

Experiencing Democracy Through Neoliberalism: The Role of Social Justice in Democratic Education

Paul Carr

Youngstown State University, Ohio, USA

Abstract

This paper reports on research involving American College of Education students in relation to their impressions of, reactions to, and engagement with democracy. Four themes are explored: the conceptualization of democracy; the democratic educational experience of teachers; the concern about teaching controversial issues; and the understanding of, and linkage to, social justice. Of particular concern is the clear lack of appreciation among participants of democracy as a philosophy, ethos, political system and cultural phenomenon, as they often associate democracy exclusively with the electoral process. In general, participants did not focus on critical thinking, politics as a way of life, power-sharing, the decision-making process, the role of the media, alternative systems, and social responsibility as part of what could be considered thick democracy. The nebulous linkage between democracy and social justice, with the overriding fear of bias, values-dissemination and indoctrination, raises the concern of how education systems and teachers conceptualize the citizenship-based, lived experience of democratic education, as opposed to standardized testing and the ever-ending quest for high academic achievement that has become the hallmark of neoliberalism. The paper also underscores the meaning of political literacy within the context of democracy in education.

Introduction

As Kahne and Westheimer (2003) ask, "Is it important to learn math, history, English, and science? Yes. Is this focus enough to sustain a democratic society? No" (p. 63). Connected to this point, and central to this paper, is the question of whether we can have democracy without social justice? While a range of definitions and

interpretations exists for both democracy (Levin, 2005) and social justice (Vincent, 2003), there does not appear to be a consensus on how the two are intertwined in education (Portelli & Solomon, 2001; Soder, 1996). This is troubling because what takes place in schools - in the curriculum, in extra-curricular activities, in service-learning, with parents, and throughout the school culture - will have a significant effect on how adults understand and are engaged in democracy. The role of the educator in preparing students is paramount but few studies have been undertaken on the perspectives, experiences and perceptions of educators in relation to democracy (Apple, 1996; Sears & Hughes, 2006).

Democracy is a political enterprise (Freire, 1973), and education is built on a political foundation (McLaren, 2007). Decisions made about course content, discipline, testing, accountability measures, funding and even who plays on the football team have some political considerations intertwined in the decision making processes used to develop, or not develop, policies (Hill, 2003). An element that further compounds the complexity of the problematic of understanding political education is the reluctance of many educators and administrators to establish a clear connection between the political realm and democracy in education. While arguing that democracy is a political concept, and in many ways a cultural ethos, a philosophical framework, and a set of values, it is important to examine how educators foster democratic thinking and action in education. This paper aims to provide some context, depth, and clarity to the question of how social justice figures into the democratic education equation (Portelli & Solomon, 2001). Similarly, this research also deals with citizenship education and the quest for a more complete human dimension in the form of the type of educational experience students are presented with, which is directly related to democracy (Sears & Hughes, 2006). Although this research presents a case study based in the United States, the themes raised also relate to the international context.

This research involves a study of College of Education students in relation to their impressions of, reactions to, experiences with, and engagement in democracy. The research-participants are current or future educators, and, therefore, their understanding of, and relation to, democracy will ultimately have an impact on K-12 students in a range of ways, not the least of which would be the formal and informal (hidden) curriculum (Apple, 1996). Acquiring a sense of the location of social justice

within democracy should be a central concern for educators when considering democracy in education (Carr, 2006a). Is social justice examined in a critical fashion, and how do current and future educators reconcile the existence of marginalization and racism in US society? How do we measure what we do in education in relation to democracy and social justice in terms of accountability? Another integral piece to this analysis concerns identity, and the difference of opinion between students based on their backgrounds and origins, which can help clarify the strength of, and commitment to, democracy in education, at the individual, collective, and societal levels (Vincent, 2003).

Research Methodology

The research sample for this study includes 129 students at a College of Education in a university in Ohio.[1] Education students were the target-group for this research because of their obvious role and impact in educating young people; although other disciplines, such as law, medicine, social work, engineering, etc., would also be interesting and important to study, the focus on education students was felt to provide a more distinct window onto how democracy is constructed within schools and the broader education field. As Table 1 illustrates, the vast majority of participants, who self-identified, are undergraduates, under the age of 21, and White. The only requirement to participate in the study was that respondents had to be College of Education students at this university.

Table 1 - Research Sample[2]

	Category	Number	Descriptor
LEVEL	Undergraduate	114	U
	Graduate	15	G
GENDER	Male	43	M
	Female	86	F
AGE	< 21	93	1
	22 - 25	12	2
	26 - 30	4	3
	31 - 40	8	4
	> 41	12	5

RACIAL ORIGIN	White	113	W
	African-American	11	A
	Other*	5	0

*Includes three Latino and two Mixed-race respondents.

