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**Claremont McKenna College**

“Humanization *is* Liberation: ‘Emotional Morality’ in  
the Mitigation of Inequitable, Dehumanizing, Domestic  
Educational Policies”

Submitted to Professor Roderic Camp

By Nirel Jones Mitchell

For Honors Government Senior Thesis

Year Long

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**Abstract:** Top researchers in the field of critical pedagogy signify that humanization--the process of understanding and connecting with the humanity of another individual—literally liberates the brain from fear. This allows for student creativity and higher-order thinking; without cultural awareness and empathy, researchers claim, educational apartheid will persist. American notions of both teacher and student intelligences as well as ideas of ‘proper’ teacher-student relationships are contextualized by the political philosopher John Locke who delineated a capitalistic political framework based on his interpretation of human motivations: reason and the pursuit of happiness. The corresponding narrow conceptions of intellect, educational success, morality, and emotionality have become cultural dogmas--determining human value based on market norms expressed through particular labels. In the case of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a Congressional act known for its unintentional marginalization of minority demographics, this value-laden diction complicated attempts at equitable educational reform. Despite Western exclusionary notions of what constitutes ‘rational’ and, thus, useful data, contemporary political philosophers and behavioral economists, affirm that educational policy is missing an analytical framework critical to the realm of both leadership and liberation—namely, a philosophical reading of the societal and a moral reading of the political. Herein lies the need for emotional morality: the understanding of how emotions and reason, which are constantly in interaction in the brain, are impacted by market and nonmarket moral assumptions indicated through word choice. The following analysis attempts to articulate how emotional analysis can apply political-theoretical knowledge to educational policy in the pursuit of mitigating American human rights crises in the domestic public school education system.

**Key Words:** John Locke, intelligence, political theory, No Child Left Behind, morality

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## Introduction

On January 8, 2002, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was passed by Congress. At the time, the law contained the most sweeping set of federal changes relevant to elementary and secondary schools, to date. According to the US Department of Education, the “cornerstone” of the policy was Title I: a program that provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of children from low-income backgrounds. As such, the act aimed to grant disadvantaged institutions the opportunity to amass accurate data and receive adequate funding, necessary for the advancement of both teacher and student excellence. States were required to test every student’s progress towards federal standards using assessments aligned with federal guidelines. Results were then compiled to measure the growth of all students, highlighting particular subsets--like those disproportionately impacted by classism, racism, ableism, and English language barriers. These figures were then made public; called Accountability Report Cards, compiled statistics determined school labels over the course of five years. Once deemed ‘in need of “Program Improvement,”’ they were required to develop an immediate two-year enhancement plan for subjects being taught insufficiently.<sup>1</sup> Broadly, the policy intended to accomplish a national level ideal identified by the George W. Bush administration. According to the former director of the National Center on Education and the Economy, this ideal was--put plainly--a heightened administrative “accountability” with the hope of increasing student preparation for “economic success.”<sup>2</sup>

The policy attempted to utilize state responsibility in the creation of this comprehensive educational package. It emphasized the incorporation of typically depreciated stakeholders:

<sup>1</sup> “Title I, Part A Program,” Title I, Part A Program. US Department of Education (ED), November 7, 2018, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Susan Sclafani, “No Child Left Behind,” *Issues in Science and Technology* 19, no. 2 (2002): 43.

scholars, school districts, and educational professionals, at all levels.<sup>3</sup> Still, the government expectation--“every student proficient in math and reading by 2014”--failed. Instead, the law ushered in a new era of testing linked to punishments: closure for schools that did not prove consistent proficiency, for example. It, too, financially penalized the very institutions it meant to help, those with disenfranchised students in dire need of federal fiscal support. Consequently, some teachers constrained class material to emphasize exam content, often reducing attention to equitable representation in literature, for example.<sup>4</sup> Consistent shifts between administrators additionally had the potential to trigger children who experienced trauma outside of the classroom:<sup>5</sup> a demographic predominantly made up of black students, within the United States.<sup>6</sup> Thus, while regular updates made policymakers, the public, and educators more aware of under-performing demographics within otherwise highly performing schools, recent research overwhelmingly points to the policy’s marginalizing effects on low-income students and minority individuals.

A common critique of NCLB is that it proposed an “empty rhetorical [goal],” “No Child Left Behind,” but was ill-prepared to “provide sufficient resources to educate...children successfully.”<sup>7</sup> For the aforementioned reasons, this has validity. Still, it is important to note the significance of rhetoric. Rooted in capitalistic notions of intellect, careless diction contributed to the policy’s lack of effectiveness. The terminology that existed within and around NCLB is especially relevant to California. In a particularly publicized case, local officials had to explain

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>4</sup> Gregory J. Fritzberg, “No Child Left Behind: Changes and Challenges,” *The Journal of Education* 184, no. 3 (2003): 38.

<sup>5</sup> Maura McInerney and McKlinton, Amy, “Unlocking the Door to Learning: Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Transformational Schools,” Education Law Center, December 2014, 6.

<sup>6</sup> A. L. Roberts et al., “Race/Ethnic Differences in Exposure to Traumatic Events, Development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Treatment-Seeking for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the United States,” *Psychological Medicine* 41, no. 1 (2011): 71.

<sup>7</sup> Donald M. Thomas and Bainbridge, William L., “No Child Left Behind: Facts and Fallacies,” *The Phi Delta Kappan* 83, no. 10 (2002): 781.

why John Glenn Middle School, one of the three model middle schools in the state, was suddenly labeled a “federal...failure;” harsh labels had engendered public panic.<sup>8</sup> Like with any policy, during the implementation tradeoffs were documented--notably, the prioritization of test results at the expense of college preparation and civic-mindedness. Policymakers possibly underestimated, however, the difficulty involved in balancing complexity--for example, statistical measures that might be difficult for educators and the general public to understand, against transparency--simpler measures that would be easy to interpret but less useful for making decisions. Relatedly, policymakers were forced to weigh uniformity, which would allow for easy comparisons across states, against flexibility, which would permit innovation and promote local relevance. Consequences were compounded at institutions run inefficiently; schools that were operating in the absence of clear accountability, performed significantly below their operational capacity.<sup>9</sup> In fact, when President Barack Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) which supplemented NCLB, the superintendent of San Francisco’s Unified School District at the time, commented that the district was excited to refocus efforts towards “the complex and high demands of [a] changing world,” as opposed to mitigating public image nightmares related to rhetorical scandals.<sup>10</sup>

The National Center for Education Statistics’ most recent data states that 52.3% of students attending public schools in the United States are considered ‘low-income,’ defined as those “eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.” This statistic has been rising every year, since 2000.<sup>11</sup> There has been an increase, as well, in the percentage of students who are Hispanic and

<sup>8</sup> Carl Kaestle, “Testing Policy in the United States: A Historical Perspective,” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 683, no. 1 (2019): 37.

<sup>9</sup> D. Ballou and Springer, M.G., “Achievement Trade-Offs and No Child Left Behind,” Urban Institute, Working Paper, (2009): 1.

<sup>10</sup> Richard A. Carranza, “Statement from Superintendent,” San Francisco Public Schools. SFUSD, December 10, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> “Number and Percentage of Public School Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch, by State: Selected Years, 2000-1 through 2016-7,” Institute of Educational Sciences, 2018, 1.

Asian/Pacific Islanders. While the percentage of students enrolled in public schools that identify as white is projected to continue decreasing, the number is projected to increase for students who are Hispanic or Asian/Pacific Islanders and to maintain amongst Black and American Indian/Alaska Natives.<sup>12</sup> This means that future policies like No Child Left Behind will most greatly impact low-income and minority students. A minority individual, here, refers to the legal definition: “a student who is an Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian-American, Black (African-American), Hispanic American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander.”<sup>13</sup> For a nation presently rife with social ills related to classism and racism, effective teaching and policies are critical to the cultivation of citizens prepared and willing to eradicate crises in American society.<sup>14</sup>

NCLB did not just reduce the quality of education for low-income and minority students. It also increased teacher and administrative disenchantment with their jobs.<sup>15</sup> When educators are not inspired to dedicate the necessary time, energy, and sometimes supplemental funding, crucial to quality instruction for marginalized demographics, they encourage learned helplessness: a term that refers to a person’s sense of powerlessness, arising from persistent trauma or failure to succeed, despite their capacity to overcome. This is especially dangerous to establish amongst low-income and minority demographics; they arguably need resilience most, to surmount societal obstacles. Teachers that express sympathy over failure or lavish praise for completing simple tasks communicate low expectations to their students--labeling them as less capable and

<sup>12</sup> “Indicator 6: Elementary and Secondary Education,” Institute of Educational Sciences, February 2019, 1.

<sup>13</sup> “Minority student, n.” *Minority Student [Education] Law and Legal Definition. 2019. US Legal.*

<sup>14</sup> Mike Szymanski, “Black Students and Families Need More Support--and They Need It Now.” Los Angeles Public Schools, LAUSD, October 9, 2017, 7.

<sup>15</sup> Randall Reback, Rockoff, Jonah and Schwartz, Heather, “Under Pressure: Job Security, Resource Allocation, and Productivity in Schools Under NCLB,” *The National Bureau of Economic Research*, (2013): 23.

causing them to internalize their own lack of intelligence, as a consequence.<sup>16</sup> In the past, personalities--related to both the self-identification by and external reputations of teachers--were considered the primary determinants of teacher intellectual aptitudes. Esteemed administrators and educators, themselves, commonly identified with businesslike attitudes and “natural resourcefulness.”<sup>17</sup> Because NCLB’s assessments of educational professionals were linked to children’s performances on exams, teachers with low performing students began to believe they did not possess the personality traits required to transform students that were “unmotivated, not caring about education, or involved in illegal activities by choice.” This idea, relevant to the ‘cycle of poverty,’ is reinforced by stereotypes about poor families and families of color as well as antiquated notions of what it means to be an effective teacher.’<sup>18</sup> The typical notion of teacher competence does not emphasize values--which are related to both their internal judgments and principles regarding moral duties. Studies show that these, more than natural inclinations, help predict the seriousness with which a teacher is intrinsically motivated to sacrifice time and devote energy for the sake of student progress.<sup>19</sup>

It may be the case that stakeholders at all levels need more time and money to incorporate the aforementioned concepts, which are necessary to create effective educational systems. However, it is also paramount to recognize that early capitalistic notions of intelligence, schools, and success, still inform decisions in the educational space. Since 1966, there has been a relatively stable perception that the best way to assess educational policy is through comprehensive quantitative social science. Recently, however, some federal policymakers--

<sup>16</sup> Zaretta Hammond and Jackson, Yvette. *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*. (Thousand Oaks, C: a SAGE Company, 2015), 91.

<sup>17</sup> Ronald W. Solórzano and Solórzano, Daniel G., “Beginning Teacher Standards: Impact on Second-Language Learners and Implications for Teacher Preparation,” *Teacher Education Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (1999): 42.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Gorski, “The Myth of the Cycle of Poverty,” *Educational Leadership* 65, no. 7 (2008), 32.

<sup>19</sup> Solórzano, *Beginning Teacher Standards*, 42.

including those involved in reframing the ESSA--have expressed uncertainty about the notion of solely relying on empirical research within examinations of school measures.<sup>20</sup> Culture molds language. Thus, language provides a way of interpreting past social inequities and present dogmas; both are essential to the philosophical imagination and necessary for the establishment of a more equitable future. Distinct from an evaluation of teaching methods, this essay explores pedagogy which concerns teaching philosophies. It investigates theories of instruction and, thus, what educators should ideally aim to accomplish within their classrooms. While history cannot predict the future, nor tell us with any certainty what policy options to choose, it can trace the origins of important ideas and explore them. More, it can investigate the often unnoticed impacts of cultural norms on how institutions interact with individuals. American federal social policies illustrate the tensions and nuances within the ideological basis of the American federal government: a hybrid between a Representative Democracy and the Constitutional Republic. Their guidelines are contextualized by the key early political philosopher John Locke who, in addition to his influential capitalistic doctrine, articulated a distinct perspective on human intellectual aptitude as a result of his outlook on human nature. In conjunction with other classical theorists, his early texts actually delineate a political framework that undergirds the foundation of American society. Consequently, his distinct conception of both pedagogy and human intelligence still affects the present public school education system. The few federal policies regarding education that have resulted from this original notion of intellect have solidified this singular narrative of human competence which disproportionately elevates particular identities and communities.

<sup>20</sup> Kaestle, *Testing Policy in the United States*, 34.

The concept of intelligence, itself, has been supported, studied, and subverted--without explicit mention and throughout various disciplines--markedly before any notion of public school education. Much like intelligence, the notion of competence is used to address interpretations of human capacity. Competence, the "capacity to deal adequately with a subject" however, is more closely associated with education--related to the understanding of a particular school-based body of information, in comparison to the broader notion of "knowledge" that intelligence includes. They are used almost interchangeably; in fact, the word 'competence' originated from a psychological study of human intelligence and motivation. The first citation of the specific word 'competence,' found within American scholarly literature, was published in the article "Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence." In the text, Robert W. White--an American abnormal and personality psychologist--dissected theories of motivation and learning, thus introducing the word 'competence' into the realms of psychological analysis and educational research. Since the initial presentation of competence, critical pedagogists have attempted to examine this notion by considering the effects that understandings of intelligence have on human psychology, racial minorities, and individuals of low socioeconomic classes. Thus, at first glance, the consideration of current popular pedagogies through the discipline of political philosophy seems peculiar. This perspective, however, is not only compatible--but critical; interpretations of the intersections between government and pedagogical analysis are necessary to move beyond mediating the effects of marginalization towards addressing the exclusionary original theories surrounding intelligence and competence that have since been reinforced through the American government.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Robert White, "Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence," *Psychological review* 66, (1959): 297.

As it turns out, Locke's political philosophy regarding competence, specifically his understandings of rationality, success, social interactions, and--even--his concept of moral education, consistently intersect with both public policies and critical pedagogies. The multifaceted work of modern educational theorists, in fact, begs for the addition of a political-theoretical dimension to their interdisciplinary investigations of the public school education system. Simply put, market values and market reasoning, which are elucidated within Lockean texts, have increasingly reached into spheres of life previously governed by non-market norms.<sup>22</sup> Morality has been tied to emotionality, thus, in a society hyper-focused on rationality, it is overlooked in conversations about intellect. Many social scientists today--and, as a result, policymakers--view moral guidelines as solely capable of representing the way that humans would like to exist. Alternatively, they claim economics recognizes how the world legitimately operates."<sup>23</sup> But classical economists, in the past, conceived of the economic sphere as a branch of moral and political exploration.<sup>24</sup> Plus, moral intelligence--the capacity to forgive, extend compassion, and reason autonomously about moral problems, for example--is a significant part of being a rational being that *actually* impacts society.<sup>25</sup> Formal educational structures and intellectual quickness are to be praised, but they cannot be considered distinct from discussions about good character, kindness, and ethical values. Therefore, this essay will reengage with the debate about where markets serve the public good and where they need to be challenged when applied to the classroom.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Michael J. Sandel, "Market Reasoning as Moral Reasoning: Why Economists Should Re-engage with Political Philosophy," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27, no. 4 (2013): 121.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>25</sup> Rodney Clarken, "Considering Moral Intelligence as Part of a Holistic Education," *Northern Michigan University School of Education*, (2010): 6.

<sup>26</sup> Sandel, *Market Reasoning as Moral Reasoning*, 121.

Education today is seen largely as an economic activity, not a realm dedicated to the development of capable, conscious, and conscientious citizens. More, overcoming economic stagnation--or any widespread societal issue--requires investigating personal ethical theories, a skill that necessitates instruction. Seemingly impossible ethical and moral situations are everywhere and there needs to be a framework, both rooted in practical public policy and aware of historical discourse impacts, that can navigate human rights issues and their interpersonal dynamics. Schools that fail to address the moral aspects of life have failed both students and society, at large.<sup>27</sup> This is particularly important, now, as educators are forced to be innovative and encouraged to rethink paradigms related to educational traditions, in light of the global pandemic. This research has the potential to inform referendums or inspire cultural reform and--as a result--social change in a way that both moves closer to the foundational goals of NCLB and extends past it.

