority" or "dominant" cultural group are morally obligated to avoid using any language, entertaining certain beliefs/ideas, or pursuing any research that has the potential to inadvertently offend or upset members of minority or nondominant groups (or those who style themselves as their spokespersons). In the research arena, the Sensitivity Doctrine exerts pressure on researchers to avoid findings that are critical of minority group behavior, attitudes, or abilities, or that portrays them in an unflattering light. In the words of one writer, "the need for free and unfettered scientific exchange must be balanced against the need that no group in society feels threatened by such exchange" (Gottfredson, 2007, paraphrasing Estes, 1992).

The Sensitivity Doctrine encourages a perception of the problems faced by minority groups as fundamentally attributable to their status as perpetual victims of historical or current mistreatment and misunderstanding (which is a perspective that harmonizes with multiculturalism ideology). Students, practitioners, trainers, and professional organizations allow themselves to be cowed into silence from the Sensitivity Doctrine by studiously avoiding discussion of certain relevant but politically "radioactive" topics. These sensitive topics cause professionals to modify their speech or interpretation of research results in order to conform to the dictates of current multicultural orthodoxy—for fear that not doing so would invite accusations of "bigotry," "Eurocentrism," "cultural incompetence," or "cultural insensitivity." In the words of one writer, "[o]ne can feel the gradient of collective alarm and disapproval like a deepening chill as one approaches the forbidden area" (Gottfredson, 1994, p. 56). Militant multicultural advocates capitalize on these fears by adopting a professional identity as "enforcers" of politically correct multiculturalism in university training, journal editorial boards, and state professional organizations.

The Sovereignty Doctrine

According to this doctrine, racial/ethnic minority psychologists, educators, or organizations—simply by virtue of their minority status—are assumed to have automatic and unquestioned expertise in all matters related to serving or understanding racial/ethnic minority children in schools. As a corollary, white middle-class professionals—by virtue of their "outsider" status—are expected to defer to the opinions of racial/ethnic minority individuals without regard to their training, experience, or knowledge in serving cultural minority children (e.g., see Swisher, 1998). According to Hale-Benson (1986, p. 4),

for example, it is the singular task of the "black community" of psychological scholars to pool their scholarly talents so that black children can succeed educationally. Similarly, Swisher (1998) argues that only Native American educators can significantly improve education for Native American children.

The following section describes how these six doctrines are blended together in supporting various models of multicultural advocacy in the context of preservice training for school professionals. Many training programs in school psychology, counselor education, and teacher training are under an often self-imposed pressure to (a) admit students who fit specified "diversity goals," (b) integrate multicultural content into courses and practica in order to secure or retain accreditation status, or (c) generally arrange training experiences to win students over to the goals and values of multiculturalism. As indicated in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, the primary goal of multiculturalism ideology is *conversion*. Three major models for changing hearts and minds to embrace multiculturalism can be identified in most university training programs, which are labeled *The Moral Model*, *The Culture Model*, and *The Social Engineering Model* (adapted from Fein, 2001). The central tenets of each model are summarized, followed by a description of how each model typically responds to criticism, concluding with a critical evaluation of the serious flaws that are inherent within each model.

MODELS OF MULTICULTURAL ADVOCACY WITHIN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

The Moral Model

Under the *Moral Model*, multiculturalism advocacy is framed as a fundamental battle between good versus evil. Counseling psychology and multicultural education are two disciplines that are well known for characterizing racism, racial/ethnic prejudice, and discrimination as the preeminent moral evils presumed to be responsible for minority group misery (see Sidebar 2.2). According to the *Moral Model*, properly trained multiculturalists (who represent the forces of good) should be socialized to aggressively fight these evils as advocates for fairness and "social justice" (Briggs, 2009; Shriberg, 2009).

Under the *Moral Model*, minority group status is viewed as synonymous with "victimhood." That is to say, victimhood becomes the lens through which majority groups are encouraged to view minority group identity in U.S. society. Members of nonwhite and/or non-English-speaking groups are assumed to be automatic victims of racism, prejudice, and discrimination simply on the basis of their minority status—with only the most superficial observations being required as corroborating evidence. Such "victim narratives" are well known to anyone with even a cursory exposure to contemporary

racial/ethnic politics in the United States. That is, audiences are constantly reminded that African Americans used to be slaves in the United States, faced legally sanctioned discrimination in the past (particularly in Southern states), and are poorer and incarcerated at greater rates than whites on average (Healey, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2003).

Likewise, audiences are constantly reminded that American Indians were swindled in the past by the U.S. government from broken treaties, had their land forcibly taken away from them, had their cultural traditions disrupted by forced resettlement efforts, and suffer disproportionately from a variety of health problems (Healey, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2003). Hispanics are likewise presumably victimized by pressures to acculturate to English-speaking U.S. society, as well as political efforts to crack down on illegal immigration (Healey, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2003). Although Asian Americans have typically fared better than other groups on income, education, and social achievement variables, the *Moral Model* portrays them as victims on the grounds that their model minority status subjects them to unfair perceptions and stereotypes (Sue & Sue, 2003). Arab Americans are seen as victims of U.S. stereotypes and unfair perceptions (e.g., racial profiling), particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (Sue & Sue, 2003). Under the *Moral Model*, any persons belonging to these groups automatically share the victim status of their ancestors.

✍ Sidebar 2.2 The Ubiquity of Racism as Perceived By Counseling Psychology and Multicultural Education Texts

- "…all racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States share experiences of oppression as a result of living in the dominant White American culture." (Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, & Loya, 1997, p. 13)
- "White therapists and counselors are the major purveyors of power because of their disproportionate representation among the mental health professionals. This also means they are the greatest perpetrators of racism.… Although they may be well meaning, they often behave as unintentional racists." (Ridley, Espelage, & Rubinstein, 1997, p. 139)
- "(R)acism is what people do, regardless of what they think or feel." (Ridley, 1995, quoted in Fong & Lease, 1997, p. 389)
- "…what may have worked previously to combat racism in the 1960s may need to be reorganized to meet the new challenges of racism's protean [changeable] manifestations." (Liu & Pope-Davis, 2003, p. 99)

- "Over the past 500 years in U.S. history, racism has reflected many forms, including blatant racism, enlightened racism, symbolic racism, paternalistic racism, liberal racism, and unintentional racism.… Although many of the laws that perpetuated and maintained racism have been abolished, racism continues in contemporary U.S. society in numerous individual and institutionalized forms." (Coleman & Hau, 2003, p. 174)
- "…issues related to race and racism are among the causes of discrepancies in student achievement among students of color and their white peers." (Holcomb-McCoy, 2003, p. 416)
- "Others…have also noted the presence of racist practices in schools such as tracking ethnic minority students in low-performing classes, excluding students of a particular ethnic/cultural group from school programs, and disproportionately referring ethnic minority students for special education services. Multiculturally competent school counselors have not only a clear understanding of systemic racism but also the ability to effectively challenge racist practices that occur in their schools." (Holcomb-McCoy, 2003, p. 416)
- "…racism as a social force influencing access to and the delivery of health services, as well as the manner in which research is conducted, is clearly evident in the United States as it is in other countries." (Merluzzi & Hegde, 2003, p. 423)
- "The exposure to acute and chronic stress due to racism is considered to be a significant and possibly unique risk for African Americans compared to other ethnic groups." (Merluzzi & Hegde, 2003, p. 423–424)
- "Institutional racism and discrimination do not have to be intentional for them to have psychological and physical consequences." (Root, 2003, p. 481)
- "Institutional racism is characterized by practices or policies that systematically limit opportunities for people who historically have been characterized as psychologically, intellectually, or physically deficient." (Root, 2003, p. 481)
- "White children are socialized into a society that, despite strides in civil rights legislation, continues to be racist in many of its social institutions, not the least of which are schools." (Taylor & Quintana, 2003, p. 512)
- "Although so-called 'old-fashioned racism' is, arguably, less prevalent today than it was 40 years ago, other forms of racism are alive and well in U.S. society." (Taylor & Quintana, 2003, p. 512)
- "…the challenge of the multicultural movement in the 21st century is to ameliorate more sophisticated and insidious forms of cultural-racial

discrimination, oppression, and injustice that are deeply embedded in the institutions and organizations that constitute the infrastructure of our society." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 227)

- "Racism is a critical component in the organization of modern American society characterized most critically by the superior position of whites and the institutions—ideological as well as structural—which maintain it." (Wellman, 1993, pp. 54–55; quoted in Neville, Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001, p. 260)
- "We believe that White racism represents one of the most important moral problems our nation faces in the 21st century." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 290)
- "…structural racism is deeply embedded in our societal institutions, resulting in a broad range of negative consequences for the overall health and well-being of millions of persons of color in the United States." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 290)
- "…White persons commonly exhibit certain behaviors and emotional dispositions and fail to exhibit other types of behaviors and emotional reactions that effectively help perpetuate [racism]." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 294)
- "White racism is a pervasive force in our society that is deeply embedded in our societal structures and entrenched in the ideological and epistemological paradigms used by the dominant cultural-racial group in the United States to construct meaning of reality." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 294)
- "…the economic-educational-social-political realities of our society provide overwhelming evidence that underscores how White racism continues to thrive in our society." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 294)
- "White racism remains a major societal problem that will not disappear without concerted effort by all justice-loving persons in this country.…It is vital for all White persons…to become more knowledgeable of the complex ways that this serious problem is manifested in our nation and work to ameliorate this pervasive form of social pathology." (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001, p. 295)
- "Because racism is such an integral part of our society, it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture." (Delgado, 1995; as quoted in Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 58)
- "Cultural racism refers to the elevation of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant cultural heritage to a position of superiority over the cultural

experiences of ethnic minority groups." (Gay, 1973; quoted in Bennett, 2004, p. 857)