Working with colleagues in the College of Education, a detailed survey questionnaire (see Appendix 1) containing open- and closed-ended questions was distributed to roughly 400 students in October 2005. Participants returned their completed questionnaires in December 2005 and January 2006. Students were asked to respond to the questionnaire, and informed that, although the content would be of relevance to their educational program, there was no obligation to respond; further, they were informed that there was no evaluative component connected to their course-work. In two cases, professors allocated approximately 45 minutes at the end of one of their classes to allow students to fill out the questionnaire. As students were not obliged to participate, a small number in these groups chose not to fill out the questionnaire. Therefore, the return-rate of roughly 30 percent is considered significant in order to acquire an environmental scan and some representation for the sample population.[3]

In addition to providing a quantitative score based on a 1 to 5 Likert scale, with 1 indicating the lowest level of agreement and 5 the highest[4], the survey instrument invited respondents to expand on their answers. For each question, there was also the possibility of elaborating on answers in the form of an open-ended narrative; the number of students not providing narrative answers increased toward the end of the survey. The majority of respondents did provide useful and supportive answers justifying their scoring. Several people noted that the survey made them reflect more about issues they were not always confronted with in relation to democracy and education. In general, graduate students provided more detailed answers to the open-ended questions than undergraduate students. This paper focuses primarily on the narrative comments, alluding occasionally to the quantitative scores as a means of simply providing an overview of sample.

The university in question serves primarily a regional constituency, with over three-quarters of the students coming from the surrounding five-county area. Many of the students are the first in their families to attend university. It is relevant to underscore

that this is a predominantly working-class university, and that the data may reflect and be shaped by the lived experiences of the research participants. Approximately fifteen percent of the students at the university, and ten percent in the College of Education, are non-white. One question asked in the demographic section of the survey related to the level of political involvement of the respondents' parents; for the vast majority, regardless of educational level, age, gender or racial origin, respondents felt that their parents were not heavily involved in politics. This question required a relative judgment of political participation, and also speaks to the respondents' notions of politics. It is clear, however, that, at the formal level, most of the participants did not feel that their parents played a role in the political process.

The survey instrument contains four sections: 1) an introductory section requesting demographic information; 2) questions on democracy and education; 3) questions on citizenship and education; and 4) a final section allowing respondents to add any additional comments on democracy and citizenship, or on the questionnaire. Specific questions on the area of social justice and racism are presented in sections 2) and 3).

Context

To understand how current and future teachers might teach about democracy, it is important to first grasp how they conceptualize democracy. Democracy, like education, is political, laden with values, biases, judgments, predispositions, and ideological tendencies, and is based, to a varying degree, on lived experience (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). What people experience may often shape, confirm or disprove, augment, and, generally, inform their belief in something (Dei, Karumanchery, & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004). Repeated experiences of a similar phenomenon may lead to the construction of theory. The meshing of theory and practice - praxis - can be a powerful formula in promoting social change (Freire, 1973; McLaren, 2007). Having meaningful, critical dialogue and undertaking cogent analysis, on a particular matter can lead to transformative learning (Hess, 2004; Parker, 2006). Therefore, understanding how current and future teachers perceive and experience democracy is relevant to the multi-layered student democratic experience in education.

Holm and Farber (2002) question the linkage between democracy and education in the US, especially following September 11, and examine the geopolitical knowledge and global awareness of education students. Their study found that US student-teachers have a limited understanding of the global relationships, actions and realities that have a direct impact on Americans. While emphasizing that a "democratic public space for deliberations about the directions and impact of globalization" (p.141) requires having teachers who are both engaged and knowledgeable, their study raises concerns about the Eurocentric curriculum and conceptions of democracy. This tension, which is highlighted throughout the literature (Dei, Karumanchery, & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004), can be delineated as competing visions of *thin* as opposed to *thick* democracy, with the latter being characterized by more of an inclusive, holistic, critical engagement than the former (Gandin & Apple, 2002).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) have developed a framework for analyzing and categorizing democratic education programs, highlighting three broad notions: the personally responsible citizen; the participatory citizen; and the justice-oriented citizen. While each category may overlap and subsume part of the others, a progressive foundation throughout each is laid, with the justice-oriented citizen being the most likely to become actively engaged in addressing and resolving social problems. For the preceding phase, the participatory citizen attempts to become active in community organizations, and to work with others in doing good deeds. At the most basic level, the personally responsible citizen is considered to be respectful of the law and volunteers in times of crisis. (p. 240)

This hierarchy of programming/analysis raises an important question about democracy: can one be a good citizen and not participate in social justice? To this end, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) critique the advent of character education as a means of significantly enhancing civic engagement and democracy:

the visions of obedience and patriotism that are often and increasingly associated with this agenda can be at odds with democratic goals. And even the widely accepted goals - fostering honesty, good neighborliness, and so on - are not *inherently* about democracy. Indeed, government leaders in a totalitarian regime would be as delighted as leaders in a democracy if their young citizens learned the lessons put forward by many of the proponents of personally responsible citizenship: Don't do drugs; show up at school; show up at work; give blood; help others during a flood; recycle; pick up litter; clean up a park; treat old

people with respect. These are desirable traits for people living in a community. But they are not democratic citizenship. (p. 244)

Kahne, Westheimer, and Rogers (2000) have made a clear distinction between benevolent activities and action aimed at social justice. Gilmour (2006) echoes this concern by suggesting that citizenship education must focus directly on the pivotal underlying issues related to racism for it to be a meaningful concept.

Citizenship education has the potential to open up new and controversial areas of debate and, within the critical whole-school approach, can advance anti-racist developments. In Britain, however, the dominant tradition has been for citizenship education that reinforces the status quo by binding students to a superficial and sanitized version of pluralism that is long on duties and responsibilities, but short on popular struggles against race inequality (p. 99).

In her work on citizenship and service learning, Waggener (2006) elaborates on this dichotomy between the political and social components of citizenship, and concludes that "more attention must be given to service learning projects that teach about the structure of governments and encourage students to engage in political action" (p. 4).