The following essay builds on previous studies of educational marginalization. It opens a new area of research, however, by employing political philosophy as the primary prism with which to engage in inquiry. As such, it critiques dominant forms of public policy analysis which, due to an emphasis on empirical social science investigation, has neglected critical investigations of morality, history, and rhetoric. It incorporates, instead, recent poli-theoretical scholarship which--as a discipline--broadly explores fundamental questions related to politics, liberty, and justice. With close attention, diction reveals a complicated relationship between morality and intelligence—colored, specifically, by power dynamics related to both class and race. While previous research related to the No Child Left Behind Act has emphasized its poor implementation and consequences, the following essay highlights its language, affirmed by

<sup>27</sup> Clarken, *Considering Moral Intelligence as Part of a Holistic Education*, 6.

exclusionary theoretical concepts embedded in the American cultural consciousness. Antoinette Burton in her text, “Thinking Beyond the Boundaries: Empire, Feminism, and the Domains of History,” states that feminist historiography could greatly benefit from a cultural reading of the social and a social reading of the cultural; both underscore the dialectical relationship between, according to Burton, discourse and reality.<sup>28</sup> I propose that critical pedagogy would benefit greatly from a philosophical reading of the societal and a moral reading of the political, particularly as it relates to the role of public policy and pedagogy in liberatory education. In an attempt to unravel the meanings of competence, moral intelligence, and educational success this investigation pays attention to the interplay between institutional/political and discursive formation.

The following analysis will briefly relay the main criticisms of popular modern educational theorists, specifically as it relates to notions of competence and ‘appropriate’ educational structures within the American public school education system. Then, it will interpret Locke’s ethical standpoint and foundational texts with the intention of verbalizing his specific definition of intelligence, success, and ‘proper’ education. With complex understandings of capitalistic conceptions of intelligence, especially in relation to public policy and pedagogical thought, this research will nuance understandings of marginalization within the domestic public school education system, currently, and during the era of No Child Left Behind. These layered explorations--punctuated by the historical discourse analysis of the act, itself, and a political exploration of moral intelligence--will be significant in the ultimate pursuit of a framework for understanding institutional change through the construction of words and

<sup>28</sup> Antoinette Burton, “Thinking beyond the Boundaries: Empire, Feminism, and the Domains of History,” *Social History* 26, no. 1 (2001): 65.

meanings that culturally code unbalanced power. It attempts to propose a human rights framework and, through case studies--in conclusion--suggest the ideological applicability of the aforementioned framework as well as its potential for incorporation into conceptions of both teacher and student educational assessments.

## Chapter One: Critical Pedagogy--Notions of Intellect + ‘Proper’ Education

In 1983, Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner revolutionized the fields of both psychology and education by explicitly challenging traditional conceptions of competence in his foundational work: *Frames of Mind*. Gardner's book begins with the declaration that all definitions of intelligence rooted in objective measurements are too limited. Instead, he argues for the existence of seven basic types of intelligence--a groundbreaking theory that he named the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI Theory).<sup>29</sup> Some of the competencies that MI Theory highlights operate outside of classical norms regarding academic intelligence, such as bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, an expertise in using one's whole body to express ideas and feelings; interpersonal intelligence, the ability to perceive and make distinctions in the moods, intentions, and motivations of others; and intrapersonal intelligence, the ability to act adaptively based on self-knowledge.<sup>30</sup> Still, these intelligences are extremely applicable to school settings, which Gardner makes obvious in the text. The Key Learning Community--a school created with a curriculum based on MI Theory--attempted to implement a major product of adherence to the theory: equality. At Key Learning Community Elementary School, all students are chosen through a lottery system. Although some students enter with previous labels--like “learning disabled,” “gifted,” or “average”--no such distinctions are enforced, in speech nor practice, within institutional programming.<sup>31</sup> With the involvement of the full spectrum of intelligences and a subscription to the notion that each intelligence can be cultivated, the administration argues, a more equitable learning environment is not only possible but encouraged.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Armstrong. *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2009), 5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 157.

The findings of Gardner's study, and the consequent theory, were originally published for psychological scholars; but *Frames of Mind* can attribute its overwhelming success to the field of education. In fact, Gardner immediately attracted criticism from psychological researchers. Richard E. Snow, an educational psychologist who studied the evaluation of educational programs and psychological tests at the time, asserted that MI Theory was both vague and full of impractical social and educational implications.<sup>33</sup> The book, he claimed, was 'too prose' and did not have a legitimate scientific foundation. It "teams with valuable [hypotheses] about brain organizations and culture, in relation to human abilities--but only the expert can tell which statement is probably fact," he wrote in his review.<sup>34</sup> Even then, the persistent emphasis on empirical data as the solitary rational and, thus, useful way to approach educational research impacted the capacity of this theory to infiltrate psychological academia. Thomas Armstrong, however, confronts this commentary by pointing out that the problem with the argument that MI is not based on valid evidence, is that the appraisal simply reinforces Gardner's original declaration. Snow, and critics like him, prove that there are narrow and fixed standards of what content is deemed legitimate--in this case, what constitutes 'conclusive' research results.<sup>35</sup> Armstrong also mentions that most of the criticisms of MI theory have come from academics and journalists--people who are often far removed from direct classroom interactions.<sup>36</sup> Support has mainly come from teachers, perhaps because they operate through the prism of first-hand experience when determining the positive impact a multifaceted notion of intelligence can have on children.

<sup>33</sup> Richard E. Snow, "Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Howard Gardner," *American Journal of Education* 94, no. 1(1985): 110.

<sup>34</sup> Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*, 110.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 197.

Gardner was certainly not the first to acknowledge a difference in human aptitudes when it comes to learning in the psychological or educational sphere. His success, however, stemmed from his usage of the specific word “intelligence.” This distinction was purposeful. He articulates that while “[the] concept of style designates a general approach that an individual can apply equally to every conceivable content...an intelligence is a capacity, with...*competence* processes, that [are] geared to a specific content in the world.” Through this, Gardner suggests that humans not only have different styles of learning based on talent, but different competence processes rooted in distinct natures. Thus, Gardner indicates that Multiple Intelligences Theory proves “our culture has defined intelligence” based on its subjective comprehension of humankind.<sup>37</sup> The idea of intelligence as an objective notion, therefore, is “fundamentally misleading” and marginalizes particular demographics by appearing singular.<sup>38</sup> It is important to recognize that MI theory itself is a cultural product emanating from contemporary US culture. As such, it embodies many values and ideals that are considered important in the United States, including pluralism, pragmatism, and egalitarianism. Nevertheless, this philosophy remains critical to the realm of pedagogy due to its popularization of two radical ideas: the notion that definitions of intelligence require an acknowledgment and understanding of intersectionality and the belief that definitions of competence are multifaceted and rooted in human nature.

*Mindset*, by Carol Dweck, contemporarily investigates the differences between two distinct frames of mind: a “fixed” mindset, the name she adopts for those that believe their qualities are unable to change, and a “growth” mindset, which she uses to refer to those who consider learning and intellect a process of development engendered by time and experience. This she correlates with success--in terms of both a propensity for individual, social, and

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 5.

economic gain as well as the likelihood of continuous personal development. In the context of school, this means that those with the growth mindset generally study to determine what they do not know, in order to learn--not simply to pass a test.<sup>39</sup> In direct opposition, students with fixed mindsets explicitly articulate that their “main goal in school--aside from looking smart--is to exert as little effort as possible.”<sup>40</sup> According to her research, a growth mindset is the key to genuine self-awareness.<sup>41</sup> In her book, these two mentalities are juxtaposed in a binary fashion, presenting a rather simplistic narrative--in contrast to the more fluid interpretation of Howard Gardner. Parallel to his conclusion, however, Dweck finds current notions of competence within schools too restrictive; reframing pedagogies in alignment with a definition tailored towards the development of intellectual aptitude could, she suggests, consequentially benefit all students.

Research conclusively signifies that students’ implicit theories of intelligence can have important effects on academic achievement and that incremental theorists, meaning those with a growth mindset, generally fare better than those with a fixed mindset trait in the face of ability-threatening academic challenges.<sup>42</sup> The results of her studies provide strong evidence that teaching in a fashion that directly promotes an incremental theory of intelligence protects against the effects of stereotypes, not only on performance but also on one’s social identity. Moreover, the text explicitly states that “subtle messages about the nature of intelligence impact the learning environment comparable to explicit ones.”<sup>43</sup> This demonstrates that educational assessment policies need to incorporate the growth mindset; administrators that refuse to determine student

<sup>39</sup> Carol S. Dweck. *Mindset: the New Psychology of Success*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 2016), 61.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>42</sup> C. Good, Dweck, C. S., and Aronson, J., “Social identity, stereotype threat, and self-theories,” in *Contesting stereotypes and creating identities: Social categories, social identities, and educational participation* (New York City, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007), 127.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 131.

inclinations--in relation to learning--have results that reign relatively insignificant and unsustainable in predicting student achievement.<sup>44</sup>

Through her elevation of the growth mindset, Dweck implicates her personal conception of intelligence which she implies is not--but should be--widely accepted by the education system, at present. She considers intelligence a cultivated skill rooted in an expansive outlook on one's ability to develop, not a natural-born talent.<sup>45</sup> She applies this to pedagogy by correlating classroom success with a growth mindset, which can be nurtured through competence theories that encourage this particular perspective. Those with the growth mindset [find] success in doing their best, in learning and improving.<sup>46</sup> They also find setbacks motivating and are more likely to pursue strategies that initiate and maintain success, than individuals with a fixed mindset.<sup>47</sup> This, she believes, should be the objective of teaching--fostering a notion of intelligence that invests in the mindset of students.<sup>48</sup> Like Gardner, she articulates that the public school education system has narrow notions of intelligence and competence. Still, her book is somewhat unconvincing; comprehension of the growth mindset impacts student achievement, but does it contest the entire scope of exclusion relevant to the limitations created by intelligence and competence definitions?

“Our lives are shaped as profoundly by personality as gender or race,” Susan Cain states in her book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*.<sup>49</sup> Cain begins her analysis with an introduction to the ‘extrovert ideal’ which she defines as “the omnipresent belief that the ideal self is gregarious, alpha, and comfortable in the spotlight.” The qualities of the archetypal extrovert include a preference for action, certainty, quick decision making, and

<sup>44</sup> Michael B. Doubek and Cooper, Eric J., "Closing the Gap through Professional Development: Implications for Reading Research," *Reading Research Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2007): 412.

<sup>45</sup> Dweck, *Mindset: the New Psychology of Success*, 59.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>49</sup> Susan Cain. *Quiet: the Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. (Thorndike, Me: Center Point Pub, 2012), 1.

teamwork. In opposition, introverts typically esteem contemplation, reflection, safe decision making, and alone time. This impacts classroom dynamics because children that are naturally loud, active, confident, and social are presumed to be more intelligent and more engaged. Furthermore, this external norm can, in turn, influence the way an individual perceives their own aptitudes. This cultural imbalance—already perpetuated by the implicit biases of teachers and administrators—is often exacerbated by classroom atmospheres geared towards extroverted individuals. Cain points out that introverts, for example, have a preference for school classroom environments with “nooks and crannies that they can hide themselves in” while working. This directly contradicts any notion that only classes participating in large group discussions or immersed in vocal discourse are conducive to student success; it also implies that a drastic shift towards the opposite side of the spectrum—namely an emphasis on silence and solitary assignments—would, similarly, lack the potential for equity.

Thus, like many pedagogical theorists, Cain posits an important question: “how [then] do we create a classroom environment that fosters all kinds of individuals?”<sup>50</sup> Though she does not answer explicitly, she does reference other cultures that struggle minimally with extroverted-introverted tensions. As a result, she—unlike other researchers—explores the cultural factors that have engendered the narrow conception of intelligence in America. Additionally, she clearly states her perception of the American standard for intelligence within her definition of the extrovert ideal. She attributes this particular ideal to the American “life of constant action and decision” which was necessary for “the democratic and businesslike character of American” pace, during its establishment. This, she proposes, established a legacy of praise for what the political philosopher Alexander Tocqueville named “rough and ready habits of mind, quick

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 85.

decision, and the prompt seizure of opportunities” at the expense of “deliberation, elaboration, or precision in thought,” in his book *Democracy in America*.<sup>51</sup> However, just like other critical analysts, her research falls short of the inclusion of governmental analysis. An investigation of the mores engrained in the political foundation of the American government would have provided a more specific connection between American cultural values and established educational institutions. Still, the thrust of her argument is communicated effectively: America likes to claim that it “[values] individuality” but in reality “it all too often [admires] one type of individual;” a practice that needs to be eliminated.<sup>52</sup>

While psychology was the first discipline to integrate discussions of competence in relation to education in America, race is by far the subject with the most devotion and contemplation in current pedagogical analysis. Not mutually exclusive entities, some authors choose to incorporate both critical race theory and cognitive science. Culturally responsive teaching, a particularly popular pedagogy, concentrates on “[empowering] students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural and historical referents to convey knowledge, to impart skills, and to change attitudes.”<sup>53</sup> Unlike teaching practices--which attempt to change student perspectives--culturally responsive pedagogy encourages teachers to gain cultural knowledge, empathize with student experiences, and shift their frames of references to accommodate ethnically diverse populations and their liberation. This, researchers argue, inadvertently influences students by “[making] learning encounters more relevant...and effective for them.”<sup>54</sup> The theorist, Geneva Gay, expands on this principle with an emphasis on the

<sup>51</sup>Alexis de Tocqueville, Goldhammer, Arthur and Zunz, Olivier. *Democracy in America*. (New York: Library of America Paperback Classics, 2012), 155.

<sup>52</sup> Cain, *Quiet*, 4.

<sup>53</sup> Sharroky Hollie. *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success*. (Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education, 2011), 13.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

importance of a cultural mindset that is, what she calls, “grounded in reality.”<sup>55</sup> She contends that productive pedagogical thought includes both feasible ways to cultivate instructional behavior and a conscious effort to challenge unconscious biases.<sup>56</sup> Thus, Gay signifies a reality that Zaretta Hammond, the author of *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, later endorses: only with plausible, action-oriented, deep-seated pedagogy can teaching be revitalized through a comprehensive investigation of the many contextual factors that impact learning.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly, Hammond acknowledges two different levels of cultural conventions: surface culture and deep culture. While surface culture mainly involves shared external features--like music, fashion, and common vernacular--these joint experiences serve as a sort of nonverbal communication; they build automatic connections between individuals within a particular demographic. Hammond indicates that social violations of norms, even at seemingly superficial levels, can “cause mistrust, distress, or social friction.” Deep culture, thus, has an even more significant impact; it involves perceptions of good and bad which guides ethics, theories of group harmony, and understandings of competition and cooperation. Challenges to deep cultural values can cause culture shock and trigger fight or flight responses.<sup>58</sup> For teachers and administrators, Hammond signifies, attention to both levels of culture is significant. In fact, according to Hammond, sensitivity to these norms is a crucial part of the humanization of marginalized populations; it also fosters trust. Hammond explicates the neuroscience behind this concept: trust and fear are inversely related. Fear activates the amygdala and the release of cortisol whereas trust soothes the brain which, in turn, frees it for other activities like creativity, learning, and higher-order thinking.<sup>59</sup> Thus, positive relationships unintentionally keep safety-threat detection

<sup>55</sup> Geneva Gay. *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000), 12.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

systems in check. When the brains of students are at rest, they are neurologically primed to function best within classroom settings.<sup>60</sup> She challenges educators to construct culturally-based lesson plans which empower the brains of minority students by utilizing their existing neurological frameworks. This could challenge teachers, but it strengthens minority individuals.<sup>61</sup> In fact, to avoid it--she states--would be equivalent to “intellectual apartheid.”<sup>62</sup>

Hammond and Sandler delve slightly deeper into the role government--specifically, educational policy--can play in crafting the outlooks of teachers and administrators. The Common Core, a set of state standards designed to help make students ‘college and career ready,’ was built on the expectation that students should be held to a standard set higher than basic mastery and comprehension.<sup>63</sup> This policy was created to offset No Child Left Behind which, as mentioned, damaged the outlooks of numerous teachers who reduced student potential to match low-set federal requirements.<sup>64</sup> The authors, however, do not discuss the philosophical foundations of these federal expectations; they simply demonstrate how their strict definitions remain detrimental. Thus, without interpreting the root of the issue--philosophically and politically-motivated narrow conceptions of intelligence and competence--they attempt to combat its effects through culturally responsive teaching and thought. While cultural responsiveness mediates the current impact of some ineffective teaching strategies, supporters likely overestimate its scope, leaving marginalized demographics that are not racial minorities largely unaccounted for and subjecting students of color to possible undetected harmful elements.