- "Racism can enter the school curriculum through written texts which depict minorities negatively or ignore them altogether. Intelligence tests may be considered a form of racism, since they measure one's knowledge of middle class culture." (Madrid, 1986; quoted in Bennett, 2004, p. 858)
- "…one can view the clock as a tool of racism that the monochromic dominant society uses to regulate subordinate groups." (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004, p. 253)
- "Racist structures and processes [in schools] can include institutionalizing better instruction for White children than for children of color; using tracking, special education, and gifted programs to differentiate instruction along racial lines; using racially biased tests and other assessment processes; employing mainly White professionals; and so forth." (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004, p. 251)

As overt, egregious examples of racism become increasingly difficult to identify in contemporary U.S. society, multiculturalism redefines racism as petty slings and slights occasionally experienced during the hustle and bustle of everyday life. These incidents, some of which are invisible to the naked eye, nevertheless are presumed to be responsible for the "oppression" of minorities on a regular basis. At the time of this writing, for example, the concept of racial "microaggressions" is in vogue among multiculturalists in counseling psychology, which has subsequently spread to school psychology as well (Sue, 2003).

The *Moral Model* depends on two related categories of evidence to rally support for the "minorities-as-victims" narrative: (1) observed social inequalities and disproportionate outcomes between groups, and (2) accusations of racism by minorities and their advocates. The practice of putting observed inequalities between racial/ethnic groups front and center in educational debates is a favorite tactic of *civil rights moralism* (see Glossary). Civil rights moralism compels school professionals to view equality (currently referred to as *equity*) among groups as the preeminent moral mandate. In short, equality is prized, whereas inequality is viewed as inherently evil.

The quantification of *disproportionate outcomes* constitutes key evidence used in multicultural advocacy within school psychology and special education (Coutinho, Oswald, & Best, 2002; Figueroa, 1999; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Sullivan, 2010). Conti and Stetson (1997) pinpoint the heart of this issue as follows:

> Under the contemporary regime of "proportionalism," in many venues, from education to government contracts to the professions, all that is necessary to establish a presumption of discrimination and unfairness is to show that women and minorities are not distributed in a given area in exact proportion to their distribution in the population. (p. 71)

Disproportionate outcomes between racial/ethnic groups—whether they exist in special education eligibility, discipline referrals, suspension rates, or high school graduation statistics—are viewed as inherently unjust and evidence that something sinister is at work "beneath the surface" that is ultimately responsible for these "wrong numbers" (e.g., see Blanchett, 2010). Therefore, under the *Moral Model*, the appropriately trained school psychologist accepts the moral obligation to lend his or her services to correcting these disproportionalities, so that egalitarian outcomes can hopefully result. At the time of this writing, one school psychology training program website describes this moral obligation as follows (under the heading "Commitment to Social Justice"):

> …faculty and students have a strong commitment to social justice as an integral part of our training. Longstanding patterns of oppression and discrimination have left our nation with inequities that continue to plague our schools and society. We believe that school psychologists have a responsibility to develop an identity that incorporates a commitment to social justice. This dedication to equity cannot be an add-on or a single course in diversity. Rather, the commitment to cultural responsiveness and advocacy must be an integral part of the training and role of the school psychologist, as central as our commitment to evidence-based practice and effective collaboration. Thus, we train our students…to act as an advocate and systems change agent, actively monitoring the quality of the educational experience and outcomes for students from groups who have been under-represented or marginalized. (accessed January 2011 from http://site.educ.indiana.edu/Default.aspx?alias=site.educ .indiana.edu/schpsy)

Testimonials that document injustices are another favorite tactic used by the *Moral Model* to generate sympathy for the "minorities-as-victims" narrative. Jonathan Kozol is an education writer who is well known in teacher education programs for his books that chronicle, in heart-rending detail, educational inequalities that particularly affect some racial minorities in urban schools (e.g., see *Savage Inequalities, Death at an Early Age, The Shame of the Nation*). One such example reads as follows:

> In one make-shift elementary school housed in a former skating rink next to a funeral parlor in another nearly all-black-and-Hispanic section of the Bronx,

> class size rose to 34 and more; four kindergarten classes and a sixth grade class were packed into a single room that had no windows. Airlessness was stifling in many rooms; and recess was impossible because there was no outdoor playground and no indoor gym, so the children had no place to play. In another elementary school, which had been built to hold 1,000 children but was packed to bursting with some 1,500 boys and girls, the principal poured out his feelings to me in a room in which a plastic garbage bag had been attached somehow to cover part of the collapsing ceiling. "This," he told me, pointing to the garbage bag, then gesturing around him at the other indications of decay and disrepair one sees in ghetto schools much like it elsewhere, "would not happen to white children." (Kozol, 2005, p. 41)

As graduate students and school professionals are continually marinated in these and other examples of *civil rights moralism*, they are expected to feel sorry for cultural minority groups, further cementing a perception of these groups as perpetual victims of a perpetually unjust society. Under the *Moral Model* framework, the ultimate goal of multicultural training is for school psychologists in training to come to the place where they suddenly experience an epiphany (called *getting it*; see Green, Cook-Morales, Robinson-Zañartu, & Ingraham, 2009). Once school psychologists "get it," a noble passion will presumably ignite in their hearts, which then begins a process of internalizing an identity as protectors of, and advocates for, "the oppressed." Newly emboldened by this righteous cause, the school psychologist is then expected to expose injustices wherever they may be found, and to use one's cultural sensitivity/awareness to fight the racism, prejudice, and discrimination that most assuredly lies at the root of the problems experienced by minority groups in schools. Green et al. (2009) articulate this emotional epiphany as follows:

> "Getting it" emotionally allows that tear to run down our cheek when we witness injustice, and it elicits a cringe of outrage when we hear a racist remark. …Emotional knowing is experienced in the essence of our beings and felt in our hearts, in our bellies, and in our blood. (pp. 91–92)

There is virtually no limit to the various ways that minorities are thought to be victimized by schools, according to the *Moral Model*. As examples, minorities are said to be victimized by biased tests that are insensitive to their cultures (Helms, 1992); they score lower on standardized achievement tests because of "stereotype threat"(see Glossary) and economic disadvantages in the home (Jones, 2007); they are disciplined at more frequent rates in schools because teachers misunderstand their cultural traits (Osher et al., 2004); and they are referred more frequently to certain special education

classes presumably from inappropriate referral practices (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2009).

How Does the Moral Model *Philosophy Respond to Its Critics?*

Because passion for social justice is the engine that drives the *Moral Model* of multiculturalism advocacy, it comes as no surprise that its proponents' responses to critics are also fundamentally *visceral*, appealing to the emotions rather than to evidence, data, or reason. *Moral Model* multiculturalists respond to their critics in one or more of the following ways.

Opposing Arguments Are Simply Ignored.

Criticisms cannot hurt multiculturalism if they are not even acknowledged to exist. The implicit worth and virtue of multiculturalism is seen as so profound that critics' appeal to data, logic, and evidence is largely irrelevant—and not worthy of the effort required to respond seriously. When multicultural activists surround themselves only with like-minded individuals, and insulate themselves socially and professionally against exposure to legitimate criticism, then it becomes easier to simply convince themselves that their positions have no fatal weaknesses. The problem, instead, is reinterpreted as originating in the character flaws of their critics.

Deflect Attention Away From the Empirical Weaknesses of Multiculturalism Ideology and Toward an Emphasis on Its Superior Moral Virtue.

Because all debates under the *Moral Model* are reduced to a fundamental conflict between good versus evil, multicultural advocacy requires no independent justification other than an admiration of its own moral goodness. The ideologue couldn't care less about persuasive research that contradicts or undermines cherished beliefs. What ultimately matters is the satisfaction that results from a reputation of being an unwavering advocate for a righteous cause. Sympathetic audiences are expected to overlook the empirical bankruptcy of multiculturalism and sympathize with the fact that its defenders are sincere in fighting a noble cause.

Twisting Logic and Common Sense to Defend the Position at All Costs.

Those who follow the *Moral Model* of multicultural advocacy often are committed to twisting logic to incomprehensible lengths in order to protect and defend the moral sanctity of their positions. As an example, consider a report entitled "Suspended Education: Urban Middle Schools in Crisis" (Losen & Skiba, 2010), published by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). The SPLC™ describes itself as "a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the

most vulnerable members of society" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2012). According to its website, the SPLC tracks and exposes the activities of organized "hate groups" nationally, publishes and distributes "Teaching Tolerance" instructional materials to schools and interested organizations, and retains a cadre of civil rights lawyers to litigate discrimination cases, some of which have resulted in high-profile judgments netting multimillion-dollar settlements for SPLC and their clients. The NASP website on diversity resources (http://www.nasponline.org/resources/culturalcompetence/diversity websites.aspx) prominently features links to various projects sponsored by the SPLC, ostensibly designed to assist school psychologists in helping educators "reduce prejudice," "teach tolerance," and respond appropriately to bigotry. On the surface, there appears to be no other organization that "does the work of the angels" as nobly as the SPLC.