Westheimer and Kahne (2003) have cogently argued that the emphasis on patriotism and community service in the post-September 11 era may effectively diminish the level and intensity of democracy in society, and, even, be anti-democratic. Further, they point to the formal, governmental push for volunteerism and charity as a potential lever that, despite creating the impression that society is becoming more democratic, does not achieve *bone fide* critical civic engagement. Friedland and Morimoto (2005), in their study of volunteerism, found that for "middle- and upper-middle-class high school students 'resume-padding' is one of the motivating factors driving the increase in volunteering," and it is "shaped by the perception that voluntary and civic activity is necessary to get into college; and the better the college (or, more precisely, the higher the perception of the college in the status system) the more volunteerism students believed was necessary" (p. 1). Therefore, as illustrated by Westheimer and Kahne (2004), there must be an authentic (and political) ring to the conceptualization and implementation of service learning for it to have any value for the students.

One area that has been under-emphasized in the literature on civic and democratic engagement in education relates to social justice. How do different racial, ethno-cultural, religious and other minority groups relate to education initiatives to address as well as inculcate a sense of democracy? Does the identity of the teacher play a role in how they understand, experience and deal with democratic education? How is Whiteness theorized and applied so as to frame democracy in education (Carr, 2006b)? How does identity shape the democratic educational experience? In general, is there a correlation between the understanding of, involvement in, and beliefs about democracy among teachers, on the one hand, and the quality of the educational experience for students in relation to democracy, on the other (Maitles & Gilchrist, 2005)?

Findings

Several key themes emerged from the research, including:

- the particular conceptualization of democracy, with an over-riding focus on elections, seems to be narrow and weakly supported;
- the democratic educational experience of teachers is limited, and even contrary to what could be considered a meaningful foundation to engage in debate and action;
- the concern about teaching controversial issues, combined with the fear of being labeled doctrinaire, is a serious concern for the majority of participants; and
- the understanding of, and linkage to, social justice is considered nebulous and problematic.

Conceptualizing Democracy

In essence, by building a more politically literate population (Freire, 1973; Guttman, 1999), the general public--those outside of elite economic and political circles--will be able to more readily participate and engage in democracy (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002; Provenzo, 2005). Education is perhaps the most prominent and effective vehicle for getting young people to work together, to break down barriers, to understand common problems, to critically analyze complex and controversial issues, and, most

importantly, to undertake action aimed at progressive and meaningful change (Banks et al., 2005; Parker, 2003). Being able to identify problems and issues is pivotal in this process, and teachers can play an extremely important role in bringing students to the point of being able to converse, dispute, and resolve important questions in a nonviolent way (Hess, 2004; Maitles & Gilchrist, 2005).

An initial area of inquiry in the survey was to gauge how respondents defined democracy. While most respondents conceptualized democracy as "freedom" and the "right to choose," a primary focus for the majority of respondents was on elections, and many maintained that this correlated with a high level of democracy. Participants highlighted that "We live in a democratic society! We elect the officials we want and have a chance to make our opinions known" (22/U/M/O/1), and "for the most part we are able to vote on all issues that affect our lives and others. We vote people into office that share our concerns and beliefs" (38/U/F/W/1). Anger and apathy in relation to the electoral system seems to be overridden by the sentiment that elections in and of themselves connote a semblance of a progressive, advanced, democratic society. There was little analysis of the limited choices available to citizens in relation to the two predominant political parties, which seem to resemble one another in a multitude of ways. The national election in 2004, in which Ohio played a significant role in determining the outcome, may have made research participants more cynical or jaded but the almost unreserved reference to the Democrats and Republicans without any commentary on other political parties and movements, leads one to conclude that that formal political system has, to a certain degree, dissuaded many working-class educators from being engaged at that level. Hill's (2003) analysis of neo-liberalism meshes well here in highlighting the prevailing view that citizens are discouraged from political engagement as a result of the predominance of the market-place in determining priorities in the classroom.

In some cases, reference was made to the notion that "It's (Democracy) what the US was founded on, and is still active this way today" (64/U/F/W/1), "Democracy is the basis from which our country runs. It is the structure that allows and guarantees freedom" (31/U/F/W/1), and "We hold elections and trials in this country which remain for the most part un-biased and geared towards upholding our nation's specific beliefs" (35/U/M/W/1). The predominant reference to the deep roots established

during the founding of the US conflicts greatly with the true history involving the removal and quasi-genocide of Aboriginal peoples, the enslavement of African-Americans, the assimilation and marginalization of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, and a slew of other undesirable actions related to a number of minority-groups (Spring, 2004). Therefore, an uncritical examination of US history can lead to a sensationalistic appreciation of the construction and reality of contemporary democracy. Lintner (2007) suggests using critical race theory to de-mask the normative understanding of history classrooms as being neutral.

They are contested arenas where legitimacy and hegemony battles for historical supremacy. The representation of marginalized groups within history classrooms is dependent upon the willingness of individual teachers to present material that accentuates contributions, challenges historical givens, empowers the marginalized, and, above all, raises awareness of and reflection upon race and racial images and the impact they have on the historical interpretation of American history (p.103).