Not without its faults, Gay acknowledges that culturally responsive pedagogy sometimes

<sup>60</sup> Hammond, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, 48.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>62</sup> Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, Practice*, 31.

<sup>63</sup> Susan Sandler and Hammond, Zaretta, “Text and Truth,” *Phi Delta Kappan* 94, no. 4 (December 2012): 59.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

excludes notions of student agency, in regards to the learning process; it is possible that a student's respect for class information is simply "beyond the control of teachers regardless of how committed and competent [the teacher] may be," she concedes.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Hammond admits that culturally responsive teaching may invite oversimplified generalizations about cultural needs.<sup>66</sup> Still, Gay provides data supporting the results of culturally responsive mindsets and lessons across the nation, combatting many potential critiques of the approach.<sup>67</sup> The combined analyses of these theorists clearly demonstrate their interpretations of racial disparity, within the education system, as a result of pedagogy and teaching practices which reinforce historical interpretations of intelligence perpetuated by misinformed modern conceptions of competence. Ultimately, culturally responsive teaching and culturally responsive pedagogy are helpful interconnected methods necessary to respond to minority needs, simultaneously enabling students to engage in independent thinking and master complex subjects. Culturally responsive teaching practices stimulate the brains of minority students which, Hammond reveals, not only improves comprehension and achievement but also releases dopamine--a powerful brain chemical--triggered by the pleasure center in the brain.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, Gay indicates that culturally responsive pedagogy is a "demeanor and a disposition." This way of being requires consistent open-mindedness, commitment to self-reflection, and attentiveness to ideas and resources that illuminate the brains of both students of color and teachers.

To expound on these understandings of both intellect and education, Ronald W. Solórzano centers the importance of connection and relationship between students and instructors. Indeed, he cites research that describes the cultural difference theory--a term which

<sup>65</sup> Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, Practice*, 50.

<sup>66</sup> Hammond, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, 63.

<sup>67</sup> Hollie, *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning*, 22.

<sup>68</sup> Hammond, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, 102.

explains the underachievement of minorities as a consequence of cultural disjuncture between home and school language use as well as cognitive styles. He does not pinpoint what ‘school cognitive styles’ entail but he does recognize that teachers who build genuine relationships with their students, including those with backgrounds disparate from their own, can better interpret how second-language learners not only learn but display knowledge. To accurately comprehend displays of achievement progress one must be able to interpret the different manners in which developments can be exemplified.<sup>69</sup> The “necessary components of being a culturally competent teacher involve becoming familiar with relevant aspects of students’ background knowledge and experience,” he concludes. Data shows that around 80 percent of California’s teaching force is white, while over half of the California public school system students in K-12 hail from either culturally or linguistically diverse atmospheres. Consequently, Solórzano presents his assertion as imperative. As Dweck and Hammond note, strong teacher-student bonds are crucial to the development of accurate assessment--especially amongst second-language learners, Solórzano would add. Therefore, he explains, if teaching effectiveness is, as NCLB would suggest, indeed correlated with the intelligence of teachers, their capabilities should be evaluated through the number and depth of their interpersonal connections, at least towards minority communities. Like many other theorists, he places a certain amount of blame and, ergo, responsibility on the government which he thinks should manufacture changes in perceptions of intelligence and competence--though he does not mention how. “Creating effective schools for second-language learners,” he states, “certainly entails a comprehensive effort on the part of all major stakeholders at the state, district, and school level.” Still, he suggests, all individuals involved should be aiming for a multifaceted protest of historical educational analyses.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Solórzano, *Beginning Teacher Standards*, 50.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

Beyond language barriers, there are psychological factors related to race that impair the likelihood of educational mastery and confidence amongst minority students. The brain, unlike the mind, is a biological entity, not a social or cultural product. While brain capacity, itself, is detached from these particular processes, Yvette Jackson's research signifies that teachers can make choices that directly affect students' understanding of themselves. This actually impacts their brain's ability to process and retain information. She suggests that teachers approach teaching in a way that incorporates diverse cultural schemas--including pedagogy that appeals to brain capacity instead of an unidentified, culturally dependent notion of intelligence. *Colormute* by Mica Pollock, in a similar vein, illuminates a cultural factor that contributes to normative conceptions of intelligence--specifically in relation to racialized appraisals of minority students in the education system. *Colormute* is a critique of pedagogy, policy, and American patterns surrounding the intersections of race and class which, Pollock shows, has created various unequal hierarchies within school administrations and classrooms. She does not overtly mention intelligence and competence, nor does she present a solution to the injustices perpetrated by discriminatory historical definitions. However, she does provide specific insight into daily cultural issues surrounding conversations about race in educational spaces which has implications for teaching strategies; she elucidates these in another book, *Schooltalk*.

Pollock describes ways that, throughout time, American understandings of race have contributed to stratifications of dehumanization and privilege: the institution of slavery and exclusionary immigration laws, to name a few. In the nineteenth century, American racial laws became particularly relevant to education. Slaves were denied basic literacy to restrict their possibilities for liberation in the name of promoting 'American' financial expansion. American--here--clearly referred to a particular subset of the American people. Thus, American practices

concerning race, she signifies, is always complicated by capital greed. Furthermore, American governmental commitment to the notion of white superiority gained power throughout the eras of public school segregation when former slaves and immigrants of color were purposefully allotted insufficient resources, confining them to low financial stratifications. Perhaps, she hypothesizes, the prevalence of schools within the history of racial inequality signifies that these institutions are a place where individuals “make each other racial.” Educational buildings have, thus, become the central location where students interpret their racial identities because teachers and administrators constantly rank and equip children along racial lines.<sup>71</sup> Pollock claims that the concept of race has allowed laws, policies, and faux science to nuance the “proud building blocks of our nation’s ‘diversity,’” by promoting “the shameful foundation of our most wrenching inequalities.”<sup>72</sup> James Collins, a reviewer of this text, agrees. He states that Pollock highlights a convincing argument that conversations related to race--whether through explicit mention or intentional aversion--in schools contributes to a “construction of (non-essential) ethnic groups and identities by marking differences.”<sup>73</sup>

In the more recent past, Pollock mentions a Californian public referendum called the Racial Privacy Initiative which argued for the cancellation of all race labels in public records.<sup>74</sup> Ward Connerly, a large supporter of this elimination, explained to the press that the bill aimed to make “the state...blind to color.”<sup>75</sup> Pollock describes this as a part of a larger, national movement within litigation towards outlawing the consideration of race in college admissions, K-12 student enrollment, and academic enrichment. This causes her to ask an important

<sup>71</sup> Mica Pollock, *Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School*. Princeton, (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 4.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>73</sup> James Collins, “*Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School*. Mica Pollock,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 62, no. 1 (2006): 135.

<sup>74</sup> Pollock, 2.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

question: since laws encouraging colorblindness cannot halt racial categorization, how has historical legislation affected how people think and talk about race today?<sup>76</sup> Additionally, because American society has encouraged both systemic inequalities and close relationships through racial categorization, how do individuals determine whether discussions of race will have a positive or negative impact on everyday situations?

Pollock begins to investigate these questions through documentation of race talk norms at an unidentified public high school in California. Here--during her initial presentation of the institution--she introduces the concept of 'color muteness.' 'Color muteness' is a term that describes instances where individuals use 'deraced' words to promote equality; this concept is her specific bestowal on pedagogical scholarship.<sup>77</sup> She also mentions two other important categories of racial discussion: the times racial classifications are contested and the moments where they are presented as objective facts. She first illustrates her sample population--the student body guised under the pseudonymous 'Columbus High School.' She describes it as a place mainly composed of mixed, poor students of color. This, she says, made the school perfect for race observations; students were minorities but difficult to identify ethnically and, thus, there were numerous conversations using, eliminating, talking about, and talking around the concept of race. Interestingly enough, despite the individual complexities of the student body, Pollock notes that teachers and kids repeatedly sacrificed their multiplicity in order to align with what she calls "a national habit of simple racial identification." This conformity, she suggests, is an attempt to craft a "strategic response within an inequitable country that has for generations bluntly asked [individuals] what [they] 'are'" in order to assess how they should be treated.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 41.

Her analysis of color muteness underlies the thesis of her entire book. She claims color muteness is a phenomenon prevalent throughout the history of American social sciences,<sup>79</sup> a product of a pervasive American ideology that claims race should only matter in specific moments.<sup>80</sup> While the inclusion of race when it is not significant and the contestation of race when it is relevant are important patterns of race talk to understand, the majority of her book analyzes color muteness—simply not acknowledging race at all. The most common example of color muteness within educational spaces can be exhibited through the commitment to the word “all.”<sup>81</sup> Race is deemed practically nonexistent in the discussion of ‘education for all,’ but-- according to her research--color muteness elicits a lot of controversy about the impact of race on educational policy and pedagogy. In an interview, one of the former principals of the school Pollock studied implied that she purposefully omitted race words from reform discourse as an intentional equity strategy;<sup>82</sup> she believed that she could better nurture all students by refusing to “segregate in any regard,” even dialogically. Along these lines, Pollock’s research shows a dichotomy prevalent in equity reform: to some talk of ‘education for all’ demands an intentional pursuit of racial equality; to others, the word demands that educational policy actively ignore racial inequality. Pollock notes that within schools and on district levels, people who describe education policy with a commitment to this stringent concept of ‘all’ do, in fact, fail to discuss the details of expected or existing roles for racial equality, in turn, obfuscating the potential for authentic dialogue about effective social change. She concludes her interpretation of race talk patterns with this: “deraced words [used] when discussing plans for achieving racial equality can actually keep [individuals] from discussing ways to make opportunities racially equal.”<sup>83</sup> And

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 71-72.

she predicts that this will simply continue. For example, she argues that many Americans now appear dangerously unwilling to navigate the complexities of determining the role of race amidst contemporary inequalities.<sup>84</sup> Race has recently been considered a tiresome topic, but her research considers race talk extremely important, not just because of its historical and current relevance but because of its possible future consequences. For example, at Columbus, the unwillingness of the aforementioned administrator to address the specific educational needs of any particular racial/ethnic group allowed both racial and financial disparities to be sustained institutionally.<sup>85</sup>

Unlike many critical pedagogists interested in race, Pollock specifically cites public policy as a source of tension within pedagogical communities. There has been widespread resistance to racially targeted reform language in California policy which demonstrates a political and legislative preference for aggregated restorative solutions. But it also reveals the uncertainty many people feel about how race matters--or should matter--to educational inequalities. She broaches a touchy subject: are certain “race groups worse off than others?”<sup>86</sup> Pollock boldly states that “not all people of color in California city seem identically disadvantaged.”<sup>87</sup> Teachers, administrators, and policymakers--by refusing to analyze and combat the patterns of race talk--prove not only their uncertainty about racial categorization and its ability to replicate unjust systems, but represents their unwillingness to compare demographic inequalities and, therefore, their inability to address their differences. Still, she declares, race is not something made in the past that has created reactions with no real consequences. It is being made in the present; people are constantly reacting to its changes, and the consequences will continue to hold a very real presence. One can see racial orders being built, erased, and

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 114.

challenged every day in the United States, she argues, through the language used and refused when discussing race, injustice, and equity.<sup>88</sup> By using race words carelessly and--more importantly--by deleting race words, American citizens and legislature help reproduce racial and financial inequalities. Thus, Pollock argues it is absolutely imperative that students, teachers, policymakers, and administrators learn how to navigate race talk. "Communication is action...each communication is an action with serious equity implications," she says.<sup>89</sup>

Equity work in schools, she suggests, should be an active effort to develop the full human talents and capacities--meaning intelligences--of every young person at the institution. In the United States, however, people too often falsely suggest that certain types of young people innately have more value, potential, intellect, aptitude or talent than others, making them more worthy of economic investment.<sup>90</sup> Unlike the previous pedagogical texts, she acknowledges that American public schools do not simply have an achievement gap, but rather an allocation gap in school funding, a preparation gap due to limited access to quality preschools, and a power gap because poor parents are disproportionately excluded from influence amongst the schools that serve their children.<sup>91</sup> The reason why America continues to be characterized by pervasive disparities in student achievement, she declares openly, is because the United States has done very little to comprehensively address the intersections of racist and classist oppression. According to the American Psychological Association, she points out, psychologists do not even agree about how to measure intelligence and competence.<sup>92</sup> As many pedagogists' state, test scores and school grades are never a measure of a student's full skill set.<sup>93</sup> *Schooltalk* highlights

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 133.

the fact that both internationally and historically a huge variety of skills are necessary for success in different time periods and social groupings.<sup>94</sup> Essentially, people define intelligence differently<sup>95</sup> and, like race talk, words delineating intellectual potential--for example, “normal” or “gifted”--have power.<sup>96</sup> In her opinion, ‘intelligence,’ in present public school educational spheres, actually means the development of skills that America values and, thus, deems worthy of measurement and fiscal endowment.<sup>97</sup>

“No brain is racial,” she states. And the domestic public school education system was founded on the notion that intellectual ability was distributed unequally by white scientists as an attempt to justify systems of economic, social, and political inequality organized along racial lines. Still, there are often racialized, classist, linguistic, and gendered patterns replicated throughout school punishment and reward centers. She relates closely to pedagogy when she states that the perpetuation of white supremacy, even within educational equity efforts, can be attributed to teachers who grew up in white, monolingual, and financially privileged communities, where disadvantaged individuals simply would not reside. Educators tend to reward children whose behaviors look like the values that their cultural frames of reference recognize, values that minority communities may or may not esteem.<sup>98</sup> In the article “From Shallow to Deep: Toward a Thorough Cultural Analysis of School Achievement Patterns,” Pollock points out the phenomenon of shallow cultural analysis within pedagogical journalism and popular discourse. She suggests that, rather than imposing theoretical analysis on students, teachers and pedagogists alike should--like anthropologists of education--study the organization

<sup>94</sup> Mica Pollock, *Schooltalk: Rethinking What We Say About—and to—Students Every Day*. (New York City, NY: The New Press, 2017), 134.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>98</sup> Mica Pollock, “From Shallow to Deep: Toward a Thorough Cultural Analysis of School Achievement Patterns,” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (2008): 343.

of people's everyday interactions in concrete contexts. Authors must, then, call for educators to not only become more aware of their students' life experiences outside classrooms but also of the educators' own consequently patterned interactions with students inside classrooms.<sup>99</sup>

In the end, Pollock illuminates that both within and despite attempts at equitable change, modern racist and classist practices persist; they contain resources amongst demographics that were historically deemed intelligent enough to amass economic affluence. She mentions the American educationalist, Lisa Delpit, who points out a broad "culture of power" operating in modern American schools: those who are dominant in society have more power to determine which behaviors and which children get recognized with school success. Ray McDermott, an anthropology professor, expounds when he states that education is also founded on a western cultural assumption that only a few can "achieve" while others must "fail."<sup>100</sup> Both of these citations allude to cultural dogmas rooted in capitalistic reverence affirming, not only the importance of race and class in relation to culture but also the significance of political philosophy in establishing cultural definitions.