However, as with any ideology that is fundamentally driven by moral passions (as opposed to the careful analysis of research), the temptation for corruption, greed, and recklessness is apparently too seductive to resist. A Spring 2010 special issue of *The Social Contract* journal (Volume 20, No. 3) is exclusively devoted to articles detailing how the SPLC has grown rich and corrupt by, among other things, exaggerating what does (and does not) qualify as a "hate group" and concomitant hate crimes. According to the SPLC, any organization that opposes illegal immigration, criticizes affirmative action, has an explicitly conservative political bent, or opposes homosexual behavior on religious grounds is morally equivalent to the neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan (Colson, 2010; Gemma, 2010; Menzies, 2010).

Of particular concern here is how supposedly data-based publications suspend logic and common sense in the service of *Moral Model* advocacy. The SPLC-sponsored "Suspended Education" document (Losen & Skiba, 2010) appropriately begins with a careful documentation of middle school suspension rates, disaggregated by race, sex, and ethnicity, since the 1970s. The report analyzed data from 18 large urban school districts in Florda, Wisconsin, Indiana, Texas, North Carolina, Washington, Georgia, California, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusettes, and Maryland. The authors found that racial gaps in suspension rates have grown considerably since 1973 in all districts and states studied. In particular, suspension rates for some racial/ethnic groups significantly exceeded average suspension rates of the general population, especially for African American males.

These data certainly present a legitimate cause for alarm, but what is most alarming is the authors' *interpretation* of this data and their recommendations for future action. Fantastically, the authors make the claim that, despite this data, "[r]esearch on student behavior, race, and discipline has found no evidence that African-American over-representation in school suspension is due to higher rates of misbehavior" (p. 10). Suspending for a moment legitimate challenges over the factual accuracy of this claim, this response illustrates an all-too-common reflexive tendency of *Moral Model* advocacy.

That is, instead of facing squarely the problem of minority overrepresentation in school misbehavior, *Moral Model* advocacy spins painful facts into an opportunity to reconfigure them as examples of minority victimhood (by implying that a widespread and sinister agenda impels school districts nationwide to unfairly discriminate against racial/cultural minority students). In the context of their review of school desegregation research, Caldas & Bankston (2005) write:

> But can we discount some or even most of these suspensions and expulsions of minority students as reflections of biased teachers and administrators? It seems we cannot. Major research studies find no evidence to support the so-called prejudiced teacher hypothesis as an explanation for overall differences in ethnic grades or disciplinary actions. Indeed, substantial evidence confirms that misbehavior on the part of minority students is actually greater than indicated by most statistics. A recent study of the issue has concluded, "In many school systems black students are less likely to be suspended for the same offense as a white student. Moreover, the greater the discretion given administrators in suspension decisions, the fewer the black students suspended." It does indeed look very unlikely that the high suspension and expulsion rates of minority students are produced by biased enforcement. (p. 92)

Engaging in Anger, Sanctimony, Name Calling, and Character Assassination.

Those who identify with multiculturalism ideology come in all shapes, sizes, backgrounds, and personality styles. However, those who are most vocal and militant about multiculturalism see it as an integral feature of their personal and professional identities. Some become angry simply over the perception that others do not take multiculturalism as seriously as they do. To illustrate, Green et al. (2009) write:

> "They just don't get it!" I shouted these words in my mind at a meeting of national leaders charged with charting the future of our profession. No one (else) seemed outraged that schools were still failing our diverse youth and that our role in righting that wrong would be critical. Where was our depth of concern and our plan for action? Why did I have to call across the country to find a colleague who shared my passionate concern and check my reality? Here was a conference filled with brilliant minds, but the journey of the heart and spirit to linking those minds to meaningful actions for our diverse children, conceptualizing the problem with multifaceted depth, seemed to be a place we dare not go. (p. 108)

The *Moral Model* assumes that those who criticize any aspect of multiculturalism (on either empirical or philosophical grounds)—or who fail to behave in ways expected by multiculturalists—do so not because of any legitimate or principled reasons, but because of fundamental moral or character flaws that require sanctimonious condemnation and correction (Fein, 2001). Thus, those who take issue with any aspect of multiculturalism are viewed as morally compromised by their inherent "Eurocentrism" (Helms, 1989; Richardson, 1993), their sense of "white privilege" or "white supremacy" (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2003), their latent or overt racism (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2003; Mio & Awakuni, 2000), or "[the loss of the] desire to be considered serious scholars" (Parham, 2002, p. 31). One writer even claimed that the failure of whites to enroll their children in lavishly funded minority schools (for the purposes of promoting racial integration) reflects "something very evil about America" (Jordan, 1992). A particularly telling example of this mindset can be seen in "white privilege" conferences that are currently in vogue among militant multicultural educators (an example of which is shown in Sidebar 2.3).

Sidebar 2.3 *Moral Model* Multiculturalism Training: "White Privilege" Workshops

Approximately 1,500 teachers, students, activists, artists, social workers, and counselors from more than 35 states attended the 12th annual White Privilege Conference held from April 13–16, 2011, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The conference was sponsored by the Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity & Inclusion at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. According to the White Privilege Conference (WPC) website (www.whiteprivilegeconference.com/wpc.html), the WPC is not designed to "attack, degrade or beat up on white folks," but nevertheless is "built on the premise that the U.S. was started by white people, for white people." As such, the purpose of the conference is to provide a comprehensive examination of the concepts of "privilege and oppression" involving race, gender, sexuality, class, and disability, as well as "the ways we all experience some form of privilege, and how we're all affected by that privilege." Select titles from the more than 150 workshops offered during the conference are listed as follows:

- "Making Your School or Classroom a Force for Eliminating Racism"
- "Helping Non-White Students Survive Academia—The Pinnacle of White Dominance"

- "How Queer Stays White: Interrupting White and Male Supremacy in Queer Struggle"
- "The Joy of Unlearning Racism: How White People Experience the Journey Toward Liberation and Healing"
- "This is Your Brain on Racism: Understanding and Transforming the Neurophysiology of White Privilege and Internalized Racism"
- "Uprooting Christian Hegemony"
- "Whose Hip Hop Is It? How White Supremacist Ideology Commoditized a Movement"
- "Beyond Jerry Springer: Correcting the Myths and Misconceptions of Transsexuality"
- "Building Political Consciousness for Social Transformation: Land, Labor and the end of Whiteness as Property"
- "'ESPN's Rap Sheet': How Sports Media Promotes White Male Supremacy"

As quoted directly from workshop descriptions, attendees learned how "black inferiority and white superiority still impact many institutions in American life, such as education"; how white privilege "can keep some of our students from experiencing academic success"; and how "social justice educators" can use "strategic organizational change efforts" to create "systemic, long-term culture change" in organizations. One workshop purported to teach "essential qualities and skills required for white people to avoid acting from a 'savior' or 'superiority' complex when working in community organizations and educational settings." In another workshop, attendees participated in an "interactive performance event" based on real testimonials from migrants who have attempted to cross the U.S.–Mexico border.

(adapted from Kersten, 2011)

Fatal Flaws of the Moral Model

Passionate emotions may provide an immediate sense of inspiration, motivation for action, and self-satisfaction, but they are unacceptable as a foundation on which to build a knowledge base that guides an applied profession. Emotions may ignite action, but they cannot sustain it over time (Fein, 2001).

Conflicts Rooted in Opposing Moral Positions Are Resistant to Resolution.

Debates in which two or more sides are each driven by the *Moral Model* are extremely resistant to resolution, because sides often disagree on which moral principle should drive

policy decisions. In debates over affirmative action, for example, one side feels that it is profoundly immoral for groups who have experienced discrimination in the past to be denied special help in the present. Similarly, those on the opposing side feel just as strongly that it is profoundly immoral to extend special privileges unequally to certain groups simply on the basis of race or ethnicity. In the same way, those who support gay rights feel that it is profoundly immoral for persons to be denied public and social affirmation because of naturally occurring sexual tendencies that are largely beyond their control. Yet those who oppose gay rights feel just as strongly that homosexual behavior is deviant and immoral (on the basis of deeply held religious or nonreligious beliefs), and equally as immoral to publicly affirm the legitimacy and mainstreaming of such behavior.

The point here is that when two or more sides argue over opposing positions rooted in deeply held moral convictions, *they are unlikely to persuade the opposing side*. Instead, advocates become unhinged in defense of favored ideologies, with name calling and character assassination becoming the preferred modes of debate. This creates winners and losers in organizational policy decisions (Schein, 1998), where the losers are prone to resist initiatives of the winning side. Instead, the losing side is much more likely to build resistance movements of like-minded individuals within the organization (e.g., Cummings, 2008) or to break away from the organization with the goal of forming a new one. The point is, viscera is never a reliable foundation on which to build training models in school psychology or any other field.

Clear, Objective Thinking Is Compromised.