From the quantitative responses, interestingly, the two categories representing African-Americans and African-Americans with other non-Whites provided scores significantly lower than all other groups in relation to how democratic participants felt the US actually is. This reflects the notion that peoples' lived experiences, complementing the social construction of identity, will determine how democratic their experience within society may be. "People of color" may, generally speaking, experience American society in ways that Whites do not understand (Carr, 2006b; Gilborn, 2005). Overall, participants demonstrated a fuzzy notion of democracy, often expressing commonly-held mainstream virtues, and rarely critiquing the extremely nuanced nature of democracy.

When considering engagement with democracy, again the African-American and African-American and other non-White categories provided lower scores than the entire group, which was already at a very modest level of appreciation. At one level, this would appear to be an extremely low level of engagement in or with democracy, which returns us to how participants define democracy, and why they consider their involvement in it to not be substantive. Does the response from "people of color" suggest that "formal" democracy is primarily for White people? The visible symbols and nomenclature of formal democracy seem to appear to be overtly White (and

male), judging by the national heroes, presidents, military history and so on that are emphasized in the curriculum, and this somewhat superficial veneer of democracy prevents many citizens from seeing themselves reflected in the national identity (Carr & Lund, in press).

A primary consideration for participants in relation to their engagement in democracy is the centrality of voting. Some participants simply noted that this act was the extent of their participation in democracy, offering that "I vote but do not actively participate" (11/U/F/W/1), "I vote and do some stuff like that but I'm not very engaged" (31/U/F/W/1), "Sometimes I vote, but I pay very little attention to politics" (86/U/M/W/3), and "The only time I am engaged in democracy is when I vote on Election Day. Other than that day, I don't pay much attention to politics" (74/U/M/W/1). As future teachers, one has to wonder how these individuals might understand intricate international issues, and how they might take on the task of engaging students to talk about, for example, the military intervention in Iraq or the impact of global warming on all societies (Holm & Farber, 2002). Can teachers move beyond the temptation to teach compliant patriotism (Westheimer, 2006)?

The notion that voting is often conflated to encompass democracy raises concerns about how people participate in society in the plethora of activities, decisions and manifestations that define the socio-economic, cultural and political fiber of the nation. Many respondents openly admitted that they were apathetic about "politics", and that they were neither interested in nor invited into democracy participation. A significant minority of participants illustrated their attachment to democracy by divulging that "I don't really know what being actively engaged would include" (12/G/F/W/2), "I am not involved with any public issues for or against" (13/G/F/A/5), "I could be more active by voicing my concerns, but I don't have time for that" (17/U/F/W/1), "I watch news but never really pay attention" (37/U/F/W/1), and "Got my own problems out here, work, school, bills, etc." (68/U/M/A/2). This staid, homogenized view of politics unfortunately meshes well with the neoliberal objectives of the No Child Left Behind legislation, which effectively places a premium on testing to the behest of social justice, citizenship, and democracy (Lipman, 2004).

While respondents were often critical of the level and texture of American democracy, a small number pointed to the perceived lack of democracy elsewhere as proof that the US is decidedly more democratic and even superior than other nation-states. Although no examples were given of the shortcomings of other systems, one insight might be that respondents are not as well-informed or educated about democracy within the international context (Holm & Farber, 2002). Is democracy understood to be a one-size-fits-all type of proposition for the average educator? Participants noted that "There are many opportunities provided to people (in the US) because of our rights and freedoms, whereas other countries do not have such opportunities" (33/U/F/W/1), "We vote, not a dictatorship" (102/U/F/W/1), "Democracy is what made this country so great and outlast our former fellow super power the USSR. Let's keep promoting it" (18/U/M/W/1), and "Most democratic and free country in the world. If you don't break the law then you are free to do just about anything you wanted" (70/U/M/W/1). The connection to the international environment is often considered secondary to domestic issues, and the inner-workings of the narrowly-defined curriculum serve to accentuate the possibility of teachers finding innovative and critical ways of engaging students in macro- as well as micro-level problems (Gandin & Apple, 2005).

Lived experienced, as Dei (1996) points out, is pivotal to formulating a vision of the "other." Do people fully understand other contexts and countries, have they visited them, met with the inhabitants, learned their languages, become familiar with diverse cultures, or are the comments about the US being more "free" and "democratic" based on stereotypes and misinformation? What are the implications of not being engaged in democracy so as to be able to question decisions made by government? Can one debate patriotism without being accused of being anti-patriotic (Westheimer, 2006)?

In some cases, respondents simply argued in favor democracy as being the "best" system, commenting that "Democracy still outperforms any other form of government. Despite criticism from sources, the people still have a vital role to play in the governing of the country, state, and local community. I can't think of any alternatives that would work better" (8/G/M/W/5), and "'If men were angels there would be no need for gov't.' Democracy is the best government available but far from perfect" (26/U/M/W/1).

These comments beg that question, what type of democracy? Or as Westheimer and Kahne (2004) put it, "What type of citizen?" Do current and future teachers fully understand the detailed, complex, and problematic nature of democracy, here and abroad? Similarly, do the educational contexts and institutions of the US allow for a thorough critiquing of, and engagement with, democracy (Lipman, 2004)?

Democratic Experience in Education

Responding to the question of the level of democracy in education, using the Likert scale, respondents generally felt that their democratic experience in education was moderate, with the African-American and African-American and non-White categories, again, providing a rating lower than the entire group. The overall scores in relation to the high school experience having an impact on participants' thinking about democracy were slightly lower than those pertaining to the level of democracy in the education system. Narrative comments fleshed out these scores, illustrating that participants have a range of concerns about how democracy is actually shaped and delivered in education.