Top researchers in the field of competence education have mainly tackled conceptions of intelligence in regard to psychology, race, and class. Howard Gardner, Carol Dweck, and Susan Cain illustrate the relationships between definitions of intelligence, personality, and mindset; Zaretta Hammond, Daniel Solórzano, and Yvette Johnson analyze racial factors and their contributions to conceptions of competence in schools; and Mica Pollock complicates those interpretations with the inclusion of power dynamics, specifically in regard to socioeconomic hierarchies. Today, critical pedagogists mainly view intelligence--at least in terms of its applicability to the educational sphere--as existing somewhere between pure natural brain

<sup>99</sup> Pollock, *From Shallow to Deep*, 373.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

inclination and complete cultural nurture. An individual's likeness to align with dogmas affirming particular brain powers and specific societal preferences is distinct. The societally-affirmed mores, however, domestically coincide with what the present American business world considers effective, rational, and desirable. As such, educators are--sometimes unintentionally but, often, with full knowledge--aiming to push students towards the attainment of a very small subset of intellectual capacities. More, if educators do acknowledge the gamut of intelligences, they devalue ones that cannot be empirically tied to tangible fiscal gain. Certainly, more important to resolving long-standing human rights issues and, relatedly, determining in what area of the American workforce one would make the most expansive impact, however, is genuine self-awareness. And a student's capacity to not only understand themselves but express their needs is significant to their teacher's potential to navigate between intellectual nature and nurture. Self-aware students are more likely to be grounded in reality--meaning what is realistic for them. They are also more likely to be in tune with the world around them and their potential to positively impact it.

Related to economics, philosophy, human rights, leadership, politics and--thus--business are educational policies which, as mentioned, shape the future of all fields by impacting what types of citizens enter each societal sphere. Pedagogical thought, the education system in practice, according to critical pedagogists is void of providing the practical skills necessary to challenge defunct cultural norms. More, because intelligence is often not depicted as a capacity that can grow, teachers and students alike are anxious about approaching the sort of complex world topics that elude concrete explanations; their lack of knowledge could, they fear, imply an inalterable intellectual deficiency. If schools do encourage the navigation of social identity formations, they do so as an external and optional program--not a consistent and progressive part

of the curriculum, aligned with brain developments and changes. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that administrators, themselves, never received instruction on how to combat prejudices and increase self-awareness. This demonstrates that educational assessment policies, perhaps, but most definitely educational pedagogies must incorporate an emphasis on critical thinking and philosophical introspection. In terms of shaping education, this is even more important. Unlike intellect which has some ties to actual biological differences, the setup of the education system is pretty much solely based on cultural traditions. Thus, teachers--within the enclave of their classrooms--can create and cultivate completely different approaches, when given the time and resources. This is where relationships become ultra-significant; teachers must feel close enough to either their students or school community to invest extra time in gathering materials or reinventing the wheel in order to incorporate lessons that explore cultural dogmas related to intelligence, success, and morality.

### **Methodology**

My methodology is called Grounded Normative Theory and it encompasses the aforementioned principles. It, broadly, is a technique that views theory exploration as a solidaristic form of directly participating in positive social change. GNT thus, like this paper, challenges notions of intellect through a dialogical approach to research; it intentionally disrupts the assumption that academic literature innately beholds a greater value than experiential narratives provided by the demographic being studied. To develop a research project or question, grounded normative theorists work alongside activists to gain insight into what normative questions are facing their sector of choice--in my case the intersection of educational, philosophical, and political development. Grounded normative theorists, then, establish a project

through collaboration, with purposeful attention on the amplification of commonly overshadowed voices. In GNT, instead of creating an ineffectual conversation between scholars, there is a discussion fostered between those who live the concepts and those who theorize about them.<sup>101</sup> I consider myself an investigator of human interdependence, solidarity, and love—more specifically, I study the impact of foundational political philosophies on present-day cultural dogmas, marginalization, and liberation. As a Government and Spanish major, I leverage literary and archival data to explore how societal expectations and identity formation influence relationships and access to education in Latin America and the United States. I consider my work a cross between activist scholarship and introspective ‘artivismo,’ a term coined by Chicano artists in East LA and the Zapatistas in Mexico to reference the type of advocacy that is expressed creatively. As such, I directly engage with African American/Afro-Latinx communities and their allies in the pursuit of tangible social change.

<sup>101</sup> Brooke Ackerly et al., “Grounded Normative Theory (GNT): Theorising with Those Who Struggle,” *European Consortium for Political Research*, (2018): 35.

## Chapter Two: Locke--Notions of Intelligence, Education, Morality + Interdependence

In order to interpret John Locke's conceptions of intimacy and interrelationship, related to his ethical outlook and--thus--moral compass, one must comprehend his notion of human nature outlined in the *Two Treatises of Government*. This directly prompts his understanding of human motivations: reason and the pursuit of happiness. Happiness, here, is directly correlated with the capacity to generate profit from property acquisition; he defines reason as aligning with self-preservation and pain mitigation. As a result, Locke proposes a merit-based society, dependent on political cooperation. Distinct from elevating human interdependence, this political system, represented within the American government today, is reliant on social contractual agreements. Thus, he posits a civil government that focuses primarily on protecting individual rights--notably, the rights of those deemed intellectually valuable--with the intention of fueling their ambition, raising societal capital and, as a byproduct, cultivating individual joy. Inequality accompanies capitalism, he acknowledges. He does not frame this theoretical notion of education and politics as related to the mitigation of inequalities' consequences. Instead Locke, in *A Complete Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Understanding*, constructs both an educational and moral system that aims to reaffirm and maintain the aforementioned appraisals. Through these texts which--together--all constitute a somewhat comprehensive capitalistic doctrine, Locke uses political theory to describe human nature and motivation which is improved, he claims, through reasonable social cooperation, not intimate connections.

Locke begins his discussion of human nature with a conversation about natural principles regarding standards of human interaction, specifically concerning personal preservation. These norms--which he presents as a feature of the natural world order--are not necessarily correlated

with social justice or social resistance. Instead, Locke claims that all natural men have the right to their self-preservation and, consequently, to food and drink; both he, too, considers elements critical to physical sustenance. God gave the earth to mankind and, as a result, the natural man was granted the chance to use it to his advantage. The earliest state of nature, Locke illustrates, is a land of penultimate freedom. Each individual orders their daily actions and disposes of possessions per their personal needs and aspirations. It is, too, a state of perfect equality. It has no imposition of man-made hierarchical structures. Still, laws exist. He calls these the ‘laws of nature’ and they are correlated with a notion of human motivation: reason. The law demands that, due to human equality and for the maintenance of independence, no one should rationally harm another’s life, health, liberty, or possessions. Locke relies on spiritual verbiage to prove the validity of this point. He claims to agree with Richard Hooker, another philosopher who is known for his application of politics to the Christian Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12). However, the nod to spirituality is clearly a rhetorical association for Locke. Within the greater context of *The Bible*, the ‘treatment’ mentioned in this verse indicates humankind’s capacity to love even those who want to harm them; Jesus Christ himself, for instance, is hailed as a perfect being in the Christian faith because of--at least, in part--his willingness to lovingly die for those who hated and abandoned him. Locke reduces this ethical principle when he, alternatively, suggests that individuals should merely refrain from harming anyone that does not present an immediate threat to their self-sufficiency. The law of nature explicitly encourages any reasonable attacks, ‘reasonable’ meaning preempting potential personal danger.

It is relevant to mention that Locke calls labels this concept the ‘law’ of nature. Other philosophers have, for example, framed their versions of the state of nature as ruled by

sentiments, not mandates. While across ideological and political spectrums, political philosophers have declared that natural men are forced to triumph over crises, Locke's rational men solitarily and preemptively attack other natural men--distinct from combatting external pressures as a response to consideration for some collective good. Since innate feelings are not mentioned in Lockean theory, it is easy to assume that this law is, somehow, enforced. Turns out, each person is a judge; they punish to deter and restrain. There is no element of retribution. The enforcement power that each individual has, gives natural men justifications for murder, usually rooted in either selfishness or bias. This lays the foundation for his notion of human solidarity within this primitive state. Locke claims there is no natural inclination towards human interdependence. Each person must act towards their gain in the state of nature, supposedly for the peace and preservation of mankind. Yet, it is obvious that selfish enforcements of laws and judgments of passions may impede societal harmony, more than promote it. Locke anticipates this argument and acknowledges that when men judge themselves, in this state, they will always be partial to themselves. Additionally, Locke implies, revenge and excitement will consistently cause them to go too far with their disciplinary tactics.<sup>102</sup>

Similar to Locke's state of nature is another dangerous state: the state of war, ripe for total mortal destruction. The state of war is declared whenever a premeditated malicious word or action is enacted against another human being. Upon this development or proclamation, Locke says it is reasonable to destroy the other person because, as is outlined in the law of nature, each person has the natural right to eliminate anything that impedes their safety. Those who attempt to impose absolute power are declaring this sort of war, he expresses.<sup>103</sup> The political implications of the state of war conclusively deem authoritarian and tyrannical governments illegitimate.

<sup>102</sup> John Locke. *Two Treatises of Government*. (London: R. Butler, etc., 1821), 3.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

Even when these structures claim to operate for the common good, they obliterate the virtual fence of freedom which is intended to protect individual rights. Additionally, the state of war is perpetual. Whenever injury is committed—even when a sort of violent justice is retroactively attempted—there is hurt which, according to the laws of nature, justifies revolt. Together, the state of nature, laws of nature, and state of war will cause conclusive annihilation. Though Locke’s initial political picture is bleak, these chaotic states can be mitigated by organized society. This implies that Locke believes the purpose of civil government is, primarily, to protect self-preservation within the context of established institutional organization. There must be limits to government rights in order to avoid any impositions on individual freedoms, as a result. This is a far cry from the educational system proposed by critical pedagogists today--one which hopes to involve political officials and citizens in the interrogation of societally-affirmed structures with the intention of community building. Locke indicates that the sole purpose of government is to help remove people from the state of war and put them in a state of peace. In civil society, for example, one can lock their door—avoiding constant quarrels between neighbors. Again, this is rooted in the premise that humans are fundamentally self-interested and, as a result, most willing to commit to systems that promise their individual security and happiness.

He lays the foundation for his political theory and the political rights of individuals by disproving the divine right of kings: a prominent doctrine of the political lineage at the time. It claimed that kings derived irrevocable authority from God. Locke, opposingly, says that no explicit dispensation of authority was given by God to Adam in *The Bible*. God “has given the earth to the children of men,” and to “mankind in common,” instead.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, even if dominion was transferred to Adam, he expands, there is no way to determine his direct

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 40.

successors who would be the only heirs to earthly land under divine right ideology. Starting with this baseline—that the world belongs to all men—Locke elucidates what just acquisition looks like: “how men might come to have property.”<sup>105</sup> God has given natural men the earth and, because one’s body belongs to oneself, “the labour of his body and the work of his hands...are properly his.”<sup>106</sup> For example, the fruit on earth is given to all by God but the one that picks a specific fruit owns it. Additionally, the more labor it takes to obtain the item, the more value it holds. This notion is grounded in the idea that resources, and by extension people, are of little use to mankind or themselves in the absence of labor. An apple must be picked before it can be eaten; a tree by itself is no use. Thus, a human that cannot work is not a productive contributor to civilization. One common objection to this political proposition is that people will likely take more ‘apples’ than they need. A greater objection would be that considering the differing abilities of human beings, some are naturally more able to—for example—pick a fruit than another. He does not, in this section, respond to the latter inquiry—potential ableism goes unexamined, the implication being that in a merit-based society disabled individuals are, in fact, less valuable than able-bodied people.

He does, however, respond to the concern regarding greed. There is a spoilage limit that mitigates its negative impact. After a certain threshold, whatever people have gathered and saved will spoil. Upon seeing the waste that their labor has produced people will have an incentive to constrict their acquisition based on necessity. Acquiring land obviously nuances the widespread applicability of the spoilage limit idea but property, Locke claims, becomes personal when it is enclosed and improved. He uses the example of a well to illustrate why enclosing property is not—in fact—thievery, despite a lack of explicit communal consent. If one had to get the consent

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 11.

of all mankind, he argues, everyone would starve; besides, nature is always replenishable. Take a stream where a person ‘encloses’ a mug of water, for example. There is still plenty left for others. With land, however, there is not necessarily enough to distribute amongst the human population. To counterclaim this predicted argument, he reverts back to conversations about God. He retroactively adjusts his previous claim that God gave the world to men in common. God actually gave the world to “industrious and rational” natural men in order to be cultivated. Where he gets this particular extrapolation is unclear; he does not cite a specific bible verse. Perhaps, due to this lack of clear evidence, he anticipates another rejection to the proposed theory: land that is being enclosed is not being cultivated but, rather, secluded and it is unable to be enjoyed by the collective community as a result. He answers by saying that the invention of money and its value shifts notions of equitable distributions. Money transcended the spoilage limit. Initially, having more than one needed was irrational because it would eventually spoil and become worthless. But with the invention of money, it makes sense for industrious people to acquire more than they personally need so that they can improve it and then sell it. Thus, the invention of money eliminated the need for a spoilage limit—remember, the spoilage limit is the only thing, thus far, that he posits could satiate natural human selfishness. Still, he counts this greed as positive when it is conducive to property accumulation, increased creativity, and overall societal economic growth.<sup>107</sup>

Locke’s political philosophy is arranged like a proof: he asserts claims, anticipates objections and prepares rebuttals. Interesting then is the application of his so-called rational political philosophy to interpersonal relationships within the domestic sphere. Locke generally affirms distance between political institutions and familial units, what he calls ‘personal

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 13.

authorities.’ “Political life should not be modeled on the life of a family,” he states. This separation between civics and interpersonal relationships is an intentional strategy on Locke’s part. He hopes to present his theory as the only rational way to establish new societies, not subjective in any regard. Still, Locke cannot evade abstract ideas completely as he, again, engages spirituality. He grounds his argument in biblical terms to counter possible metaphysical critiques to his stark rationalistic approach. He constantly references deity when demonstrating how rights should be allocated within society. When he claims the industrious and rational deserve the Earth, he asserts a new morality that is quite deviant from Biblical norms—despite claiming that it was directly presented by God. It is not the “meek that inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5) but the “industrious and rational” who inherit prosperity and power in a capitalistic society. It is, thus, relatively clear that his biblical quotations are simply part of a rhetorical strategy. In reality, he is somewhat anti-biblical; the philosophy assumes that in the natural state of humankind, individuals need to labor and acquire solitarily because they are not provided enough resources by God. Within civilizations with capitalistic foundations, property needs to be considered a sacred right and people must feel a near devotion to the preservation of both it and themselves. This may be another reason that he utilizes biblical text. Locke urges people to engage with individualism, rationality, and private property with near-religious fervor.

Some would say that this sort of commitment both allows for the exploitation of the laboring class and increases the propensity for mass monopolization of land and wealth. Locke thinks that despite inevitable inequalities, there are--too--virtually unlimited opportunities to innovatively utilize labor in a capitalistic world. He communicates this through the notion of a multiplier effect: the idea that people can improve land one, ten, and one-hundred times its original value by employing productive labor. He rhetorically illustrates the multiplier effect in

this way, alluding to an exponential increase, to represent the idea that enclosed land has unlimited potential for improvement. Thus, even the poor and exploited in a civilization with capitalistic foundations, will be vastly better off than they would in a non-Lockean society. Society rewards those that are inquisitive as well as neurologically and physically able to labor alongside capitalistic norms. This, he claims, will benefit everyone because it raises net societal and economic values.

Further, in the *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke argues that no one ought to commit injustice by doing “harm [to] another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions.”<sup>108</sup> By injustice, he means that no one should assert dominance over another in a way that impacts their ability to be industrious and rational—not inequality. He suggests combatting this injustice with “Shame, and the Apprehension of Displeasure,” which he classifies as “the only true Restrain.”<sup>109</sup> Like a child who “comes to recognize that disgraceful acts tend to remove him from the company of others,” all humans will respond to social exclusion as they have a natural “Inclination [that drives] [them] into Society.”<sup>110</sup> This is the first time that Locke explicitly mentions the necessity of any sort of community. Derived from the social contract, Locke’s politically legitimate civilization is a group bonded by logical consent. Humans sacrifice some natural rights in exchange for government protection over individual property and, relatedly, freedom. Freedom, he defines, not as collective liberation, but as the “Power in any Agent to do or forbear any particular Action, according to the determination or thought of the mind.” This means that Locke endorses a kind of freedom that promotes the execution of actions when they result in immediate personal pleasure or intellectual exploration. Still, he unsurprisingly equates

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>109</sup> John Locke. *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Understanding*. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), 8.