The emotional intensity with which moral positions are held tend to create pervasive blind spots in other intellectual or moral areas (Fein, 2001). This causes otherwise careful scholars and professionals to become quite sloppy and/or careless in how they apply (or do not apply) research to practice. Here, professional objectivity is compromised, and there is a tendency to distort priorities. For example, while "color-blind merit" and "representative diversity" may both be noble goals, they often lead to opposite outcomes in policy decisions. The ideologues' tendency to elevate representative diversity over color-blind merit in all instances leads to what one writer refers to as the "dictatorship of virtue" (Bernstein, 1994). Ideological rigidity manages only to inspire like-minded followers. For others, rigid moralism invites only alienation, opposition, and backlash.

The Moral Model *Creates Moral Confusion Rather Than Moral Clarity.*

By portraying educational problems as a good guy/bad guy dichotomy, the *Moral Model* encourages professionals in training to become more acutely race conscious at the same time that they are receiving opposing messages to be color-blind in dealings with others. In many multicultural advocacy movements, the ideal of "color-blindness" is openly held

up to ridicule (Kunjufu, 2002; Schofield, 2004). The *Moral Model* encourages professionals to view the world through the prism of racial/ethnic identity politics. That is to say, all minority problems are perceived as attributable to the long-term effects of whites' mistreatment of minorities in the distant past, or to something whites are currently doing (or not doing) to minorities in the present. This, in turn, creates an inducement for teachers, counselors, and school psychologists to cease being appropriately judgmental toward any legitimate faults or wrongdoing on the part of minorities—since they are viewed as little more than hapless victims of circumstances beyond their control. Such double standards in expectations rarely escape public notice. Here, militant multiculturalists make themselves vulnerable to the charge of *liberal racism* (see Glossary), defined as patronizing attitudes toward minority groups that in essence absolves them from any personal responsibility or accountability for life outcomes. According to Ahlert (2008), for individuals who subscribe to the *Moral Model* of race relations:

> …the color of a man's skin…determines everything, but in this case being non-white confers a sense of permanent victimhood coupled with permanent entitlement. Non-whites can never accomplish anything without government set-asides, affirmative action, quotas, etc., all of which were/are provided by the enlightened segment of the white population. Any white who does not subscribe to such a worldview gets tossed into the dedicated racist category. Nothing will convince them otherwise…

Although some whites may be particularly susceptible to this form of emotional manipulation, many are not. When exposed to multicultural advocacy and indoctrination rooted in the *Moral Model*, such persons will either tune out such messages, superficially pretend to "go along to get along," or actively resist being unfairly stereotyped and demonized (for a more detailed discussion, see Chapter 10).

The Culture Model

Although the *Moral Model* of training reduces multicultural issues to an essential conflict between good versus evil, the *Culture Model* of training reduces multicultural issues to an essential conflict between "enlightenment versus ignorance."

The *Culture Model* approach to multicultural training is modeled after the training students receive in introductory human exceptionalities classes. In such classes, students learn that certain diagnosable conditions (e.g., autism, deafness, blindness, mental retardation, learning disabilities, emotional disturbances) have specific identifiable characteristics in schoolchildren that can undermine normal academic and social functioning. Thus, if a preservice teacher, school counselor, or school psychologist plans to work with autistic children in the future, they must first learn specialized terms and

concepts that are specific to the unique social, language, cognitive, and developmental characteristics of autistic children. In the same way, the *Culture Model* views "culture" and "cultural differences" as all-purpose explanations that presumably help preservice professionals understand the peculiarities of children from different racial, ethnic, social class, or language groups.

As in the *Moral Model*, minorities are still essentially viewed as perpetual victims of the society around them. Unlike the *Moral Model*, however, the *Culture Model* emphasizes the role of "cultural misunderstanding" as the primary ingredient responsible for school problems. In the *Culture Model* worldview, minority groups are seen as growing up in an insular cultural environment that, for all practical purposes, is largely unknown to citizens belonging to the majority culture. The task of training, therefore, is threefold. First, the *Culture Model* seeks to identify the "clinical disorder" in majority groups that presumably causes them to be insensitive to the needs of minorities in schools. Predictably, these disorders are framed in cultural terms using a variety of names, such as "Eurocentrism" (Helms, 1989), "cultural blindness" (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Issacs, 1989), or "ethnocentrism" (Pope-Davis, Coleman, Liu, & Toporek, 2003). Second, students trained under the *Culture Model* are socialized to view cultural differences as the primary explanation for different educational outcomes among racial/ethnic groups. Third, the *Culture Model* encourages students to seek and use so-called "culturally sensitive" interventions that presumably work better with cultural minority students (compared to interventions that are not culturally sensitive).

Whereas the fundamental message of the *Moral Model* is that minorities are victims, the fundamental message of the *Culture Model* is that minorities are exotic. Minorities-are-exotic messages are designed to control the *image* of how minority groups are portrayed in the social science literature. These images, as applied to different groups, are depicted in Sidebars 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7.

Sidebar 2.4 "Minorities-as-Exotic" Perspective in Psychoeducational Literature: African Americans

Worldview (Boykin, 1986; Hale-Benson, 1986; Huber & Pewewardy, 1990)

- Emphasizes spiritualism and harmony with nature
- Values affect and interconnectedness with people
- Flexible orientation toward being on time
- Orientation toward people rather than objects
- Emphasis on oral rather than print-based communication

Preferred Learning Style (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Hale-Benson, 1986; Huber & Pewewardy, 1990; Kunjufu, 2002; Turner, 1986)

- Learns better under cooperative rather than competitive learning situations
- Learning is enhanced (particularly for young children) when opportunities for movement are incorporated into lessons
- Learning is enhanced when test questions are read orally rather than read as text
- Learns more easily from materials that have social, rather than abstract, content

Preferred Style in Language, Interpersonal Communication, and Helping Contexts (Hale-Benson, 1986; Kochman, 1981; Martines, 2008; Orr, 1997)

- Frequent use of context-specific word meanings, "colorful" and idiomatic expressions
- Language syntax is restricted and grammatically simple; rigid and limited use of adjectives and adverbs
- Language patterns interfere with standard English necessary for understanding math problems
- Males may use "brother's" handshake
- In interacting with others, 36 to 42 inches of space preferred
- Relating style is animated and confrontational
- May look away when helper is speaking; can show disrespect in same manner
- Expressive; nods and facial expressions common

✍ Sidebar 2.5 "Minorities-as-Exotic" Perspective in Psychoeducational Literature: Asian Americans

General Cultural Values (Morrow, 1989)

- Geared toward spiritualism
- Mankind is supposed to live in harmony with, rather than dominate, nature

Child-Rearing/Family Practices (Chan, 1986; Morrow, 1989)

- Family, rather than the individual, is the basis of society
- Family members must develop a sense of moral obligation and primary loyalty to family
- Child behaviors that maintain and enhance the family name are considered valuable

- Negative child behaviors (e.g., disobedience, disrespect) bring collective shame on the family
- Traditionally, teachers are more respected than parents
- Children are not allowed much independence
- Parents control child's behavior by appealing to child's sense of obligation to others
- Children often sleep with their parents
- Greets the head of a family or an older person first
- Sons are valued more than daughters

Special Education Issues *(Chan-sew, 1980; Morrow, 1989)*

- Child's handicap thought to be punishment for moral transgressions committed by parents and/or ancestors
- Handicapped children are thought to be possessed by demons, ghosts, or evil spirits

Preferred Style in Helping Contexts (Martines, 2008)

- Soft and pliable handshake
- Prefer respectful distance, 36 to 42 inches okay
- Indirect eye contact
- Few smiles; head nods may be used to signal respect
- Categorized as East (Chinese, Japanese, Korean) and Southeast (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian) Asians

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✍ Sidebar 2.6 "Minorities-as-Exotic" Perspective in Psychoeducational Literature: Hispanics

Cultural Values (Dunn & Griggs, 1995)

- Loyalty to the family; adolescents more inclined than Anglos to adopt parents' religious and political beliefs
- Males are more authority oriented; females are more peer oriented

*Cognitive/Learning Style (Dunn & Griggs, 1995; Tileston & Darling, 2008)**

- Field dependent; perceive stimuli globally and experience new information holistically
- Learn best when material to be learned has social content
- Internalize criticism from teachers
- Greater preferences for a cooler (temperature) learning environment

*Communication/Language (Tileston & Darling, 2008)**

- Values diplomacy and tact in communication with others

*Social Interaction Style (Tileston & Darling, 2008)**

- Hispanics (particularly Mexican Americans) work well together in co-operative or collective efforts, as opposed to competitive individualism
- Predominant response style is "experiencing life to its fullest"
- Role definitions between males and females must be respected

Preferred Style in Helping Contexts (Martines, 2008)

- Firm handshake for males; soft and pliable handshake for unacculturated females
- Contact 24 to 36 inches with no barriers
- Indirect eye contact, at least initially
- Initially reserved; smiles and head nods may occur frequently later

*Primarily Mexican Americans

Sidebar 2.7 "Minorities-as-Exotic" Perspective in Psychoeducational Literature: Native Americans

Group Values/Behaviors (Dunn & Griggs, 1995)

- God is viewed as positive, benevolent, and integral to daily living
- Bravery, patience, honesty, respect for others, controlled emotions, and self-respect are admired personality traits
- Everyone knows their geneaology and has a strong sense of community and tribal identity