Some participants admitted to not seeing a link between education and democracy, often referring to their discipline as being disconnected from teaching democracy. For example, participants highlighted that "I am a math (science) major" (46/U/F/W/1), "I'm going into gym" (51/U/M/W/1), "Truthfully, I would be more concerned w/ teaching standards" (5/G/M/W/4), and "As a music education major, citizenship is not a subject in my curriculum" (42/U/F/W/1). It is troubling that future and present teachers would discount the pivotal role of democracy, however that may be defined by them, in the lives of their students. The implications are numerous in light of the already significant social problems (racism, poverty, violence, under-achievement, disenfranchisement, hyper-development combined with underdevelopment, political illiteracy) that are evident in schools across the nation (McLaren, 2007).

A predominant thread to the answers provided by participants pointed to a decidedly negative experience in school, some ridiculing the notion that democracy was part of the mandate of the institutions in which they were educated. For instance, some participants stated that "I remember high school 'government' and history classes as being somewhat of a joke. the teachers 'taught', the students 'learned' and dialogue was

pretty much non-existent" (124/U/F/W/5), "I went to 2 high schools that never talked about the government and even in my social studies classes" (114/U/F/W/1), "Hell no, went to a city school; football there had an impact on democracy for me" (68/U/M/A/2), and, in a somewhat detached way, "I didn't fall into the crowd" (16/U/M/W/1). The connection between the negative democratic experience in schools to the prevailing view that democracy should not be openly addressed in teaching is clear, although there is undoubtedly a patriotic flavor that further reinforces the schism (Westheimer, 2006).

Another prevalent comment about democracy in education was that the teacher is not democratic. Pointing to the perceived autocratic style of teachers, participants underscored that "There is no fairness in the classroom; with the teachers, they expect African-Americans to do poorly; they don't challenge us in advanced courses" (13/G/F/A/5), "The students do not govern the classroom; the teacher is the dictator. The students do not vote for the teacher; the teacher is appointed" (18/U/M/W/1), and "In fact, it was an essentialist environment where teachers and administrators were more like dictators than those of today. Students had no input into education; it was a set curriculum determined entirely by the school bureaucracy" (124/U/F/W/1). The notion of a teacher working with and providing authentic leadership seems to be conflated to that of a political dictator. The comments, however, are a testament to the prevailing view that most of the participants did not perceive their teachers to be practicing, in an explicit way, democratic education, something that requires effort, practice and planning (Hess, 2004).

Fewer respondents had an unequivocally positive democratic experience in education but some did mention that "My school was full of supportive and outspoken people that helped to acquaint me with politics" (1/U/F/W/1), "I began thinking for myself in high school and realized for the first time that the things I agreed with were really my thoughts, not my parents" (19U/F/W/1), and "My teachers taught me to be open minded and ask questions, especially when it comes to government" (22/U/M/O/1). This is certainly an area for further research in order to determine if these participants are then more likely to explicitly teach for a critical democratic experience and engagement, and also how this ties into their already developing sense of democracy based on family, community and other influences.

A large part of this positive experience can be attributed to a single "government" class in which students were exposed to some of the formal workings of democracy. The comments stressed that "My last class in high school was government and I think this was the most effective" (43/U/F/W/1), "my government class opened my eyes to it" (15/U/F/W/1), "My senior year government class really had an impact on my thinking of democracy because it made me more knowledgeable" (89/U/F/W/1), and "The mandatory gov't class for seniors teaches a great deal about citizenship and almost everyone knows a lot more when they leave than when they entered" (18U/M/W/1). Channeling all of the democratic work into a single class is a sure-fire way of undermining and misrepresenting democracy to students (Parker, 2003; Banks et al., 2006). With the neo-liberal pressures to "teach to the test" and "achieve the standard", teachers are under increasing pressure to limit constructivist, situational and context-based learning (Hill, 2003; McLaren, 2007).

As with the trend throughout the research when discussing democracy, a number of students stated that their democratic experience in education focused on voting. In particular, it was noted that "High school prepared me to do the right thing, to vote and to work hard" (14/U/F/W/1), "My high school taught me the responsibilities of being a good citizen. The best way to be a good citizen is to vote every 4 years for the person we believe would be better for this country" (74/U/M/W/1), and "We read books on the constitution and rules about the flag. But basically we were mostly encouraged to vote" (126/U/F/W/1).

Another theme that developed when discussing democracy in education is that parental involvement played a more determinant role than the school. This was exemplified through comments such as "My family had the greatest impact --I was already set in my partisanship" (11/U/F/W/1), "I don't know if high school prepared me. It was more my parents that prepare the students to become good citizens" (38/U/F/W/1), "They (the teachers) gave me basic information, but I think my parents were a bigger influence" (42/U/F/W/1), and "I would say yes (the school played a role), but only that it assisted in the role of my parents" (78/U/F/W/4). These comments underscore the lack of an explicit educational strategy to convey or "do" democratic education (Banks et al., 2006). They also speak to the notion of cultural capital, with those able to, and privileged with resources, being advantaged in having

a range of opportunities at their disposal (Dei, Karumanchery, & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004).