<sup>110</sup> Jacqueline L. Pfeffer, “The Family in John Locke's Political Thought,” *Polity* 33, no. 4 (2001): 606.

freedom--too--with the pursuit of self-interest through economic competition and the attainment of both intellectual and financial independence.<sup>111</sup> In chapter five, of the *Second Treatise of Government*, property is considered purely economic. In chapter nine, he calls it the “aim of society” which deliberately expands its association. He also intentionally uses property (fruit, water, land etc.) as his examples when discussing natural human rights which attaches individual rights, more broadly, to economic rights. Those that agree with capitalistic foundations will be disposed to cooperation. Make no mistake, he does not confuse consensual and cooperative engagement with intimate involvement.

Locke’s conception of interdependence is best represented by his ideal government structure. He recommends that the legislature writes laws but has no power to societally enforce mandates. The branch must, thus, cooperate with the executive sector which is always in session and fully capable of implementing legislative standards. Additionally, the federal division of the government deals with international relations and war. Lastly, citizens have civic influence. They can—and should, he suggests—revolt when they find the broader government encroaching on personal rights. Here, he infuses an element of large-scale rebellion into his notion of interrelationship, but his sense of revolution is tied to individual benefit not collective cultural or intellectual progression. He distinguishes each subdivision functionally but considers them a united body, coordinated in order to ensure an equitable distribution of power in regard to societal happenings. Any definitive usurpation by a singular group would submit all others to their arbitrary departmental wills, thus inducing the state of war. They are, like all of humankind in civilized nations, voluntarily partnered by a singular purpose: in this case, societal regulation.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, just as no particular branch is deemed supreme—which, in fact,

<sup>111</sup> John Locke. *A Complete Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), 2.

<sup>112</sup> Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 3.

results in specialized excellence—no governmental institution is capable of fully communicating the social standards necessary to instill capitalistic morale. Hence, the need for familial speciality.

He considers parents the critical transmitters of “virtues connected with acquisition and management of property.”<sup>113</sup> As an encouragement to industriousness, for example, Locke proposes that children be made to “fashion their own toys.” Parents could “thereby employ their child’s desire for playthings to habituate them” to pursuing hedonistic desires through self-reliance.<sup>114</sup> He then applies this mentality to schooling when he suggests that parents create “[contests]” for their children to see who can best demonstrate liberality. This competition is not a friendly game but a challenge of sorts which, subtly, tests a child’s capacity to submit to specific notions of success and intellect: the normalcy of one individual winning while another loses in a public display of financial knowledge.<sup>115</sup> Thus, it is relevant to note that though this contest relates to generosity, at its core it channels self-interested motivations--including pride and competition--towards limiting the sort of “covetousness and desire of having” that shakes the bedrock of contractual collaboration. This is not an exercise in empathetic relationship building but rather a mere consideration of others to allow the installation of personal goals and practice of capitalistic traits. Locke’s remarks, also, only concern a child’s disposition towards their “[friends]”--people for whom the child cares--not society as a whole. Thus, even in his discussion of liberality, which is arguably the closest that he gets to encouraging sacrifice and human connection, he restricts the applicability to one’s immediate circle and, like always, with individual goals in mind.<sup>116</sup> The outcomes of these contests, too, reflect on the adults involved. Outside of the immediate familial circle, their children’s performances on informal

<sup>113</sup> Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought*, 603.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 605.

<sup>115</sup> Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Human Understanding*, 31.

<sup>116</sup> Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought*, 606.

examinations, signify the parents' ability to create productive members of society. As such, Locke states that parents "must look upon [their] children" as individuals that they want to shape to "be like [themselves]: with the same passions, the same wisdom, [and] the same desires." This implies a certain level of interest in standardization, at least in terms of the need for regulated standards within educational instruction.<sup>117</sup>

Locke himself indicates that the type of information deemed significant enough to be included within standardized norms is, indeed, based on "speculative" and "agreed upon" subjective traditions. Therefore, education within the family needs to be a sort of indoctrination-- a system of "constant impression" in the pursuit of cultural uniformity. Those who are not, he later explicitly states, "sheepish, [bashful]," incapable of networking,<sup>118</sup> or distant from the "language of business,"<sup>119</sup> have a better chance at happiness as well as civic acceptance because they are "useful."<sup>120</sup> Thus, competence need not be correlated with some grand capacity. He recommends relatively low standards when it comes to standardizing school-based understanding. A mind busy with productive activity need not ruminate on "meddling with things exceeding...comprehension." This does not mean that concepts of morality should be abandoned, but rather that they should be framed intentionally through questions that allow for practical outputs related to human conduct.<sup>121</sup> One of the main aims of education, in his view, is the instillation of the 'principle of virtue,' namely, the ability to subvert one's immediate appetites and desires to the dictates of reason. The importance Locke places on this quality cannot be overstated: nearly two-thirds of *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* is devoted to an account on how to best reinforce this understanding. As such, he asserts that moral education, in

<sup>117</sup> Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Human Understanding*, 31.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>121</sup> Locke, *A Complete Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 4.

this respect, is more important than most other kinds of education. “Virtue” he states, is critical because it makes individuals “[valuable]” and “[lovable],” expansively “beloved by others” and “tolerable to [themselves].” Without these things--value, love from others, and self-toleration--there is no happiness.<sup>122</sup> Thus, though the idea of wisdom and rationality are explicitly and consistently equated to capital gain and business management, there is--too--an element of public acceptability and self-evaluation weaved into his notion of intellectual excellence.

He takes a strong stance against the need for formal educational institutions. In place of the usual scholastic course of study, Locke proposes an entirely new curriculum. Just as within a subject there is a certain way to present ideas--by introducing first one simple thing, then another idea logically connected to the first, and so on--he thinks that there is a parallel method, best for intellectual instruction. His teaching begins with reading and writing in English which eventually incorporates French and Latin. Simultaneous with French studies, the child should be introduced to a host of other subjects like geography and arithmetic. Once addition and subtraction are mastered, the individual should return to geography and learn about poles, zones, latitude, and longitude, which makes academic studies directly applicable to life. When they master the terrestrial globe, he suggests, they can move on to investigate celestial things, including learning about hemispheric constellations. Next, the child--perhaps an adolescent at this point--would move on to discuss geometry, history, then ethics, law, and, finally, some natural philosophy. The advantage of this system, Locke thinks, is that it not only teaches all of the most useful subjects, including some that were not represented in education during his time, but it also develops in a way that follows the natural evolution of a child’s mind. His familial curriculum focuses on engendering capitalistic values. His notion of an academic core, too, elevates topics

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 102.

that apply to terrestrial understanding, economic gain, and comprehension of the logical foundations of his capitalistic philosophy. Still, the main goal of this education system is to allow for transferable skills. He says that manual aptitudes—including gardening, carpentry, and the creation of optical lenses—are useful because they help to relax and refresh the mind after a day of academic study. It is better to have such a skill to produce during down time, he thinks, than to be idle—the antithesis of industriousness.

And most parents, Locke thinks, actually occupy an adversarial role in their children's lives. When the children are young and need rational guidance, the parents are indulgent but when they are grown and can use their own reason, the parents suddenly begin imposing their will. Locke says that these patterns are illogical and that parents must reverse their behavior: when the children are young, they should be placed under stern authority. Young children should relate to their parents through fear and awe. These words, “fear” and “awe,” do not connote any particular closeness or reciprocal relational bonding. Once a child is a rational creature, a parent can only retain his authority by inspiring “reverence”—again, not a word that is typically related to relationships based on mutual reliance. As stated, the main role of parents in Lockean society is to be the individuals that “preserve, nourish, and educate...children” in a way that, essentially, integrates capitalistic dogmas into their internalized psychological fabrics.<sup>123</sup> More specifically, the goal of the familial institution is to create children that operate with competence in skills related to property management.<sup>124</sup> To attain this end, nature gives parents temporary authority over their children.<sup>125</sup> A parent's sustained power, alternatively, over his child's property is directly incompatible with Locke's concept of adequate education. A child who does not have

<sup>123</sup> Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought*, 503.

<sup>124</sup> Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 40.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

personal property at their disposal cannot be informed about how to effectively extend it. This appraisal of the parent-child relationship demonstrates Locke's conceptions of teacher-student dynamics. Teachers are meant to be somewhat distant and uninvested, like his notions of conjugal society signifies, and they are also supposed to reinforce the type of intellect that translates into effective economic acquisition and oversight.

The purpose of marriage, Locke later communicates, is "Procreation and mutual Support," a way to impart capitalist ideologies into future generations, not to foster interpersonal intimacy.<sup>126</sup> Like the rest of his relational binds, an empathetic connection is not necessary—instead, he promotes contractual partnership. Locke expresses no concern about the capacity to provide substantial education when "the Husband and Wife part which happens frequently."<sup>127</sup> Similarly, when he claims, "The Wife has, in many cases, a Liberty to separate from [her husband]; where natural Right or their Contract allows it," he affirms that the familial educational structure is not impacted by the level of closeness between parental figures. Implicit in this, is the idea that a model of interdependent connection is not educationally critical for child development into productive capitalistic citizenship.<sup>128</sup> Jacqueline Pfeffer phrases it this way: "there is no express suggestion that when parents separate or divorce, or when one parent dies, that the...parent's ability to fulfill the didactic end of the society with his or her child is necessarily compromised" as long each parent is "competent," meaning logical.<sup>129</sup> A familial structure, specifically, is necessary because it is a prerequisite for political continuation—important to the elimination of the dangerous state of war.<sup>130</sup> Children, through the education that

<sup>126</sup> Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Understanding*, 27.

<sup>127</sup> Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 22.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>130</sup> Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought*, 601.

their parents provide, become capable of understanding laws, liberty, and equality.<sup>131</sup> A child who has come to the use of reason has a motive, he argues, to enter a capitalistic political society.<sup>132</sup> Though some of his explanations regarding this concept refer to notions that would commonly be associated with definitions of dependence and revolution, in reality, Locke's theories about politics and intimacy encapsulate this: a consensual partnership in the pursuit of either direct or indirect individual aims.

Locke believes that education requires the pursuit of truth--of course what he considers truth is constricted by his interpretations of human nature and human motivation. Still, it can be attained by individuals exercising reason and human intellectual faculties.<sup>133</sup> No matter how rudimentary truth is, however, some people simply cannot comprehend, "idiots, savages, and illiterate people," to name a few. This is because they are easily "corrupted by [customs] [and]...borrowed opinions." By this, Locke later reveals, he means that individuals who align with other cultural understandings--perhaps, those not as focused on profit—are idiots incapable of productive intellectuality. They are, as he characterizes them, people "unwilling to cast their native thoughts into new moulds." Intelligence--then--is a combination of competence and usefulness,<sup>134</sup> both decided upon by societal standards. And in the case of America, they are derived from notions intertwined with capital advancements. Thus, education is a pursuit of the kinds of truths that are "always...simple, all pure, [bearing] no mixture of anything else with it; rigid and inflexible to societal interests." These truths, he claims, are objective and, as a result, "excellent."<sup>135</sup> Objective principles have no particular ethical ties. They cannot be considered 'good' or 'bad.' Like his notions of intellect and success, humans are to be "measured by their

<sup>131</sup> Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 38.

<sup>132</sup> Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought*, 603.

<sup>133</sup> John Locke, *Essays on the Laws of Nature*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 40.

<sup>134</sup> Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Human Understanding*, 122.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

usefulness,” meaning their potential to economically impact society.<sup>136</sup> As Ruth W. Grant and Nathan Tarcov convey plainly in the introduction of *Some Thoughts Concerning Education and the Conduct of Human Understanding*, “[education] is objective oriented” with a focus on whatever is “applicable,” “practical,” and “profitable” in Locke’s world.<sup>137</sup>

As mentioned, pedagogist specialize on singular elements--predominantly, psychology, race, and class--within their research as an attempt to identify a component so comprehensive that reducing its relevance would, similarly, considerably reduce classroom discrimination. But, if intelligence is impacted by economic, political, individual, and social factors related to both the past and present--which is what pedagogists suggest--only the addition of political theory and analysis of capitalistic conceptions of intelligence truly encompasses all of these dimensions; it illuminates the psychology of American institutions and public thought. Thus, analyses of literature and theories surrounding human intellect in classroom settings—more than indicating a conclusive interpretation—articulates this fact: no singular variable explains persistent achievement, resource, and power gaps; the definition of intelligence, itself, is complex and its scope must be better understood by an interpretation of its impetus. More, interpreting John Locke is critical to the aforementioned analyses of modern educational pedagogies. This research is imperative; effective pedagogy within classrooms will both reduce crime--as is indicated by the realities of the school to prison pipeline--and produce adults prepared and willing to eradicate other crises in American society.

As I will try to show, deciding which social practices should be governed by market mechanisms requires a form of economic reasoning that is bound up with moral reasoning. Mainstream economic thinking often asserts its independence from the contested terrain of moral

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 277.

and political philosophy. Economics textbooks emphasize the distinction between positive questions and normative ones, between explaining and prescribing. But Lockean scholars note that his definitions of education, liberation, political theory, and human motivation seem unable to account for the kinds of actions that are typically emblematic of societally-appraised virtue today. As Julia Walsh articulates in “Ethics: Locke,” notions of deep personal sacrifice for societal benefit is generally absent. To the extent that Locke is an architect of present-day American society--including in terms of thought processes related to interrelationship, justice, and educational equity--it matters a great deal whether his moral understandings are easy to interpret.<sup>138</sup> Some portions of his philosophy, perhaps, seem too simplistic--constantly relating back to his two main principles: rationality and happiness. Other times, it seems mysteriously complex; his explanations of ethics, specifically, leave much to the imagination. In “What Does Locke Expect Us to Know?” Steven Forde, says that, ideally, all of humankind would grasp the full philosophical elaboration of his demonstrative morality; but in practice, the simpler logic of civility and its place in human happiness, Locke implies, will suffice.

<sup>138</sup> Steve Forde, “What Does Locke Expect Us to Know?” *The Review of Politics* 68, no. 2 (2006): 233.

### Chapter Three: Political Philosophers/Economists--Notions of Morality + Interdependence

Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes are known as the founders of modern political philosophy: the theoretical movement that Locke participated in. Through their works, they display a fundamental divergence from classic approaches to religious and moral traditions. They, as a result, assert opposing depictions of the roles of philosophy and government in society; this is in comparison to their most famous predecessors: Aristotle and Socrates. While classical philosophers concealed dangerously seditious claims in rhetoric that abided by accepted moral principles, Machiavelli overtly suggests a partnership between philosophy and politics. Additionally, he recommends the liberation of political leaders from common conceptions of morality. He does not expect the abolition of moral expectations to apply to the general population but, instead, endorses the creation of an illusion; the government should portray integrity for the establishment of societal peace and order. Hobbes builds on this theory by advocating that all individuals discard established moral standards, thus promoting a new governmental structure not only rooted in collective stability but also the protection of individual liberties.