Preferred Style as Clients in Helping Contexts (Martines, 2008)

- Soft and pliable handshake
- Respectful distance initially; later, much closer distances are okay
- Indirect eye contact
- Few smiles and head nods

Preferred Learning Style (Dunn & Griggs, 1995; Kaulback, 1995)

- Learns primarily through observation and imitation, rather than through listening to verbal instructions

- Group-oriented, and prefer to work in small groups or on team projects

Communication Style (Lomawaima, 2004; Kaulback, 1995)

- Asking questions is not found in day-to-day speech habits outside of schools
- Highly skilled in nonverbal communication
- In the classroom, may use silence to exercise control over the teacher

Cognitive Abilities (Dunn & Griggs, 1995; Kaulback, 1995)

- Possess highly defined visuoperceptual skills developed from hunting/trapping experiences
- Score higher on simultaneous processing measures and lower on sequential processing measures compared to Caucasian students
- More highly skilled in holistic processing (i.e., seeing the whole versus the parts)

Instructional Implications (Kaulback, 1997; Smith & Shade, 1995)

- Learns best from visual instructional materials (e.g., films, diagrams, pictures, drawings)
- Children should be allowed freedom of movement in learning situations
- Due to cultural background, children may not understand how and why a certain succession of printed letters corresponds to certain phonetic sounds (necessary in learning how to read)
- Learn better when instruction moves from practice to theory, rather than from theory to practice
- Instruction should provide opportunities for a high percentage of group projects and a low percentage of oral questions and answers
- Instruction should incorporate manipulative devices and activities that allow students to feel and touch
- Use artwork that illustrates people and animals, cartoons, wood-carving, model building, miniature displays, and map-making
- Encourage opinionated expression of viewpoints in social studies and other subjects where controversy can be found
- Use metaphors, images, analogies, and symbols rather than dictionary-type definitions
- Adolescents feel uncomfortable in competitively structured situations
- Prefer to learn in a cool (temperature) environment
- Afternoons are the worst time of the day for concentrating on new and difficult material

In these portrayals, multiculturalism lectures audiences that "differences are not deficiencies" (e.g., see Hale-Benson, 1986; Tucker & Herman, 2002; Wright, 2008). Here, audiences are told that behavioral and cognitive standards for children in schools are little more than a manifestation of a Eurocentric middle-class worldview, and such standards should not be applied to culturally different children (e.g., Hale-Benson, 1986). According to this thinking, a more enlightened view requires modification in educational practices and standards that recognizes the role of culture and cultural differences in understanding cognition and behavior. The *Culture Model* assumes that once teachers, administrators, and psychologists are educated in the norms, folkways, and values of a particular culture, they will develop the necessary sensitivities and competencies to serve these groups "correctly," which presumably will lead to improved outcomes.

Following this model, training programs will infuse multicultural content into their coursework; professional organizations will provide a plethora of workshops, seminars, and training videos on multiculturalism; and publishing houses will flood the market with textbooks on multiculturalism—all in an effort to prepare professional educators and psychologists for an increasingly "diverse" world. This mindset has spawned an entirely new lexicon in education and psychology that promotes culture as the central construct that the majority group must understand in order to be properly enlightened. A wide variety of culture buzzwords commonly found in the multicultural education and multicultural psychology literature are listed in Sidebar 2.8.

Sidebar 2.8 Culture Buzzwords Commonly Found in Education, Counseling, and School Psychology Literature

cross-cultural
culture brokers
culture-centered knowledge
culture conflict
culture shock
cultural affiliation
cultural ambassadors
cultural ambience
cultural backgrounds
cultural bias
cultural competence
cultural congruence
cultural deprivation
cultural determinism
cultural differences
cultural discontinuity
cultural diversity
cultural empathy
cultural encapsulation
cultural entrenchment
cultural equivalence
cultural hegemony
cultural identity
cultural integrity

cultural matching	cultural relevance
cultural mistrust	cultural sensitivity
cultural pluralism	culturally appropriate practice
cultural proficiency	culturally consistent practice
cultural racism	culturally specific counseling

How Does the Culture Model *Respond to Its Critics?*

Contradictory Research Is Simply Ignored.

Similar to the *Moral Model*, the *Culture Model* must completely ignore contradictory empirical research in order to protect its integrity. For example, White (1984) claims that the average lower scores achieved by black students on individually administered intelligence tests are largely a result of "culturally inappropriate" test items (pp. 109–112). Such statements are quite surprising, given that they were made four years *after* the landmark text *Bias in Mental Testing* exhaustively examined such claims and found them to be false (Jensen, 1980). Similarly, Helms (1992) urges psychometricians to develop more "culturally appropriate" cognitive tests for lower-scoring minority groups, despite the fact that contemporary research finds no evidence of statistical test bias in well-developed standardized instruments (Reynolds & Lowe, 2009).

Treating the Concept of Culture as Mysterious.

By its very nature, the *Culture Model* of training sets up a politically useful antagonism between "insiders" versus "outsiders." In this approach, culture represents a mysterious black box containing secrets that are presumably beyond the experiential understanding of outsiders (see Swisher, 1998, for this view as applied to Native American education). Insiders—typically academics/educators who belong to the minority group under discussion—are assumed to possess unassailable expertise in all matters related to the cultural group of which they are members. In contrast, outsiders are portrayed as possessing

> …a structurally imposed incapacity to comprehend alien groups, statuses, cultures, and societies. Unlike the Insider, the Outsider has neither been socialized in the group nor has engaged in the run of experience that makes up its life, and therefore cannot have the direct, intuitive sensibility that alone makes empathic understanding possible. (Merton, 1973, p. 106)

Outsiders are expected to be deferential toward any belief or theory that presumes to have inside knowledge of the culture that is different from his or her own culture.

Outsiders are socialized by enlightened multiculturalism to avoid any appearance of criticizing the culture theories of insiders, for to do so is interpreted—particularly within politically contentious climates—as acts of disrespect and cultural arrogance (e.g., see Sue, Capodilupo, Nadal, & Torino, 2008, response to Thomas, 2008).

Whenever educational problems are politically embarrassing to multiculturalism, the *Culture Model* takes refuge in the "secret mysteries of culture" as a means to explain away the difficulty. Thus, if a given minority group routinely displays lower average scores on cognitive tests, then the issue is attributed to test developers' failure to incorporate culture into the design of tests (Helms, 1992). If a minority group displays discipline and behavioral problems at a consistently greater rate than other groups, then the problem is blamed on teachers' lack of understanding of students' cultural backgrounds (Osher et al., 2004). The self-esteem of minority children is seen as so fragile, that if the school curriculum fails to include a sufficient proportion of "cultural" content, it is believed that students will fail to achieve adequately (see discussion in Roth, 2005). Only a select group of expert multiculturalists are presumed to have access to special cultural insights that will magically transform how professionals serve minority children.

Use of Obfuscation in Communicating Ideas.

Obfuscation is another method used by adherents of the *Culture Model* in responding to critics. If culture is assumed to be fundamentally mysterious, then obfuscation can make culture seem even more mysterious. When used as a verb, synonyms for *obfuscation* are to *confuse*, *bewilder*, *muddle*, *perplex*, *baffle*, or *confound*. As a noun, synonyms for *obfuscation* are *blurriness*, *fuzziness*, *unclarity*, *vagueness*, and *murkiness*. Obfuscation is rampant in academic writing, where communicating ideas using "50-dollar words" is preferred over communicating ideas using simpler language that the lay public can easily understand. This allows the writer to hide half-baked ideas behind pompous-sounding verbiage. Such language may indeed impress the gullible, but in the final analysis it is so incomprehensible as to make not the slightest bit of sense. As examples, consider the following excerpt from the second edition of the *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*:

> In addition to using race as an analytical tool, critical race theorists challenge the separate discourses on race, class, and gender and focus on the intersectionality of subordination.… These types of analyses could contribute to multicultural education by interrogating the racialized context of teaching, and connecting race with multiple forms of oppression. Multicultural research conducted within a [critical race theory] framework might offer a way to understand and analyze the multiple identities and knowledges of people of color without essentializing their various experiences. A second potential contribution of [critical race theory] is the way that it challenges Eurocentric

> epistemology and questions dominant discursive notions of meritocracy, objectivity, knowledge, and individualism.… Critical race theorists ground their research in these systems of knowledge and "integrate their experiential knowledge, drawn from a shared history as 'other' with their ongoing struggles to transform." (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004, p. 246)

Ferguson (2000) adds the following insights:

> In this contemporary racial formation the category of race has increasingly been defined through cultural rather than biological difference. Relations of power and inequality are explained as the demonstrated consequence of superior or pathological cultural characteristics. Attitudes, values, behaviors, familial and community practices become the field from which social distinctions derive. … Since a good part of the ideological work on race is to fix meanings and relationships as natural and durable, the racialization of cultural forms and practices not only extracts behaviors and attitudes from the social matrix in which they are embedded but transforms them into immutable racially linked characteristics that produce poverty and bad citizens. (p. 20)

Such writing is, unfortunately, all too frequent in multicultural education texts enamored by Marxist thought (for an extended discussion, see Sokal & Bricmont, 1998).