Teaching About and For Democracy

Concerning the question about inculcating a sense of democracy in students, participants generally felt strongly about this, providing a relatively high quantitative score. Interestingly, the survey found that the notion of teachers playing a role in transmitting values becomes more relevant with age. Similarly, there is a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate students in this area, with the latter feeling that teaching about democracy is more critical. There are, however, a number of nuances and subtleties to the interpretation of what participants mean by inculcating "a sense of democracy in students".

Participants in favor of teaching democracy pointed out that they are, and should be, positive role models. Some participants assumed that this would be a natural extension to their mandate of communicating the formal curriculum, noting that "Absolutely! Teachers should emulate democracy and reflect a positive role model of the democratic process" (8/G/M/W/5), "I want the kids I teach to be instilled with the morals and beliefs that keep our great nation sustained" (35/U/M/W/1), "We as teachers must show that it is through dialogue that we reach agreement and air our opinions. Everyone's opinion is important-the teachers' as well as the students'" (124/U/F/W/5), and "They should because it is important and yes, teachers are capable of establishing democratic values in students" (90/U/F/W/2). The implications for citizens after they matriculate are duly noted, and the concern that not teaching for and bout democracy is counter-intuitive is a minority view in this research. This important dichotomy can have the effect of, as Gilmour (2006) coins it, using citizenship education as a placebo to actually doing social justice work.

When talking about democracy, some participants, again, emphasized that schools and teachers should be focused universally on the electoral process and voting.

Participants emphasized that "Getting kids to vote is a big thing" (68/U/M/A/2), "Voting is the key" (66/U/M/W/1), "my senior class was encouraged to vote as well as (be) informed on current issues allowing interest to be taken. We were also provided with voting registration forms by our teacher" (67/U/F/W/1), and "Yes,

(teaching democracy is important) by presenting information about all election issues and showing examples of how federal issues affect us on a personal level" (42/U/F/W/1). What is most disconcerting is that this perspective does not appear to be centered on a critical understanding of elections and democracy but, rather, on promoting participation in the electoral process and a neo-liberal view of politics (Hill, 2003).

An important proviso to any attempt to broach the notion of teaching democracy, according to a large number of participants, is the concern about imparting values and indoctrination. Participants cautioned that "I believe that values are important to teach as long as the teacher does not try to indoctrinate the student" (3/G/M/W/4), "They should teach students their rights, but not instill this "sense of democracy" to the point where the students are indoctrinated" (11/U/F/W/1), "No, because when they try to do so their political views come out" (25/U/F/W/1), "I think teachers should inform their students but need to be careful not to pursue any answers" (84/U/F/W/1), and "Teachers should never be allowed to (present) information to their students about choosing democracy over anything else. A student should have their own right as to which party they would be a part of" (74/U/M/W/1). As Sears and Hughes (2006) point out, this exaggerated and misunderstood formulation of indoctrination is, in effect, preventing the teaching and learning of critical aspects related to democracy and citizenship, while undermining political literacy (Banks et al., 2006). The concern about being misrepresented and, subsequently, being considered as doctrinaire is clouded with the contemporary socio-political context, which encourages a compliant patriotism and discourages critical, class-based analysis that would unfavorably position neo-liberal education reforms.

Democracy and Social Justice

A primary concern of this research has been the place of social justice in democracy, especially within the context of education. Participants were asked directly for their views concerning social justice and racism in relation to democracy. Interestingly, for the former, in relation to its importance, the overall response is relatively significant, and is higher than the score provided for the latter. However, the African-American and African-American plus non-White categories provided a lower score for the social justice question but a much higher one for the question related to racism. For both

questions, it would appear that age and level of education were important indicators of agreement that social justice and racism are integral components in/to democracy.

For some participants, understanding racism is critical to democracy. It is obvious that the two components are inextricably linked, evidenced by comments that "Racism is a significant plague to democracy" (3/G/M/W/4), "A racist society is not fully democratic. Sadly, I believe the U.S. is a racist society" (9/G/F/O/4), "I feel we will have a female president before a black one" (47/U/M/W/1), and "It's sad to me that people still judge each other on appearance, but I cannot deny it still goes on. If racism didn't impact democracy then why have we not had an ethnic president?" (71/U/F/W/2). One African-American respondent highlighted the contradictory nature of American democracy by stating that "In the U.S. racism, a social construct, is used to justify or rationalize the allocation of resources by those who control the majority of the resources. Many are duped to believe that because they resemble those in control that decisions are made to benefit or include them too" (129/G/M/A/5). The predominance of Whiteness in shaping the debate around race, racism and racialization was not specifically alluded to, which raises questions about the university education respondents are exposed to (Carr & Lund, in press).

An interesting connection to systemic inequities, especially in relation to social class, was made by a number of participants. The understanding of privilege based on class, as opposed to race, is evidenced through comments such as "Rich people seem to always have more than poor people when it comes to politics and rights" (17U/F/W/1), "The more important or even 'rich' a person is, they can get away with more things than an average person would" (35/U/M/W/1), "Those who have power and influence -and 'know people'- can usually achieve things others cannot. Getting out of trouble, favors, etc." (43/U/F/W/1), and "I still believe that in our society it does make a difference where you come from and who your parents are, it's hard to be a minority with the same right as a respectful figure" (44/U/F/W/2).