Before Machiavelli, standard conceptions of morality were derived from ancient texts and biblical teachings. Aristotle's definition of virtue praised the individual who occupied a sort of intermediate space between either intense virtue or extreme vice. Machiavelli, in his book *The Prince*, proclaims a new terrain of amorality that endorses ruthless behavior for the sake of governmental retention of power as well as regime stability.<sup>139</sup> While Aristotle would say that liberality, for example, is the right disposition to have towards money, Machiavelli argues that liberality, actually "hurts [the prince]" and his subjects in the long run. As such, he connects

<sup>139</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince*. (Harmondsworth, Eng.; New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 1981), 62.

morality, economics, and interdependence in a way that hints at a need for objective rationality. Thus, moral detachment--like the objectivity that Locke relates to education, intelligence, and human connection--should also complicate notions of moral existence and political communication. According to Machiavelli, if a ruler tries to be too generous at the beginning of his career, he will become infamous for his giving. In order to keep up with his reputation, he will then have to burden his subordinates with rigorous taxes making him hated amongst his subjects. Once he realizes this, he will try to retract his generosity leading him to become known for the corresponding vice: meanness. If he is known as stingy from the very start, however, he can keep his income allowing him to “defend himself from whoever makes war on him.”<sup>140</sup> This, Machiavelli implies, is more important than adhering to some sort of moral standard. He does not even discuss whether liberality or parsimony is more moral, nor does he claim that a prince should care about virtue but rather, he overtly declares the ruler’s need to focus on the “security and well-being” of himself and his authority.<sup>141</sup>

Machiavelli’s critique of Christianity is similar. He believes the ruler of any society should be freed from the constraints set by a moral compass. They should, instead, be taught “how to use both [the] nature” of law and force. He explicitly states that a “prudent lord cannot observe faith”<sup>142</sup> because moral universalism--which Christianity relies on, to some degree--does not allow a prince to “enter into evil,”<sup>143</sup> even when necessary to “win and maintain his state.”<sup>144</sup> Machiavelli’s promotion of morally neutral leadership expands the boundaries of early perceptions of morality. As such, the prince can do whatever is necessary to maintain his power and, consequently, keep the regime safe. It is important to note that, though Machiavellian

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 71.

society allows for peace and order, it runs the risk of making the people increasingly Machiavellian. If the leader is unsuccessful in painting a religious gloss over their actions the masses will turn towards chaos; if they become liberated themselves, each individual will pursue their personal interests, using weapons to acquire power.

While it would seem, then, that Machiavelli advocates for government censorship--meaning governmental use of particular word choice in the creation of whatever narrative is deemed critical to enacting civic plans--he, in fact, alludes to a fundamental tension: the desire to present a sort of transparent objectivity and the reality of governmental value-laden statements within public communication efforts. His open critiques on religion and morality show that Machiavelli does not always think it is necessary to rely on crafty thought experiments; he presents his own notion of amorality as neutrally beneficial and, thus, easy to address outright. He does, however, insinuate that religion and morality are relevant to consider in discussions of maintaining or breaking the status quo. He delineates this, in the text, is in his introduction of Moses as an “armed prophet”<sup>145</sup> who used, he claims, the image of a “mere executor of things...ordered...by God,” to “[acquire]...kingdoms.”<sup>146</sup> His description of Moses as someone who made “[Moses’] people observe [Moses’] constitution” explicitly indicates that Machiavelli does not believe in Moses’ divine connection. Instead, Machiavelli views Moses as a shrewd politician who used doctrine as a justification for the assertion of his personal gain. Thus, he depicts religion primarily as a political institution that poses a threat to the sovereignty of the government by giving people the opportunity to put their loyalty in virtue and altruism, instead of the political leader. The power of religion, therefore, must be used as a tool but, unlike Socrates, he overtly claims the church should be a place to channel the general public’s illusions.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 22.

He says that a prince should “appear all mercy, all faith, all honesty, all humanity, [and] all religion” because people are more likely to obey someone if they believe the ruler is operating for a common good.<sup>147</sup> It is clear that in a Machiavellian society, people will never fully be liberated from the sense of justice. Therefore, the concept of virtue and organized religion should be kept and exploited, taking advantage of people’s desires to follow the common good. This implies a complete change in the goal of political philosophy. Instead of subverting the government to expose truth, which Aristotle and Socrates professed, Machiavelli proposes political philosophers and political leaders form an allegiance to create an illusion of truth while prudently discerning what they deem necessary to make sure that the political leader remains in power and the regime remains in order.

Hobbes expands upon Machiavelli’s claims by amplifying his critical approach through not only completely dismissing Christianity but also eroding the conception of devoted belief itself. Like Machiavelli, Hobbes does away with the Socratic philosophical strategy and explicitly states that he regards Christianity as devotion to a prophet, who operates in the name of God. And people, he articulates, foolishly “trust and believe” in him, regardless of “whether he be a true or a false” communicator of God’s will.<sup>148</sup> He says that declarations of divine inspiration are a product of habitual pride.<sup>149</sup> He also claims that divine appointment often originates from a person “finding of an error generally held by others.” After forgetting how they came to a different understanding of truth they, he states, “presently admire themselves as being in the special grace of God Almighty.” In reality, they are essentially exhibiting “madness.”<sup>150</sup> His specific example of this is Jesus Christ, himself, who he characterizes as a simple man that

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>148</sup> Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), 42.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 47.

“[wandered] through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none” until he and the disciples settled on an idea and became “mad men.”<sup>151</sup> Here, not only does he claim that Christianity is fundamentally untrue, but he also asserts that faith in any creed is completely illogical. In fact, any time a person adheres to a doctrine that is taken “not from the thing itself...but from the authority and good opinion” of whoever said it,” the belief is truly in “the speaker, or person” not in the doctrine. Therefore, he considers it “evident” that whatsoever one believes, solely by testimony, witness, or writings, of another man “whether they be sent from God or not, is faith in men only.”<sup>152</sup> While Machiavelli does not believe in God, he still encourages the presence of the church as a political institution. Hobbes, however, obliterates even the potential for God as traditionally understood and, therefore, has no need for standards of religion or morality.

The Machiavellian perspective of virtue, which princes and philosophers should be liberated from, is extended by Hobbes from an illusion to complete moral relativism. Hobbes describes human actions as a product of motion either moving towards something, called an appetite, or moving away from something, which is called an aversion.<sup>153</sup> And he suggests that whatever “is the object of any man’s appetite or desire,” is “good.” “[The] object of his hate and aversion,” he calls “evil.” This implies that moral expectations are not really guided by some ultimate truth or supernatural understanding but “used with relation to the person that [uses] them.” There is no consensus on what is desired, no absolute standard or natural law, and, thus, “nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil.”<sup>154</sup> This resolves the Machiavellian possibility of each person attempting to assert their own moral veneer and seek power, by allowing each person to be enlightened and to ascribe to their own senses of morality.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 33.

However, Hobbes' ideology was, at the time, still a potentially irresponsible and idealistic hope contingent on public transference from established principles of justice to acceptance of the unflattering scientific method's depiction of human nature.

Like the preceding philosophers, Hobbes' conception of morality points to his understanding of the purpose of political philosophy and his view of the requirements of politics. He condemns early philosophers of having no "utility" and despises moral philosophy because he believes it is simply "a description of [one's] own passions."<sup>155</sup> Instead of this, he suggests an alternative picture that relies on "precise truth" found through the reductionist strategy commonly used "in geometry."<sup>156</sup> Under this assumption, philosophy should be interpreted like math which is conceptualized through self-evident principles and reasoning. This implies that the new goal of philosophy is to understand the fundamentals that undergird individual human opinions and actions through substantial proof and empirical evidence. This philosophical view is particularly useful for Hobbes' understanding of government. His political structure requires, not only security from "continual fear, and danger of violent death"<sup>157</sup> but also protection of the "liberty each man [has] to use his own power as he will himself."<sup>158</sup> Unlike classic philosophers, he illustrates humans as subordinate to a law of nature which they have created "by reason" in order to "endeavor peace" and "defend [themselves]" from powers that try to take away the "preservation of [one's] own nature."<sup>159</sup> In Hobbesian society, government is elevated, no longer something to simultaneously subvert and avoid, or something to align with in order to establish peace and safety, but an institution to provide protection from certain death, a champion of individualistic liberties.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 417.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 20.

Hobbes and Machiavelli radically modify the rhetorical strategy of classic philosophers by shifting from cleverly embedded lessons in morally accepted standards, to explicit amorality, and eventually to moral relativism. Their critical approach shows that, unlike Socrates and Aristotle, they do not think of the government as an institution to be feared but as an organization to side with and shape. Their political alliances and conception of morality allow them to promote a vastly different depiction of society, consequently. Hobbes even creates the foundation for the American government by portraying a community based on a social construct, engendered by the people for their: 1) protection from death and 2) preservation of individual rights. It is significant to state that while Machiavelli is depicting a new conception of leadership that does not adhere to societal assumptions in terms of religion, his extreme aversion to the creation of disorder suggests that his society is not completely without foundations of dogmatic beliefs. Similarly, Hobbes never explicitly addresses the fact that he describes fear as the most rational passion because it leads to self-preservation. Both Machiavelli and Hobbes conceal a dependence on a certain very powerful claim that, though not moral, is supposed to be accepted without question. This claim is the understanding that preservation of life, peace, and order are the most important foundations for society. This raises the question: how far have Hobbes and Machiavelli really traveled from the reliance on dogmatic assumptions that they criticize? More, if dogmatic assumptions are fundamental to governmental life and--thus--poli-theoretical explorations of human interaction and individual rights, how should information be properly conveyed to the public? Will understanding the moral implications of a policy assist or disrupt attempts at transparency, objectivity, and fairness?

Economics--today--is widely considered a value-neutral science of human behavior. Its academic scholarship, as a result, relies heavily on empirical data. In fact, it only acknowledges

subjectivity when pulling from relatively uncontroversial assumptions about human psychology and decision making. The discipline, however, is starting to grapple with the reality of dogmas, despite attempts at strict mathematical methods of human analysis. This becomes particularly relevant in discussions of interpersonal dynamics and informational transference. Community culture and social interdependence are difficult to quantify and, thus, predict based on market norms related to wages and clear objectives. The assertion that market choices are free choices, for example, requires the entertainment of conversations about the societal conditions that undermine the capacity to consent.<sup>160</sup> Additionally, much of the Western world identifies with individualism, meaning being characterized by independence and self-reliance. But Americans regularly participate in more social institutions, especially regarding education, than some collectivist locations. Economics has a difficult time interpreting this sort of data--the kind that involves underlying moral, cultural, and social values related to political actions. Still, these features define the cultural experiences of individuals and, thus, impact the way human beings interact with one another. Social science, broadly, has a difficult time explaining where values come from, why certain things are valued, and why particular social and religious goals are prioritized over more prominent values shared by society, at large. The inability to self-reflect is a pervasive issue. But values are significant; they explain how people evaluate moral principles of justice, social participation, economic mobility, and--as a result--leadership, business, education, and policy.<sup>161</sup>

The present-day political philosopher, Michael Sandel states that--despite this reality--market values and market reasoning have almost ubiquitously infiltrated spheres of life

<sup>160</sup> Sandel, "Market Reasoning as Moral Reasoning," 123.

<sup>161</sup> Alberto Alesina and Glaeser, Edward L., "Why are welfare states in the US and Europe so different? What do we learn?" *Dans Horizons stratégiques* 2, no. 2 (2006): 51-52.

previously governed by nonmarket standards. “In procreation and childrearing, health and education, sports and recreation, criminal justice, environmental protection, military service, political campaigns, public spaces, and civic life,” he begins, money and market norms matter.<sup>162</sup> Markets in refugee quotas, procreation permits, and the right to shoot a walrus, regardless of perceived economic efficiency are, in his words, “questionable.” They are not necessarily fiscally irresponsible, but they do “erode...attitudes and norms that should govern the treatment of refugees, children, and endangered species.” Similarly, creating educational policies that aspire to remain objective, transparent, and ‘logical,’ in the sense that they stress economic scientificity, are questionable. They impact views of intelligence and often perpetuate exclusionary assumptions about neurotypicality, race, and class. Perhaps, this seems far-fetched: the idea that certain value-laden words within public policies allude to Lockean theories of intellectuality rooted in standardized business norms which were, initially, chosen arbitrarily. Acknowledgment of this possibility, however, through moral assessment, is critical--and this is what Sandel explores in his text.

Taking his framework further, I suggest that notification of the emotional implications involved in moral assessments must be grafted onto his recognition of the significance of nonmarket knowledge. In his work, Sandel uses the example of an average couple in a committed and loving relationship to depict his proposition. Their capacity for love, he explains, is not depleted with use--as market norms about commodities would suggest--but they are enlarged with practice. If over a lifetime the couple asks little of one another in hopes of hoarding their love for “times they really [need] it,” the relationship will be less fulfilling. In addition, it would likely be more difficult to love each other during trying times, because they

<sup>162</sup> Sandel, “Market Reasoning as Moral Reasoning,” 121.

did not commit to establishing a system that works, during times of ease.<sup>163</sup> Now that emotional labor is seen as capital and intelligence is viewed as currency dynamics like those exemplified in teacher-student relationships become relevant to the realm of economy-type assessments.<sup>164</sup>

Building on Sandel's illustration, a teacher does not become more capable of navigating relationships with children that they do not naturally relate to by hoarding their emotional energy and denying other kids the opportunity to connect. Similarly, children enhance their capacity to trust teachers that they dislike, who still have their best interest at heart, by nurturing relationships with those that they enjoy. Implying to either party that their love and trust is a depreciating commodity, would be considered ludicrous and, for some, even offensive.

Individuals do not want to believe that they are wasting precious emotional resources by investing in children that energize them; they do not want to be considered 'unjust' because they are generous with interpersonal devotion; and a helpful incorporation of morality and ethics into the classroom setting would channel this desire towards mitigating inequalities and encouraging equity, not navigating ideological reprimand.

For Locke, morally intelligent individuals are people who truly digest his foundational principles: industriousness and rationality. Educational success, as a consequence, means having the capacity to employ these virtues in a way that generates self-interested acquisition and property management. Emotionality is only a roadblock to this attainment. Hence, its necessity to be submerged under rational reasoning. Rational human interactions--according to his comprehension--emphasize self-reliance, competition, and in rare cases contractual collaboration for the sake of individual rights. According to present-day market norms, moral intelligence or

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>164</sup> Thomas Piketty and Goldhammer, Arthur. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2014), 56.

moral entrepreneurship is exhibited in one's capacity to capitalize on shifting cost-benefit conditions as well as group compositions. Typically, this requires specific circumstances. Here, it is not industriousness and rational skills that induce ability, but rather, special endowments that produce an unusually high stake in norm reform. Superior technical knowledge of cost-benefit conditions may also play a role.<sup>165</sup> According to teacher accounts, educational success under the supervision of market norms is not about student growth. It emphasizes amassing data that can be used to prove the validity of the sector, as a business.<sup>166</sup> As Dan Ariely states in his analysis of behavioral economics, today teachers are focused on "comparable benefits and prompt payments." As a consequence, whatever sort of learning is measurable and conducive to fiscal award is deemed successful, according to market standards.<sup>167</sup> Emotionality--because individuals are heterogeneous most important respects--is viewed as one's varied "response to triggering events." It should be channeled, thus, "towards purposive, eager, action."<sup>168</sup>

Nonmarket norms, alternatively, signify that culture and ideas are drivers of society, including economic arenas. Virtues, like industriousness and honesty, are both nurtured through institutions and cultivated over time.<sup>169</sup> More, commerciality and industry are not the only associations significant to nonmarket standards.<sup>170</sup> Conservatives, in the past, have been quick to blame social liberalism for breakdowns in the traditional nuclear family and thus, in their opinion, certain liberal ideologies have disrupted the very institutions that foster morally intelligent citizenship.<sup>171</sup> Similarly, liberals, in the 1960s through the 1980s, led an attack on moral extra-governmental communities, particularly marriage as it existed then, claiming that it

<sup>165</sup> Robert C. Ellickson, "The Market for Social Norms," *American Law and Economics Review* 3, no. 1 (2001): 43.

<sup>166</sup> "The Impact of Market Norms on Education," Center for Teaching Quality, January 8, 2018, 1.

<sup>167</sup> Faria. *The Evolutionary Limits of Liberalism*. (Springer International Publishing, 2019), 207.

<sup>168</sup> Ellickson, "The Market for Social Norms," 2.