Fatal Flaws of the Culture Model

The *Culture Model* has several fatal flaws, not the least of which is the superficial manner in which culture is conceptualized and promoted under this approach. The practice of equating race/ethnicity as synonymous with culture is quite understandable, given that outwardly observable differences in physical traits are the easiest and most expedient method for classifying human beings. In reality, however, culture includes variables that are not easily visible to the naked eye, which are associated with socioeconomic status, the child-rearing philosophy of parents and caregivers, as well as a host of other religious, regional, subcultural, and school context variables (see Frisby, 2005b).

Multiculturalism Degenerates Into Racialism.

For all practical purposes, politicized multiculturalism equates culture with racial/ethnic group membership. As an example, consider the case of a second-generation Japanese American child from a hard-working Christian fishing family who grows up in the Pacific Northwest. When the child starts public school, how is his or her elementary teacher (following the dictates of current thinking in multicultural education) supposed to expose the child to cultural role models in history lessons? Should the child's role models

be successful fishermen from the past? Should the child's role models be successful Christians throughout U.S. history? Or, should the appropriate role models be famous Japanese Americans? It comes as no surprise to many that multiculturalism ideology overwhelmingly supports the last answer—simply because culture, for all practical purposes, is reflexively treated as a proxy for race and ethnicity. Thus, multiculturalism is merely a more socially acceptable form of *racialism* (see Glossary). Here, multiculturalism allows the academic community to discuss race covertly "in stealth mode," but without the appearance of discussing it overtly.

Lazy Stereotypes Have Minimal Scientific Value.

Legitimizing the cultural stereotypes displayed in Sidebars 2.4–2.7 is fundamentally unscientific. The breezy descriptions in Sidebars 2.4–2.7 cannot be construed as independently verifiable facts, because there is no objective, scientific method for operationalizing such statements. The authors of such statements provide no quantifiable data to support these stereotypes, which in essence consist of authors' personal opinions or interpretations of group traits. Furthermore, basic common sense acknowledges the wide variability among human beings (even within the same racial/ethnic group), as well as the considerable overlap in traits among groups (see *Star Trek Fallacy* in the Glossary). This view presents a threat to multiculturalism ideology, because acknowledging intragroup variability or the overlapping of traits across groups undermines simplistic cultural explanations for educational problems.

Lazy Stereotypes Justify Blame-Shifting.

The real purpose of the stereotypes in Sidebars 2.4–2.7 are well known to anyone who is savvy in the multicultural politics that are played out all too often in academic and applied settings. A simple hypothetical scenario illustrates how this political gamesmanship operates. Suppose a mother from a nonwhite low-SES minority group has a chronic tendency to show up late for school appointments, if she shows up at all. The school psychologist knows that the mother has no competing demands on her time, and quite naturally concludes that this mother is irresponsible or unreliable. However, a recent multicultural article claims that such behavior simply reflects "a different or more flexible concept of time" that is indicative of that particular cultural group (e.g., see Sue & Sue, 2003, p. 169). Thus, with facile words, irresponsibility is magically transformed into a legitimate cultural trait that is to be accepted as normal. Thus, the *blame has shifted* from the mother's behavior to the "Eurocentric" attitudes of the school psychologist, who can now be criticized as woefully ignorant and insensitive to the mother's culture. It is therefore incumbent on the school psychologist to be sensitized and "enlightened" so that he or she will cease being "judgmental." As will be shown in Chapter 7, effective

interventions for improving student and family behaviors in at-risk minority communities have no qualms about being judgmental of nonproductive behavior.

Culture as "Bad Genetics."

As stated in the previous discussion of the *Group Identity Doctrine*, multiculturalism ideology views individuals as little more than representatives of their racial/ethnic group. Militant multiculturalists essentially argue that unrelated individuals (bound by culture) have similar behaviors and cognitive patterns simply on the basis of shared skin color, language, or ethnicity. In reality, the more complex organisms (i.e., human beings) are, the more complex are the determinants of phenotypic traits and day-to-day behaviors (e.g., see Petrill, Plomin, DeFries, & Hewitt, 2003). Lobo and Shaw (2008) articulate this complexity as follows:

> Each individual *organism* is exactly that—an individual.… Even laboratory organisms, which have a high degree of genetic similarity because they have been inbred for many generations, behave differently under the same conditions.… Similarly, among humans, even "identical" twins who are raised together in nearly the same *environment* are never truly identical.… Even though such twins are indeed the same at the genetic sequence level, people who know them can easily tell them apart. This is because the individuality and variation we observe in each *organism* is generated through a complex *interaction* between the *organism*'s "complete genetic endowment" and its *environment* from conception onward.

Because multiculturalism is fundamentally an ideology (and not a science), it leapfrogs over these simple truths to indoctrinate audiences with the notion that culture is a fixed, all-powerful, quasi-genetic force that determines and standardizes the behavior and psychological traits of all persons belonging to the same racial/ethnic or language group. No properly trained geneticist would dare suggest such a principle, as this would ignore a host of environmental factors, such as parental upbringing, socioecomic status, and differences in schooling contexts.

Successful educators—who have real-world experience studying effective educational practices with at-risk minority student populations—conceptualize culture in a more concrete, practical sense. To illustrate, Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003) write:

> In arguing that the cultures of racial and ethnic groups strongly influence the educational performance of youths, we are simply saying that children first develop values, attitudes, and skills as a result of their experience in the families that raised them. But those values, attitudes, and skills continue to be shaped by

> children's interaction with their peers, teachers, neighbors, and other aspects of their environment.... Good schools can become an enormously important element in that environment. (p. 66)

Human Universals Are Ignored.

An important question that is rarely discussed seriously in debates on multiculturalism is: Are human beings (regardless of their racial/ethnic/language differences) more similar than they are different? The open acknowledgement of social and behavioral universals shared by all groups is virtually ignored in multicultural psychology, primarily because it yields no political advantages for advocacy groups. Multiculturalism is built on the fundamental premise that different racial/ethnic groups have little to nothing in common, and they cannot (or should not) be compared on a similar standard (for numerous examples of this view, see Taylor, 2011, Chapters 5, 6, and 7). In short, militant multiculturalism argues that comparing different racial and ethnic groups is akin to comparing apples and oranges. As an illustration, Boykin (1986) writes:

> To characterize Afro-Americans as culturally different from Euro-Americans is not graphic enough. To the extent that the Black experience reflects a traditional West African cultural ethos, the two frames of reference are noncommensurable. There are fundamental incompatibilities between them; they are not quite polar opposites, but they are almost dialectically related.... This incommensurability makes it difficult to put black cultural reality in the service of attainment in Euro-American cultural institutions, such as schools. The ideology that informs those institutions is a profound negation of the most central attributes of African culture. (p. 63)

This is utter nonsense. Although it is true that cultural differences certainly exist (both within and across groups), are these differences so profound as to reflect "fundamental incompatibilities" as Boykin and others suggest? As an illustration, what can be more culturally identifiable than musical styles and genres? Yet, at one point in time, arguably the world's greatest classical trumpet player and female opera singer (musical genres considered European) were African Americans (e.g., Wynton Marsalis and Jessye Norman, respectively). Similarly, many of the world's most accomplished jazz musicians (a musical genre originating with African Americans) are whites (e.g., Bill Evans, Benny Goodman, Gerry Mulligan, to name a few).

To understand different-cultures-are-like-apples-and-oranges thinking, one must understand the *political advantages* of promulgating such views. Multiculturalism avoids any emphasis on human universals, because these imply common standards along which groups

can be compared and evaluated (e.g., see Sidebar 10.6). In comparing different groups on the same standard, the fear is that one group may be unfavorably compared to other groups, which is politically embarrassing to multicultural advocacy efforts.

The Empirical and Philosophical Bankruptcy of "Culture × Treatment Interaction" Theorizing.

Multiculturalism's fundamental sales pitch to school psychology is through the assumed validity of *culture × treatment interactions* (see Glossary). In a nutshell, multiculturalism implies that unique treatments that are particularly effective for racial/ethnic minorities differ from treatments shown to be effective for nonminorities—simply on the basis of some as-yet-unspecified cultural modifications. Examples of culture × treatment advocacy in psychology and education are given in Sidebar 2.9.

Some multicultural advocates attempt to argue that the poor academic performance of minority groups in schools simply reflects culturally different modes of interacting with material, and they are not to be interpreted as "deficient" relative to the majority culture (e.g., see Hale-Benson, 1986). "Differences-are-not-deficits" theorizing provides an emotionally satisfying way for multiculturalists to airbrush the image of minority groups (e.g., see Kunjufu, 2005, 2011). However, this fools no one—least of all minority educators who are laboring in the front lines of minority school failure (e.g., Carter, 2000; Stern, 2009; Whitman, 2008). These hard-working professionals know that low academic performance, intractable behavior problems, and anti-intellectual attitudes are patently unacceptable, and they pursue plain, common-sense prescriptions for reversing such problems against tremendous odds (see Chapter 7).