These statements reflect, in part, the lived experiences of Whites, who generally have meaningful knowledge and experience of social class inequities more so than the racial discrimination (Fine, Weis, Powell Pruitt, & Burns, 2004). Similarly, they demonstrate the contradictory notion of their commitment to democracy, that the US is democratic but that there are numerous manifestations of systemic anti-democratic

behavior and action. Importantly, they also speak to the obvious and extremely nuanced nature of social class in contemporary American society. While it is clear that society is stratified, it is more difficult to problematize social class, and how it is intertwined with other forms of marginalization. Many people feel that there are serious problems with democracy in the US , and yet there has been a relatively uncritical endorsement, and even support, for, as McLaren (2007) characterizes it, the "permanent war on terror", which effectively disadvantages the working class more than other sectors of society..

Another layer of responses questioned the reality of racism in the US , arguing that equal rights were the foundation of the nation. White participants noted that "I don't see how it (racism) affects democracy" (20/U/F/W/1), "Why would racism be an issue in democracy nowadays?" (26/U/M/W/1), "Race doesn't matter, everyone is equal" (102/U/F/W/1), "Racism is only an important issue if someone makes it one. In the end, votes have no color" (126/U/F/W/1), and "It shouldn't be an issue. An American citizen is an American citizen. Americans of all races should take advantage of our democracy" (19U/F/W/1).

Although the sample size for African-American respondents was small (n=11), it is revealing that on certain questions, using exclusively the racial variable, the variation between African-Americans and the other respondents is significant. This is particularly the case when discussing whether the US is democratic, if the education system in which respondents were educated was democratic, the importance of elections in democracy, and, particularly, the question of racism and social justice in relation to democracy. Lindner (2007) argues that an uncritical examination of race in history paves the way for political illiteracy when examining contemporary issues, including the place of race in current events.

Discussion

What is democracy? How and for whom do we teach about it (Banks et al., 2006)? How do we reconcile, and teach about, democratic processes in which an unfavorable result conflicts with the mainstream notion of the purity and advantages of democracy over all other systems (Parker, 2006)? This raises the question of whose democracy? Should the recently-elected Hamas government in Palestine be recognized, even

though tenets of its platform may seem distasteful to many people? Should US elections be considered democratic when one considers the amount of money required to get elected, not to mention the role of the media, the lack of diversity and representation of the elected officials (especially in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status), and the restrictive voting processes as well as questionable tabulation practices (i.e., the 2000 Presidential campaign)? Can American classrooms debate the US presence in Iraq without being labeled unpatriotic (Westheimer, 2006)? Should the intervention in Iraq be characterized as an "invasion," a "military operation," an "occupation" or an "allied rescue mission"? Who are the "freedom-fighters"? The terminology to define the context and conditions of democracy and politics is, to use a military term, a *minefield* of dissent. One example is that FOX News has apparently been reported to have been directed by the owner of the network to refer to "suicide-bombers" as "homicide-bombers". Perspective-taking and a liberal dose of critical reflection on competing visions can enhance democracy, rather than diminish it (Sears & Hughes, 2006). In sum, what are the implications of avoiding "doing" democratic education (Provenzo, 2005; Parker, 2003)? These questions frame the central role of the teacher in democratic education process.

Civic engagement cannot be discussed without the term disengagement being included in the equation. Even among conservative groups there is an increasing concern about how students participate in society (RMC Research Corporation, 2005). The issue of decreasing youth involvement in the formal political system has been noted at an international level (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo (1999). Some researchers (Sears & Hughes, 1996; Centre for Research and Information on Canada, 2001; Cook, 2004) have further elaborated on the state of youth involvement in formal political (and electoral) processes and structures, with there often being the diagnosis that we may be in crisis situation. With common trends internationally, and a rise in global social, technological, and political networks and movements, part of the answer to reforming the state of democracy and civic education may be to more formally solidify linkages between groups, peoples, issues and jurisdictions, and to make the phenomenon a part of the school curriculum, downgrading the list of expectations and standardized tests that presently shape the learning experience

(Gilborn, 2006). In sum, it is important to live and "do" democracy, and to move beyond simplistic notions of electoral processes as the foundation of democracy.

How do teachers approach problematic discussions, or controversial issues (Parker, 2006)? At a minimal level, Comber (2006) believes that studying formal structures and laws, including political parties, can have a strong and positive influence on group discussions with educators. Moving beyond the simple naming structures, processes and events, Hess (2004) argues that discussions in social studies are pivotal in getting students interested and involved. However, she cautions that students need to know that a plurality of views is encouraged, which, along with solid preparation, can lead to enriching the culture and climate of the classroom and the school. Similarly, Patrick (2003) argues that successful democratic education must include several inter-connected components:

Effective education for citizenship in a democracy dynamically connects the four components of civic knowledge, cognitive civic skills, participatory civic skills, and civic dispositions. Effective teaching and learning of civic knowledge, for example, require that it be connected to civic skills and dispositions of various kinds of activities. Elevation of one component over the other - for example, civic knowledge over skills or vice-versa - is a pedagogical flaw that impedes civic learning. Thus, teachers should combine core content and the processes by which students develop skills and dispositions. (p. 3)

Ultimately, dealing with controversial issues requires teachers skilled in the art of understanding the role and place of identity and politics. The linkage between developing civic skills and attitudes, and striving for a richer, more productive and inclusive form of democratic engagement, must be explicitly connected to the classroom experience, which can reinforce, validate, and enhance the lived experiences acquired and manifested in the community (Galston, 2003). The participants here generally demonstrated a *thin* interpretation of democracy, one somewhat detached from the critical engagement discussed in the literature (Banks et al., 2006). Further research should consider how this situation is influenced by the US military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, particularly in relation to the widespread patriotism that has blocked much of the critical debate that is necessary in education in order to generate and validate engagement (Westheimer 2006).