<sup>169</sup> Murray, Charles A. *Coming apart: the state of white America, 1960-2010*. (2012), 134.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>171</sup> Ross Douthat, "Are Liberals Against Marriage?" *The New York Times*. *The New York Times*, December 3, 2019, 2.

created widespread inequalities based on personal moral opinions. Still, both parties allude to a notion of moral genius that Ross Douthat calls “[meaningful] consent:”<sup>172</sup> the ability to engage with ethics in a way that is not necessarily affirmed or accessible within the governmental structure.<sup>173</sup> Educational success means the substitution of cash as a predictor for opportunity with the reinstatement of an individual’s intrinsic desire to learn as a motivational force.<sup>174</sup> Eventually, this will permit supersedence of normative models of partnering, child-rearing, flourishing, and--even--success, itself. Of course, this means that emotionality, mutual obligation, altruism, love, and feelings of service, will become more prominent predictors of the aforementioned concepts than characteristics of particular products or activities over time.

For me, moral intelligence involves quite an expansion on nonmarket interpretations. Nurtured industriousness and honesty as well as meaningful and consensual engagement are paramount to the ‘business’ of eroding normative standards, especially exclusionary ones. But moral intelligence also requires an investigation of the ways discursive formations inspire emotional reactivity. Sensibilities may impede or precede one’s likeness to engage with a particular institution, governmental or otherwise. Moral intelligence, as a result, necessitates the capacity to analyze perspectives of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ as well as ethical theories related to group harmony and competition. These few traits are hugely beneficial regardless of historical context because, as Friedrich Hayek expounds in his text, “The Use of Knowledge in Society,” “public [conceptions] of justice...[constitute] the fundamental character of...well-ordered human association.” As societies exist presently, they are rarely well-ordered in this sense, mostly because complex issues of morality are neglected. Not only are they often avoided to eschew

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>174</sup> Rob Reich, “A Market (Rather Than Civil) Society,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, (May 3, 2012): 1.

dispute, but individuals and businesses are regularly unable to articulate their personal ethical beliefs. People disagree about which principles should define the basic terms of their association yet, they still say that they have specific conceptions of justice--ones that they are unable to communicate interpersonally. To frame this another way: human beings fundamentally understand the need for and are prepared to affirm, a particular set of principles. They, too, know that these doctrines determine basic human rights and allocate distributions of benefits, accordingly.<sup>175</sup> Still, they are often unclear on how to use notions of justice productively: employing emotional desire towards the resolution of human rights issues. “The subject of justice is the basic structure of society,” declares John Rawls, another contemporary political philosopher. As such, the way social institutions distribute fundamental rights divides and unites the country across social lines. In this regard, both major institutions and individual decisions govern, define, contradict, and affirm individuals’ capacities to influence the world of human rights. Only if moral intellect means discovering one’s ideal, best self and engaging with institutions and communities in a way that effectively and positively impacts lives can the world expect to expand hope substantially in most areas, but especially social justice.<sup>176</sup>

To employ a real-world example, a recent study on the operation of businesses under competitive conditions explores moral decision-making processes concerning profit. Specifically, it highlights those who must choose between money-making and “ethically ambiguous” business opportunities. As their “ethically ambiguous” example, the study cites increasing border security: building a wall between the US and Mexico. Since a competitor is likely to align with border security initiatives if the business in question forgoes involvement, researchers conclude, from the perspective of a business owner, abstaining might not even make

<sup>175</sup> Rawls, John. *Justice As Fairness: a Restatement, 1921-2002*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 5.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

a difference to the ultimate human rights outcome. The wall will still be built and the profits that the organization had the potential to make, will simply be sent to a less scrupulous competitor. Basically, the paper illuminates the conditions under which people use the argument “if I don’t do it, someone else will,” to mentally justify making morally questionable business alignments. Moral intelligence, with my inclusion, would look like acknowledging the reality of emotionality--essentially a cocktail of helplessness, socially diffusive responsibility, and the fear of missing out--before making a concrete decision. Then, based on a previously constructed ethical theory, the business or boss would decide how to proceed with action or inaction. The paper, “The Limits to Moral Erosion in Markets,” finds that communal moral norms can outweigh the forces of competition. Likely, individual norms and business cultures can, too, override market norms emphasizing competition for capital gain, at all costs.<sup>177</sup> Self-awareness allows for personal ethical theory development and is critical to future social justice efforts. Moral intelligence means understanding oneself in a way that allows for the presentation of a ‘best self’ in numerous world markets and nonmarket spheres.

According to Hayek, the end goal of economic rational order is an efficient economy. In the American context, both conservatives and liberals agree that a growing GDP and low unemployment rate are shared consensus goals. Still, he states in his piece, no human being could individually possess the data necessary to measure future steps, in aggregate form. The purely mathematical and scientific approach to economics as well as the norms it stresses constantly attempts to allocate and reallocate resources, depending on experienced inequalities. The main thrust of his argument is this: people must think of economic problems as spontaneous in nature and responsive to both civil and economic stimuli. This creates the conditions for the

<sup>177</sup> Björn Bartling and Özdemir, Yagiz, “The Limits to Moral Erosion in Markets: Social Norms and the Replacement Excuse,” (September 27, 2017): 1.

emergence of specific scientific data on its own. Put plainly, the government can do a lot to think about how to control and mitigate inequalities but whatever political administrations are attempting to articulate in policy should not be created purely based on mathematical infusions. Thus, educational success involves understanding the way that normative assumptions about what is moral and valuable within the education system are actually controlled by those in power--more specifically, those who have the power to choose what data is used in the determination of school successes. For students, educational success looks like gaining the tools to navigate emotional responses to operating, culturally or individually, outside of societally-enforced standards. More explicitly, it involves developing one's social identity. For teachers, educational success means connecting to passion. Education should not just be a career where students 'get what they pay for' but a lifelong commitment to interpreting internal judgments and principles related to moral duties as well as intellectual capacities.

Relatedly, college graduates today are likely to marry other college graduates. And, more, graduates from elite institutions are likely to marry other graduates from elite institutions. This is creating an entirely new class of influential people based on perceived educational successes. Historically, Harvard men and Wellesley women, for example, were the individuals with the most wealth, not necessarily the ones considered the smartest. At the time, then, money was likely to marry money. However, today, this reality has shifted: the very smart are likely to marry very smart. This, of course, relates to tastes on some level. When one spouse is a college graduate they are likely to have different preferences, different ways of spending their free time, and different ways of relating to their friends, for example.<sup>178</sup> In the grander scheme of things, these relationships and their connections to perceived intellectuality rooted in dogmatic moral

<sup>178</sup> Murray, *Coming apart: the state of white America*, 67.

assumptions signify that emotionality does, as nonmarket norms suggest, often override market notions of human interactions. Education is the new money; emotional labor is a type of capital; intellectuality is a form of currency; and the capacity to morally navigate emotionality--through education--is necessary to create a sort of productive rationality amongst future leaders.

Political philosophy begins with the question: what ought to be a person's relationship to society? The academic discipline generally seeks the application of ethical concepts to the social sphere and thus deals with various forms of governmental structures as well as a variety of social existences. In so doing, it also provides a standard by which to analyze and judge existing institutions and relationships. Since ethics are underpinned by metaphysical and epistemological theories, it too can be related to investigations of dogmas: theorizing about the nature of knowledge as well as how humans relay knowledge to one another. According to the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the greatest and most persistent ethical-political issue is the status of the individual: the ethical person and, by extension, the organizations that they run as well as their leadership strategies within them. The discussion of political rationalism emphasizes the relationship between reason and social affairs: that is, "how individuals ought to submit to the logic and universality of reason in comparison...subjective or cultural preconceptions." Rationalists argue that objective, reasonable principles unify humanity politically and hence are conducive to overall peace. Irrationalists, on the other hand, downplay the efficacy of reason in interpersonal interactions and communications. They present a broad range of alternatives put forward in lieu of staunch rationality: "emotions; cultural, religious, or class expectations; atavistic symbols; or mystical forms of intuition or knowledge." Irrationalists also often criticize rationalists for ignoring the intellectual wisdom found within social heritages; they, as

mentioned, often lie beneath contemporary ideas. My argument is that there is no rationality without linguistics, emotion, and moral considerations.<sup>179</sup>

Perhaps, this seems like a peculiar, but well-placed nuance to Sandel's much more revolutionary declaration. It is somewhat intuitive--and thus—fairly easy to insert into already existing conversation. But make no mistake, this work is relevant to public policies, like No Child Left Behind (NCLB), as well as present-day inequalities within the public school education system. Admittedly, these conclusions may not stand up to all scholarly criticisms, especially amongst economists as I am lacking in a comprehensive understanding of how market norms relate to numerous notions across the expanse of economic literature. This is also, however, not to say that these preliminary conclusions will not stand the test of history and longevity, especially with more dedicated research. This policy recommendation, more, is not close to completion, in terms of analyzing all human rights problems; many human rights issues, I recognize, are interconnected globally. Thus, dogmatic assumptions about and expressions of emotionality, proper government structures, and what makes a human being considered valuable are both disparate and ever-changing. My argument is simply this: present frameworks used to analyze and conceptualize educational policies are clearly lacking emotional morality. Emotional morality is the understanding of how emotions and reason, which are constantly in interaction in the brain, are impacted by market and nonmarket moral assumptions. This notion undergirds all so-called 'objective decisions.' Further, without these inclusions, the groundwork is laid for poor public reception as well as the perpetuation of domestic inequalities:

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 286.

1) There should be an analysis of the words used within public policies. The question should be asked: are these words or concepts rooted in assumptions related to particularly old tropes about humankind, especially concerning minority demographics?

2) When it comes to educational policies, there should be an analysis of how success is being defined as well as a discussion of whether or not notions of a ‘successful’ student and teacher is reinforcing useless market norms or stereotypes.

3) There must be an understanding of how both words about human value and definitions of success will be perceived emotionally by the public, too.

The outline indicated above is best thought of as part of a broad contemplation about intelligence, political theory, public policy, morality, and inequality. I am not suggesting that people sacrifice their moral compasses, beliefs about the significance of intellectuality, or rational attempts at policy-making based on empirical data analyses. Instead, I hope to advance a rediscovery of conversations about what it means to be morally intelligent, educationally successful, and rational, indeed.<sup>180</sup>

The Fiscal Year 2018 President’s Budget Request presented to the United States Department of Education includes a declaration of commitment to annual, high-quality, statewide assessments aligned with challenging state academic standards. This pledge indicates an administrative focus on the continued support of student learning under the reauthorized Title I Federal Grant program, previously mentioned as significant in the NCLB policy.<sup>181</sup> In the past, researchers have attempted to identify theories that reveal the link between race, class, and educational attainment. Many experts have suggested that achievement gaps, in the United States’ K-12 public school education system, are the direct result of “opportunity gaps” which

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>181</sup> United States, Congress, “Fiscal Year 2018 Budget.” *Fiscal Year 2018 Budget*, 1.

create an inequitable distribution of resources and, consequently, contribute to the unequal distribution of educational results. Analyses have shown that adequate instruction and evaluations matter and that minority students typically have limited access to effective, experienced teachers and sufficient implementation of useful assessment techniques.<sup>182</sup> The current Title I Grant is based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state. It plans to give approximately one billion dollars to a federal program, called LEA, which is the foundation for the accountability system under the federal act, ESEA. The Department has a history of encouraging states to use federal funding to review existing assessments in order to eliminate redundancy and ‘over-testing.’ More, the government currently allocates Title I funds to schools that demonstrate need and are committed to closing the achievement gap. As data collection coalesces, policymakers will need to confront the intricacies of the state-federal relationship and the increase in charter schools when attempting to construct national standards and moderate federal spending. I will utilize emotional morality to the historically relevant public policy, No Child Left Behind because it has been conclusively deemed marginalizing in consequence. This will hopefully provide an example template for analyzing this more current public protocol.

<sup>182</sup> Ansell, Susan. “Achievement Gap.” *Education Week*, Editorial Project in Education, March 1, 2018, 1.

## Chapter Four: NCLB--Notions of Intelligence, Education, Morality + Interdependence

On his first day in office, President George W. Bush announced that education was a top priority to the administration. He, as a consequence, set forth the NCLB policy plan; conversations, at the time, about and around the new act specifically emphasized the principles of teacher accountability, state control, empirical data, and standardized assessment practices:

Too many children across this nation are not educated to their potential and fall behind their peers in educational achievement. We have let this condition fester, because we have always assumed that there were some children who couldn't learn well. We offered remedial programs, but the bottom line is...we never expected them to reach the same standard as the rest of the children. As the U.S. economy has evolved over the past few decades, education has become a more important requirement for economic success, and our failure to provide an adequate education to many young people will limit their opportunities throughout their lives.<sup>183</sup>

On the surface, the above mentioned themes appear not only helpful but undeniable. There are numerous inequities in the education system, and they have been impacted by misguided notions of who can and cannot achieve. Still, evident in the quotation is an assumed distinct relationship between economics and educational success as well. More explicitly, there is a clear indication of the perceived connection between intellect and capital; they are considered both predictors of potential and goals for attainment. This denotes a specific definition of what progress means and what achievement looks like. A 'rational' analysis of above statement, meaning an analysis with the inclusion of an emotional lens, would highlight words that signify and assign value to this relationship: "failure," "[adequate]," and "limited," for example.

<sup>183</sup> Selafani, "No Child Left Behind," 43.

### *NCLB--Critical Pedagogy*

When it comes to federal intelligence assessments, historical trends have been considered particularly relevant to the world of critical pedagogy. In 1965, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed as part of the ‘War on Poverty’ instituted by Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration. It provided federal funds to help low-income students, which resulted in the initiation of educational programs, like Title I. In 1974, The Equal Educational Opportunities Act was passed. It prohibited discrimination and required schools to take action in overcoming barriers—specifically, those that prevented equal individual protections and academic progressions. This legislation was particularly important in protecting the rights of students with linguistic differences though, today, it is not necessarily viewed as paramount to the navigation of racial and economic impediments. In 1966, however, James Banks’ book, *Multicultural Education: Transformative Knowledge and Action*, made an important contribution to the growing body of scholarship regarding multiculturalism in education. This, in turn, added significant interest in the roles of race and class within the public policy sphere. In 2001, the controversial NCLB act was approved by Congress. The law reauthorized the ESEA of 1965 and replaced the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. It mandated high-stakes student testing and held schools accountable for student achievement levels.<sup>184</sup> It also, and the policy states this overtly, “[penalized]” schools that did not make adequate progress toward meeting the goals of NCLB.<sup>185</sup> Since then, the Obama administration has declared the NCLB sanctions were “unreasonable” and “unproductive.”

<sup>184</sup> Edmund Sass, “A Hypertext Timeline,” *American Educational History Timeline College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University*, (May 4, 2018): 1.

<sup>185</sup> United States. *No Child Left Behind: a toolkit for teachers*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Education, 2004), 27.

Despite the differences between George W. Bush and Barack Obama's approaches to federal involvement in education, however, pedagogists argue that common elements persist. Both assume a framework of standard-based reform and they both consider the federal government strong leaders, in their position of oversight. As such, and in conjunction with analyses of historical trends, pedagogical literature questions how much shifts in administrations or ideologies can actually impact social justice in schools; they hint at a need for collective philosophical shifts in American society, at large. It will take time to judge the success of Obama's administrative reforms, in this regard. A myriad of problems still exist, and questions are often posed in pedagogical literature like does the country even have the psychological or philosophical will to substantially reduce gaps in educational achievement? Do the players at each administrative level have insight--meaning the 'know-how' and resources--necessary to do the job? Can schools eradicate disadvantages without extensive social and economic reforms?