✍ Sidebar 2.9 Examples of "Culture × Treatment Interaction" Advocacy in Psychoeducational Literature

- "Unfortunately, many teachers, both minority and mainstream, are unable to identify traits among ethnic minority youths that require a unique set of instructional strategies for a positive learning environment. Equally disturbing is that, once such cultural traits have been identified, teachers have no idea how to adapt classroom instruction to these traits." (Vasquez, 1998, p. 1)
- "When instructional processes are consistent with the cultural orientations, experiences, and learning styles of marginalized African, Latino, Native, and Asian American students, their school achievement improves significantly.… Culturally responsive practices unveil some solutions to the seemingly unsolvable mystery of the perpetual underachievement of

marginalized students of color. They are not being taught in school as they learn in their cultural communities. This discontinuity interrupts their mental schemata and makes academic learning harder to achieve." (Gay, 2000, pp. 181–182)

- "Black children grow up in a distinct culture. Black children therefore need an educational system that recognizes their strengths, their abilities, and their culture and that incorporates them into the learning process." (Hale-Benson, 1986, p. 4)
- "…[A] multicultural approach to consultation is one that considers the influence of the culture of each member of the triad in every step of the process. Multicultural consultation also allows for adjusting services to address the culturally related needs that arise. When members of the consultation triad differ culturally from one another, this…adds complexity to the process….. The consultant's role is to make hidden cultural aspects explicit to consultation participants and to generate hypotheses informed by cultural knowledge. The resulting information allows one to either appropriately intervene on problems created by ignoring cultural variables or to find appropriate methods to incorporate the information obtained." (Booker, 2009, p. 176)
- "…[M]ost educational agencies function between cultural incapacity and cultural blindness. It is common to hear, 'We treat everyone here the same.' Although those espousing this view may be well intentioned, this cultural blindness paradigm negates children's lived experiences and translates to a 'one size fits all' model.… [C]ulturally responsive education recognizes and addresses students' learning styles, their different modes of reflective learning, the role of group collaboration, and the function of nonverbal behavior." (Crockett & Brown, 2009, p. 120)

Cultural immersion schools (see Chapter 4) are built on the premise that minority children must be educated comprehensively in their group's culture in order to do well in school. However, not a speck of solid, replicable research evidence shows that cultural immersion schools, *because of their culturally specific curricula*, result in significantly higher levels of school achievement compared to non-culturally specific schools (all other variables being equal).

In reality, the only culture × treatment interactions that have face validity involve bilingual programs (see Chapter 4) and other non-English-language interventions

(e.g., Baker & Good, 1995; Baker, Plasencia-Peinado, & Lezcano-Lytle, 1998; de Ramirez & Shapiro, 2006)—as these must be delivered (in full or in part) in a language that non-English-speaking clients can understand.

Cultural Role Models.

It is customary for professional organizations to complain about the shortage of minority professionals (i.e., teachers, counselors, school psychologists) presumably needed to serve as "role models" for minority children and youth. One educator puts the matter bluntly (reported in Kane, 2010):

> Black people are the only ones who can teach black children, it's as simple as that.… Throughout history, people have always stayed with their own kind.… The bottom line is we are not all the same. Black children are not going to grow up and be white.

Although school psychology organizations do not frame the issue in terms as crude as this, many believe that minority professionals share a deep cultural bond with their minority clients that ultimately is advantageous for facilitating positive outcomes. Although common sense dictates that bilingual school psychologists are needed to serve non-English-speaking children, audiences assume that racial/ethnic status alone offers a distinct advantage in working with racially/ethnically similar clients. Such ideas appear intuitive to most, so they are rarely challenged publicly.

Nevertheless, the "cultural matching hypothesis" can be empirically tested like any other topic in the social sciences. Maylor (2009) reviewed the empirical data on the "black teachers–are-role-models-for–black kids" hypothesis, as well as conducting thorough qualitative interviews with black teachers in Great Britain. His conclusions are summarized as follows:

> Being a role model is not an "ethnic skill" Black teachers should be presumed to "naturally" possess. Moreover, just because a teacher is Black…does not mean that her/his ethnicity would enable her/him to serve as a role model to Black pupils or improve Black male attainment. The findings in this study demonstrate that the recruitment of Black teachers does not automatically convert into those teachers either desiring to serve as role models or feeling comfortable in such a role, or indeed being accepted or acknowledged as appropriate role models by all Black pupils. This suggests that ethnic (and gender) "matching" in teaching is too simplistic an approach as it does not take into account Black pupils' perception of or reaction to Black teachers, and/or Black teachers' perception of the concept of role modeling and their experience of role modeling with Black

> pupils. This research provides further evidence that ethnic (and gender) "matching" in role modeling discourse is not only misguided, but that where it is applied it is likely to flounder where pupils do not recognize the Black teacher standing in front of them as a role model. (pp. 17–18)

Similar research has never been conducted in the field of school psychology. In the absence of hard research, the burden of proof is on professional organizations representing school psychology to justify the advantages of ethnic matching with more than simple platitudes and bromides.

The Educational Failure of All-Minority Schools.

In the absence of more direct tests of the ethnic matching hypothesis, indirect tests are available for all to see, and they do not bode well for the *Culture Model*. Recall that the *Cultural Model* implies that cultural conflicts are fundamentally responsible for the various problems faced by minority children and youth in schools (e.g., see Kunjufu, 2002). Teachers, pupil personnel service professionals, and test developers are inundated with the message that they need to learn an entirely new set of cultural skills in order to properly serve minority clients. *This philosophy predicts that all-minority environments should represent a veritable paradise of top-notch educational practices and student success, particularly when the majority of professionals in the school belong to the same culture*. Unfortunately, such predictions are flatly contradicted by cold reality. Many (but not all) predominantly minority schools are notorious for being among the worst schools in the country (see Edelman, 2011; MacDonald, 2004; Maeroff, 1988). In such schools, academic failure, gang violence, teenage pregnancies, anti-achievement attitudes, low parental involvement, bureaucratic incompetence, and corruption are pervasive.

The *Social Engineering Model*

In order for the *Moral Model* of training to be credible, it is assumed that racism and prejudice must be thoroughly expunged from the hearts and minds of those who teach or interact with cultural minority children in schools, in order for said children to succeed educationally. In order for the *Culture Model* of training to be credible, it is assumed that professionals must attain a high level of cultural enlightenment in order to properly teach, counsel, or serve minority children in schools. Multiculturalists nevertheless find themselves frustrated at the slow pace in which these goals are realized, if they can be realized at all. As a result, multicultural advocacy sees a need to aggressively promote progressive change through the process of "social engineering."

Social engineering is a term used to describe efforts by federal and state governments and professional organizations to deliberately change behavior and social mores, or modify attitudes on a large scale. This is accomplished by a variety of means, which can include

(a) building incentives and disincentives into institutional policy decisions and practices; (b) issuing court orders and/or passing laws to impel or prohibit certain behaviors; or (c) facilitating the internalization of "acceptable" versus "unacceptable" multicultural attitudes through the social media. In summary, "social engineers wish to reconfigure entire systems to produce a desired result" (Fein, 2001, p. 215).

The *Social Engineering Model* begins with the assumption that the world can be likened to a giant chessboard, in which the pieces can be manipulated by those in power to meet specified sociopolitical objectives. Whereas the *Moral Model* and *Culture Model* both rely on some form of verbal and/or emotional persuasion to manipulate behavior and attitudes, the cornerstone of the *Social Engineering Model* is that individuals or groups *must comply* or face the threat of tangible sanctions for noncompliance. The hope here is that the desired multicultural attitudes, behaviors, and statistical outcomes will naturally follow.

In the government policy arena, the move toward explicitly race-conscious preferential policies began with frustration that color-blind policies for business hiring and college admissions were not achieving the desired racial proportions originally hoped for (see D'Souza, 1995, p. 218). Gradually, quietly, and under the radar of public debate, the period of the 1960s witnessed the creation of federal civil rights agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), all of which are designed to promote racial preferences.

The results of social science research are often used as justification for massive social engineering efforts, particularly as these relate to schooling. For example, the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision of 1954 (that declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students as unconstitutional) was influenced in part by Kenneth and Mamie Clark's famous "doll studies," which purportedly documented the psychological damage visited on black students as a result of segregation (Clark & Clark, 1939). The school busing movement of the 1960s and 1970s was sparked, in part, by findings from the influential Coleman Report (see Glossary), which suggested that school achievement for black students would be maximized by racially integrated learning contexts.

At other times, social engineering is justified simply on the basis of a writer's personal opinion as to its supposed benefits. As examples, Sandhu and Aspy (1997) argue that the isolation of white children from nonwhite children is to be avoided, because "this situation might lead to a false sense of self-esteem due in part to a false notion of racial superiority" in white children (p. 62). They further state that "the overemphasis on a Eurocentric curriculum so influences…children's thought patterns that they cannot value the life-style contributions of other cultures" (p. 62). According to these authors, "exposure to cultural contributions from other ethnic groups will forever change

children's thinking such that racism and sexism will be reduced in our society" (p. 62). Other examples of multicultural social engineering efforts, particularly those designed to close the racial achievement gap, are listed in Sidebar 4.6.

How Does the Social Engineering Model *Respond to Its Critics?*

Resistance Is to Be Met With Force.