The origins of the current standards-based movement in public education can be traced back to the twentieth century when pedagogical theorists attempted to align school curricula with the demands of the U.S. economy. They developed a scientific approach to designing and planning. According to the scholars Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur, this 'back to basics' movement of the 1960s and 1970s encouraged the federal government to ensure school curricula reflected "the ideologies and political views of the dominant social classes" while "[preparing] students for employment in the growing military industrial complex to defend the country against the so-called communist threat." In 1983, "A Nation at Risk," vilified schools for their contribution to relatively weak economic performances, in comparison to their Asian and European rivals. The driving forces behind NCLB, critical pedagogists signify are, thus, "neoliberal social and economic" attempts at turning schools into the sort of corporate entities

that “[outsource] and [downsize] methods of production in the name of flexibility and efficiency.” I do not necessarily agree that NCLB intentionally turned schools into businesses, but they still--perhaps subconsciously--aligned with both capitalist and Lockean theories of intellect, educational success, and rationality.<sup>186</sup>

### *NCLB--Locke*

To both clearly break down and reemphasize Lockean ideas, I have listed his core beliefs below:

- 1) His notion of ethics and morality is rooted in his understanding of human nature: humans are most motivated by reason and the pursuit of happiness.
- 2) Happiness = the freedom to generate profit and acquire property
- 3) Reason = an alignment with either self-preservation or pain mitigation
- 4) Society is merit-based so more intellect = more value and able-bodied, neurotypical, extroverted individuals who align with specific business norms are more useful, intelligent, and valuable, as a result.
- 5) The purpose of government is to, with limited rights, avoid over imposing on individual rights while protecting the rights and freedoms of those who are valuable. This should fuel their ambitions, raise societal capital, and increase individual joy.
- 6) Freedom = the ability to do things that result in intellectual curiosity or personal pleasure

Though his conceptions of wisdom and rationality are explicit and consistently equated with both capital gain and self-management, there is an element of public acceptance and self-evaluation involved in his understanding of excellence too. Society rewards those that are inquisitive as well as neurologically and physically able to labor alongside capitalistic norms

<sup>186</sup> P. McLaren and Farahmandpur, R., “The Pedagogy of Oppression,” *Monthly Review: An Independent Socialist Magazine* 58, no. 3 (2006): 94.

and, thus, he argues that shame should be used as a tactic to reinforce the virtues critical to a ‘properly’ organized society: industriousness and rationality.

*NCLB--Political Philosophers*

A moral reading of the political illuminates this: behind nearly every public policy is a moral understanding or, sometimes, a set of relevant mores. Within the scope of America, they are regularly tied to Lockean assertions. Take, for example, the themes presented in “The New Nationalism.” They operate well outside the sphere of education but remain relevant to conversations about Locke, leadership, and equality. “The New Nationalism” served as the foundation for Theodore Roosevelt’s presidential campaign in 1912. The speech is known, today, for designating the clear concession that achieving his progressive policy goals would require a radical expansion of governmental power into the private sphere. Indeed, the very concept of private property would need reconceptualization. The national government would have to determine which private properties would be more beneficial to the community at large than particular individuals or business organizations.<sup>187</sup> The speech connects two concepts specifically outlined in Lockean texts, the first being the idea that a government is a better government, a less totalitarian government, and--as a result--a more moral government when they have little involvement in private life. Roosevelt attempts to combat this notion by relying on an alternative dogma. He reapplies the Lockean assertion ‘when private property is enclosed by individuals that are best equipped to innovate and improve it, it is worth enclosing from society, at large.’ In the text, he implies that the ‘individuals’ Locke mentions, in this case, should apply to the federal government as well.<sup>188</sup> These unspoken, yet direct, connections to

<sup>187</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, “The New Nationalism,” *The New Nationalism* (New York: The Outlook Company, 1910): 211.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

Lockean principles show that he is relevant public policy analyses that relate to human inequity, whether or not they are associated with education specifically. Poli-theoretical guidelines only depict what ‘should’ be, some say. But the bulk of public policy is combining what ‘should be’ with ‘what is.’ Moreover, when it comes to human behavior, an understanding of ‘what is,’ requires comprehension of what the general public thinks ‘should be,’ as well as how they will react to declarations about what could be, in the future.

### *NCLB--Emotional Morality*

1) Diction (Rationality): Are the words being used logical, meaning are they objective? Where do they connote assumptions about minority intellect and human freedom?

In *Coming Apart*, Murray argues that while leaders “[do] a good job practicing some...virtues, [they] no longer [preach] them.” They have, essentially, lost confidence in the rightness of appraisals and traditions. So, instead, they declare non judgementalism, at least dialogically. Leaders in society, he claims, profess industriousness by working to the point of obsession and fatigue, but there are “no derogatory labels for adults who are not industrious,” for example.<sup>189</sup> In NCLB, this is simply not true. Teachers that worked hard and pursued self-preservation--meaning job sustainability, even at the expense of student learning--were labeled “achievers” consistently, as were their students.<sup>190</sup> When teachers were capable of empirically “[measuring]” or attaining “results”<sup>191</sup> that aligned with “uniform...standards of evaluation”<sup>192</sup> they were considered more intellectual and reasonable, by Lockean standards and, thus, deserving of “financial reward,” according to the policy.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>189</sup> Rapaczynski, “The Moral Significance of Economic Life,” *Capitalism and Society* 8, no. 2, Article 1 (2013): 3.

<sup>190</sup> United States, *No Child Left Behind: a toolkit*, v, 1, 28, 31, 32, 38.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 21.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

The administration would claim that research and, more importantly, accurate research--which they defined as incorporating empirical evidence--was critical to creating highly professional teachers with high achieving students in intellectual classrooms. As mentioned, this is a dogmatic assumption taken quite for granted. In fact, Bush explicitly stated that the idea of increasing standardized testing methods in order to create big data pools was “very simple and obvious.” Educational reports during the era would claim that, when “fighting reading wars,” semantic differences had gotten in the way of public policy progress. Advocates interested in phonics and those more interested in language, as a whole, resulted in--as he puts it--an “obsessive struggle.” “Sometimes...kids who have developed wonderful decoding skills through phonics...aren’t reading” because they are disinterested in their book options; “at the other extreme, are...kids who are surrounded by good literature that they cannot decode;” but it should have “[been] apparent” that there was never a real “conflict between the two approaches,” he, again, claimed. Instead, educators should have noticed that these represented slight linguistic differences about literary progress which resulted in wasting resources and efforts that should have been realistically put towards figuring out “what works in the classroom.”<sup>194</sup> Here, he indicated that attention to wording will not be incorporated into the framework for analyzing policy efforts prior to public communication. Instead, there would be a focus on thorough understandings of educational issues through tests. This would control resource reallocation:

Standardized assessment is critical to making schools accountable and to identifying practices that make schools and teachers successful. Unfortunately, we are not doing enough to assess students. Present amounts of testing does not provide enough data to understand what is happening in the schools, so the new legislation requires schools to test more frequently...The whole point...is that [annual] [assessments] [provide] a very rich data source that can be used to help individual children and to identify where

<sup>194</sup> Selafani, “No Child Left Behind,” 44.

teachers' strengths and weaknesses lie.... We can also use the data to evaluate schools and school districts. The goal is to have a test that measures how well the students are learning.<sup>195</sup>

Still, as Locke, critical pedagogists, and political scholars indicate, all national standards require a certain element of indoctrination. The ones established by dominant demographics, rarely consider minority definitions and expressions of intellectual expertise. Dr. Larry McAndrews, in fact, over the course of the George W. The Bush administration would begin to compile a record of the administration's attempts to present a "color-blind vision of American education."

According to him, NCLB and the rhetoric related to standardized testing efforts attempted to imply that there were "no black schools or white schools" but only "failing and succeeding ones." Thus, though Roderick Raynor Paige, the United States Secretary of Education at the time, was African American, the administration consistently reinforced--or at least portrayed--a commitment to color muteness. As a consequence, within their standards they likely, as pedagogical scholars signify, reproduced norms historically propagated by privileged demographics and market ideology. Bush avoided mentioning Paige's race in his introduction, for example. Highlighting his background instead, he relayed that Paige's "mother was a librarian and his dad was a school principal." His three sisters, too, "have dedicated their careers to education," Bush stated. When he unveiled the act itself, similarly, despite referencing a host of minority school districts within his speech—like Chicago, St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit, and Baltimore, where over 70 percent of minority children attended predominantly minority schools—he talked about "high poverty schools where nearly seventy percent of fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level."<sup>196</sup> If part of Lockean freedom requires the ability to be

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>196</sup> Larry McAndrews, "'Not the Bus, But Us': George W. Bush and School Desegregation," *Educational Foundations* (2009): 70.

intellectually curious, standardized testing greatly restricted the potential for minority liberation. Through the policy, they were instructed to “fall in line” and “get back on track”<sup>197</sup> with measures created by administration seemingly devoted to erasing their identity; if not, they risked being labeled “[targets]”<sup>198</sup> for “corrective action.”<sup>199</sup>

2) (Moral) Interaction: How is success being defined and how are notions of student and teacher ‘successes’ reinforcing useless market norms?

“Raising test scores,” “social promotion,” “outcome-based objectives,” “time management,” “accountable talk,” “active listening,” and “zero noise,”<sup>200</sup> which the scholar Peter McLaren states are indicative of market norm presences, sound awfully similar to the emphases on raising test scores, social promotion, minimum qualifications, set standards, student achievement data, and teacher accountability documented in NCLB.”<sup>201</sup> Market norms, at the time, adroitly organized schools with the principles of a typical factory production line in mind. Most urban public schools have adopted business and market work-related themes as well as managerial concepts, which Locke proposed. Even the vocabulary used in the classroom mimics market driven associations: students “negotiate,” “sign contracts,” and take “ownership” of their learning. They can volunteer as “pencil manager,” “door manager,” “line manager,” or “time manager.” It is commonplace to view schoolchildren as “assets,” “[investments],” “productive units,” or “team players.” Schools identify the skills and knowledge that students need to learn and acquire as “commodities” within the “educational marketplace.” But when teachers are viewed as some sort of efficient technician, they are taught that educational success means

<sup>197</sup> United States, *No Child Left Behind: a toolkit*, 2.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

employing methods of efficiency, not encouraging learning—which is, realistically, often complex, creative, and gradual. In the market-driven model of public education, teachers are viewed as managers, “whose job it is to pump some ‘added-value’ into undervalued children.”<sup>202</sup>

NCLB indicates clearly that the purpose of the policy is to increase educational success, but at what cost? Is creating future excellent and responsible citizens possible when restricting their expansive interests, under strict control and standardized instruction, to increase their outputs? This notion of teacher success, as well—essentially, efficiently producing future workers for the traditional business world—is defined in a binary fashion. Either students are successful, or they are “in [need]” and “behind” a “staggering achievement gap;” there is no conversation about a spectrum.<sup>203</sup> Labels for teachers are even more harsh. Successful educators are considered “high quality”<sup>204</sup> and “competent.”<sup>205</sup> Alternatively, while NCLB made sure to replace the word “federal failure” with, simply, “in need of improvement,” the policy signifies that morally—meaning, in terms of both value and ‘proper’ conduct--teachers without the proper certifications or experiences are deemed low quality, low achieving, incompetent and, as a result, lacking any justification for their capacity as adequate educators.<sup>206</sup>

3) Reaction (Emotionality): How the aforementioned notions of human value and success be perceived emotionally, how does this relate to Lockean interpretations of happiness, and is there anything that can be done to mitigate or change unproductive responses?

It is not difficult to see how the ideas of success and, consequently, the labels indicating failure, would cause emotional reactions. Students, who were consistently labeled ‘low

<sup>202</sup> McLaren, “The Pedagogy of Oppression,” 96.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 2, 25, 36, 43, 52.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 31.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

achieving,' teachers, who were promptly deemed effectively 'incompetent,' and parents, who found out—through Accountability Report Cards--that their 'low achieving' child was 'falling behind' in a school that '[needed] improvement' taught by a 'low quality' teacher, were bound to cause a ruckus. This contributed to the ineffectiveness of the policy throughout California; more, these rather obvious needs for adjustments in language, signify, that policy-makers simply did not think rationally about productive phrasing when constructing the text. Even the idea of calling the school evaluations "report cards," is careless; perhaps, this was purposeful, however, in the pursuit of increasing public accountability.<sup>207</sup> As mentioned, public acceptance is one of the Lockean strategies used to enforce his societal norms: shame and the desire for social inclusion, specifically. Within the text of NCLB, the policy says that every evaluation of the school must be made available to the public upon request. Bush's own wife stated that this was because NCLB meant to "[cause] teacher and child...quality."<sup>208</sup> "The responsibility of each and every [educator]," thus, should have been to "admit that very often...an empathy way of doing what is best for the children" had the capacity to impede actual progress. Empathy and, relatedly, emotionality--scholars at the time implied—needed to be eradicated from the mind of policy-makers, the actions of educators, and, quite frankly, the philosophical understandings of the American public. Instead, Dr. Susan Sclafani wrote in one of her reports about the act, "good assessments should enable...[identification] [of]...students who require help, so that we can intervene." "A good assessment," she continues, "should let us know not only which students are falling behind but also what the major stumbling blocks are to each student's progress," even if they are the teacher or school, itself.<sup>209</sup> I suppose this brings to light an important question: while

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>208</sup> Sclafani, "No Child Left Behind," 35.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 47.

acknowledging and anticipating emotional responses to moral assumptions as well as dialogical triggers is simply good policy-making, how much should mitigating this by attempting to achieve happiness for the majority of stakeholders play a role in enacting equitable policies, especially as it relates to progressive human rights leadership and change?

## Conclusion

There is a saying in the African American community, *you ain't said nothin' but a word*. In layman's terms it roughly means 'yes' or 'you're telling the truth.' I have heard it throughout my life, in reference to social inequities within the educational sector. In this phrase, '*you ain't said nothing but a word*,' is the idea that 'word,' at least to the African American people, holds power because word choice reveals underlying truths even when truth doesn't want to be told. The power of words, thus, indicate--whether it be through freedom songs or protests of literacy examinations—that intentional word choice and, by extension, access to new terminology is critical to liberatory techniques.

My thesis originated from my general distaste for the blatant elevation of inequality delineated in Locke's capitalistic doctrine and conversations with teachers in San Francisco Unified School District--more specifically, a predominantly minority school named Leonard R. Flynn Elementary. Remember, my methodology is called Grounded Normative Theory and it is a technique that develops a research question alongside activists to gain insight into what questions are facing their sector of choice. Whilst there, thus, I informally interviewed teachers to glean their relationship to pedagogical theory and notions of intelligence in their classrooms. Here is a quote that I feel accurately synthesized the frustration that teachers expressed: "I have theories...What I don't have is an understanding of why we have so many theories in the first place. What I don't have is an understanding of what these theories really have in common. What do these theories look like when applied in my classroom? Which one should I pick? And how are these theories *actually* going to help my babies?"

As it turns out, scholars investigating philosophies of teaching have not come to a theoretical consensus on how intelligence should be measured or applied to classroom settings.

They do, however, implicate that American notions of both teacher and student intelligences as well as idea of ‘proper’ teacher-student relationships are contextualized by political philosophies. I propose that John Locke, who delineated a capitalistic political framework based on his interpretation of human motivation, still impacts definitions of intellect, educational success, morality, and emotionality today. His ideas have, essentially, become cultural dogmas--determining human value based on market norms which are then propagated through particular labels. In the case of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), this value-laden diction complicated attempts at equitable educational reform. Despite Western exclusionary notions of what constitutes ‘rational’ and, thus, useful data—meaning, despite the emphasis on empirical measurements within social science--contemporary political philosophers and behavioral economists alike, affirm that educational policy is missing an analytical framework that can aptly apply to liberatory leadership—or as I call it, ‘a philosophical reading of the societal and a moral reading of the political.’ Herein lies the need for emotional morality: the understanding of how emotions and reason, which are constantly in interaction in the brain, are impacted by market moral assumptions; in the realm of public policy, these standards are communicated, often subconsciously, through word choice. Emotional morality must be included in rational analyses of policy. With a few phrasing adjustments, a genuine understanding of how words imply value, and attention to how notions of value trigger emotional responses, educational administrators would have better able to deal with the documented failures of NCLB, instead of navigating public scandals and disheartened teachers. And that? Well, that *aint nothing but a word*.

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