In a nutshell, social engineering battles are fought through the use of power and coercion; by engaging in internecine political battles within organizations; legal battles fought within the context of the courts; or by outright fraud and/or deception. Such efforts "attempt to bully their way to success over the objections of individuals prepared to resist" (Fein, 2001, p. 207). For example, with respect to forcing programs to infuse multiculturalism in training, Mio and Awakuni (2000) state "if one has a large enough stick, resistance can be overcome" (p. 3). In addition, Mio and Awakuni (2000) opine that "political pressure on the power structure of APA" was largely responsible for pressuring the APA to adopt multicultural requirements for training programs. They describe the politicking and coalition building by the Association of Black Psychologists, the Asian American Psychological Association, the Hispanic Psychological Association, the Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, and Divisions 17 and 45 of the APA in order to accomplish these political goals (pp. 3–4).

Sometimes when social engineering schemes fail, they are met with the argument that not enough money was spent, or that participants simply didn't try hard enough. As one among numerous examples, a local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has threatened to sue one school district for failing to rectify ongoing racial segregation patterns and academic achievement inequities, although schools have virtually no control over such outcomes (see Banaszak, 2011).

The Fatal Flaws of the Social Engineering Model

The flaws of the *Social Engineering Model* can be seen most clearly when its underlying assumptions are made explicit. The *Social Engineering Model* rests on three bedrock tenets, each of which is implicitly accepted on faith: (1) the problem under consideration is sufficiently understood, or in common vernacular, and clever people know what is wrong and how problems need to be fixed; (2) the solution to identified problems can always be found; and (3) the identified solutions can easily and readily be implemented as conceived (see Fein, 2001). The shortcomings of these three tenets of the *Social Engineering Model* can be readily seen in several high-profile social engineering attempts that have spectacularly failed in U.S. society.

The Failure of Head Start.

For example, Head Start (see Glossary) began with much fanfare in the Spring of 1965 as a program designed to raise the IQ and academic achievement levels of primarily poor minority students by exposing them to a focused preschool curriculum in the months before most children begin kindergarten. The program is rooted philosophically in a naïve environmentalism (see Glossary) that was in vogue during these times, epitomized in such books as James McVicker Hunt's *Intelligence and Experience* (1961), Martin Deutsch's *The Disadvantaged Child* (1967), and Frank Reissman's *The Culturally Deprived Child* (1962). In this view, the academic performance of poor and minority children is hindered by the absence of social and economic advantages enjoyed by more affluent middle-class children. By beginning their school experience earlier, this "head start" will enable them to catch up to their more-affluent peers.

In the famous (or some would say infamous) 1969 Harvard Educational Review article "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?", educational psychologist Arthur Jensen's opening salvo generated shockwaves throughout the psychological community that still reverberate today: "compensatory education has been tried, and it apparently has failed" (Jensen, 1969, p. 2). Since that time, numerous large-scale evaluations of Head Start have yielded findings that have fallen far short of its lofty predictions (see Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003, pp. 221–226 for a summary and overview). Although early evaluation efforts did reveal seemingly dramatic increases in IQ scores immediately after six to eight weeks of the program, better-designed studies soon dampened this optimism. The Westinghouse Evaluation (Westinghouse Learning Corporation and Ohio University, 1969) found that students who had made gains did not maintain them throughout the early grades of regular school. On average, students who participated in Head Start performed no better than controls from similar backgrounds who had not attended Head Start.

Currie and Thomas (1995) compared children who had attended Head Start with siblings who had not. Although they found modest test score gains for white children, African American children showed no gains, and they were equally as likely to be held back a grade in school as black children from similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Garces, Thomas, and Currie (2002) examined the economic and social success of adults under age 30 who had attended Head Start as preschoolers. Although whites showed greater high school graduation and college attendance rates, African Americans showed no substantial benefits in these areas. African Americans who attended Head Start as preschoolers were less likely to have been charged with criminal offenses later in life, but the authors never investigated selection bias as a possible explanation (i.e., Head Start parents display better parenting skills than similar parents of children not enrolled in Head Start).

In response to these disappointing results, contemporary defenders of Head Start began to change the perceived benefits of the program from "improving academic and cognitive skills" to "promoting social/emotional growth and development." As part of former president Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, more than $120 billion has been spent on the Head Start program since 1965, with "virtually nothing to show for it" (see Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003, p. 226; see also Coulson, 2010; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

The Failure of Money to Buy Academic Achievement.

Social engineers have traditionally believed that economic inequities between majority and minority schools appeared to be an intuitively obvious explanation for inequalities in achievement outcomes. However, more careful research has shown this to be a popular but false assertion.

In one of the earliest major studies on the relationship between resources and school outcomes, Christopher Jencks and a team of researchers from the Center for Educational Policy Research at the Harvard Graduate School of Education conducted a large-scale study in the late 1960s/early 1970s designed to collect data on the extent to which differences among schools and schooling contribute to inequalities in later adult economic attainments, occupational achievements, and social status. Among their most provocative discoveries was the finding that school expenditures and resources (controlling for the initial characteristics of students) showed quite small and inconsistent effects on school achievement outcomes (Jencks, 1972).

The cold facts are that educational spending per pupil has been growing steadily since the 1950s (Greene, 2005). Although inequities among school resources are obvious, the accumulation and synthesis of decades of research shows little to no relationship between schools' monetary expenditures and student achievement outcomes (Greene, 2005; Hanushek, 1997). Many schools with relatively lower monetary resources show higher-than-expected student achievement, and conversely many schools with high monetary resources show lower-than-expected student achievement (e.g., see Sidebar 2.10). Greene (2005) concludes:

> …[R]egardless of whether there is a gap between urban spending and suburban spending, the existence of such a gap would not prove that giving urban schools more money would result in improvement. It may be that other problems would prevent urban schools from making good use of the additional funds.… [S]ome may believe that it is just inherently wrong for some schools to have more money than others do. This, however, is an entirely separate issue.…No doubt there is plenty of room for debate on how best to reform our school system. However, that debate can't happen in a constructive way until

> Americans realize that schools are not inadequately funded—they would not perform substantially better if they had more money. The empirical evidence simply doesn't allow for this to be the case. (pp. 18–19)

The Failure of Court-Ordered Busing.

As explained in Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003, p. 173), ethnic groups choose to cluster together in neighborhood residential patterns for a combination of both personal and economic reasons. Whites have traditionally tended to migrate from cities to the suburbs over many decades. Although more affluent nonwhites have done so as well, nonwhites tend to be strongly concentrated in inner-city neighborhoods, which in turn affects the racial composition of nearby schools. The aggressive integration of schools, made possible by the practice of court-ordered busing (see Busing, in Glossary), was another social engineering experiment that was supposed to inaugurate a new era of increased academic achievement for poor minority children and increased racial harmony and understanding in schools, specifically, and in society, generally (see Wolters, 1984, 2008)

✍ Sidebar 2.10 Does More Money Lead to Increased Minority Student Achievement? The Kansas City Fiasco

In 1986, federal judge Russell Clark issued a desegregation ruling that resulted in $1.4 billion being spent (over 10 years) to rebuild (primarily black) Kansas City urban schools to attract suburban whites and raise black achievement test scores. This effort resulted in the construction of a minimum of 12 brand-new schools, which included the following world-class resources and equipment:

- Planetariums
- Olympic-sized swimming pools with underwater observation windows
- A mock United Nations room wired for simultaneous language interpretation headphones
- Radio and television studios with real broadcasting capabilities
- Video editing and animation laboratories
- Mock moot courts equipped with jury rooms and judges' chambers
- A model Greek village for teaching participatory democracy
- Elementary schools equipped with one personal computer for every two children
- $900 million for hiring special staff to operate new equipment

- Funding for hiring teachers fluent in French and German
- Funding for hiring the former coach of the Soviet Olympic fencing team
- Doubling of the school superintendent's yearly salary
- Instructional costs rose from $3,094 per pupil per year to $8,000 per pupil per year (while the state average rose from $2,470 to $3,760 per pupil per year)
- The number of district school librarians increased from 13 to 56
- 53 new counselors were added

What were the results of this experiment, in which money was no object? Some white students returned to the Kansas City schools, but in numbers that were far below what was originally estimated before the desegregation plan took effect. The new facilities were built to accommodate 5,000 to 10,000 white suburban students, but no more than 1,500 white students enrolled in the Kansas City schools at the desegregation plan's peak. Those white students who did return to the Kansas City schools rarely stayed longer than a year before eventually returning to either parochial or suburban public schools.

The massive increase in the Kansas City district's budget proved overwhelming, which eventually led to massive waste and corruption. As examples, money was used to buy $700 light fixtures in one school and a $40,000 trophy case in another school. Parents in Missouri's other 529 districts became infuriated at the cuts in the budget resulting from the massive funding of the Kansas City desegregation plan. After three years on the job, the superintendent was fired amid corruption charges. Instead of dropout rates declining during the massive spending, these rates actually *increased*, while the average daily high school senior attendance rate *dropped*. The black/white racial gap in achievement test results (i.e., several months in first grade to two to three years by high school graduation) remained unchanged throughout all the years of massive funding.

(Anonymous, 1993; Ciotti, 1998a, 1998b; Evans, 1995; Ross, 2011)

In reality, however, court-ordered busing has proven to be a disaster in most instances in which it was attempted. Early efforts to use busing to integrate schools has resulted in an explosion of discipline and behavior problems for which suburban schools were unprepared, virulent animosity and hostility to forced busing from both white and minority parents, and increased violence and inflamed racial tensions in select major cities impacted by busing (see Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 1997; Wolters, 1984, 2008). Most damaging is the observation that court-ordered busing for racial integration in