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service (2005), a moderate organization, "effective citizenship education should prepare young people in three areas":

- Civic literacy - Fundamental knowledge of history and government, political and community organizations, and public affairs; skills for making informed judgments, engaging in democratic deliberation and decision making, influencing the political process, and organizing within a community.
- Civic virtues - Values, beliefs, and attitudes needed for constructive engagement in the political system and community affairs, such as tolerance, social trust, and a sense of responsibility for others.
- Civically-engaged behaviors - Habits of participating and contributing to civic and public life through voting, staying politically informed, and engaging in community service.

The obvious linkage between democracy and citizenship raises concerns of power, location, and identity (McLaren, 2007; Vincent, 2003) when considering the findings from the research presented in this paper. Provenzo (2005) provides a detailed rationale for striving for critical literacy, moving beyond the traditional method of acquiring knowledge, often associated with Freire's (1973) "banking concept" of education which assumes that students learn in a unidimensional, uncritical, decontextualized way. In concrete terms, democracy must resonate with the citizenry, lest the institutions and constitution that uphold the democratic state be rendered effectively meaningless.

Throughout the literature, even among the more patriotic organizations, there is an emphasis on connecting the content of democratic citizenship work, which includes skills, knowledge, and attitudes with action (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2001). The main friction arises when one tries to determine what action should be taken. Is it to support mainstream "democratic" institutions and processes, broadly connected to elections and voting, or is it to challenge these pillars of "democracy" in an attempt to make them more responsive to the diverse needs of the people they are intended to represent? Neoliberalism and the quest to achieve high standards has played a role in squashing progressive and critical democratic citizenship (Hill, 2003; Glimour, 2006).

The absence of democratic citizenship (or rather the presence of an extremely nuanced approach to it) is evident when considering that only three US states have specific standards for civic education, although almost half of the them have addressed at least some components of civic education in their social studies curricula and standards (RMC Research Corporation, 2005: 7). Galston (2003) has found that there is only limited evaluation of civic knowledge, due in part to the:

decentralized system of public education, and, further, the National Assessment of Educational Progress Civics Assessment has revealed major deficiencies in the overall results: For fourth-, eighth-, and (most relevant for our purposes) 12th-graders, about three-fourths were below the level of proficiency. Thirty-five percent of high school seniors tested below basic, indicating near-total civic ignorance. Another 39% were at the basic level, demonstrating less than the working knowledge that citizens need. (pp. 31-32)

In arguing for an increase in civic knowledge, which Galston (2003) feels is connected to more support for democratic values, political participation, changing legislation, better integration of immigrants and others, and less mistrust of politicians, it is critical to develop and sustain explicit linkages with communities and local institutions, increase focused professional development, emphasize clear and specific objectives and activities in the curriculum related to civic education, focus on "real-life" experiences, and significantly enhance the culture of the school, including extra-curricular activities (Galston, 2003: 32-33). It is clear that some explicit efforts, resources, training, policies and strategies need to be articulated for relevant democratic education to take place in schools.

Dei (1996) has written widely about the social construction of identity and how lived experience reinforces perceptions and interactions in society. Similarly, the study of Whiteness raises questions about the production and re-production of knowledge and power relations (Sleeter, 2000; Fine, Weis, Powell Pruitt, & Burns, 2004). Democracy is not neutral, and how it is cultivated within formal institutions, such as schools, will be shaped in large part by those developing the overriding policies, conditions and structures in which to engage in democracy. From this vantage-point it is critical, therefore, to comprehend the power and privilege of Whiteness in identifying and evaluating the merit of how democracy is inculcated in education (Carr & Lund, 2007; McLaren, 2003). Understanding the cultural aspects of democracy is at least as important as being knowledgeable about formal institutions and processes. Being able

to analyze critically the underlying issues, agendas, functions, and impact of institutions needs to be taught and fostered. Too much focus on elections can delude people into believing that democracy equals elections and that their relationships to democracy are greater than they actually are. In sum, the formulation of a democratic education framework and environment must critically involve an understanding of the role of power and identity as well as the notion that "politics" is a complex, multi-faceted, all-encompassing phenomenon that is not neutral (Carr, 2006a; Freire, 1973; McLaren, 2007).

The extreme marginalization of social justice in the No Child Left Behind accountability framework in the US (Hoover & Shook, 2003), it could be argued, significantly weakens the case for democracy and social justice in education. Payne (2003) has argued that African Americans are conflicted about their history, and, further, that the civic educational experience needs to be liberating as well as being able to speak to the reality of non-White students. He further elaborates on the themes of disenfranchisement, marginalization, and alienation from the curriculum, which is a reality for too many African-American students. Critical pedagogy, as outlined by McLaren (2007), may help acclimatize students to what many see as an educational system put in place to support the perpetuation (or reproduction) of class differences (Bourdieu & Passaron, 1990). Within the British context, Gilborn (2006) has forcefully argued that recent citizenship education reforms there are too tame and unfocused, essentially ineffectual in altering the institutional racism that it boldly publicizes is one of the objectives of the reform.

The clear lack of appreciation among participants in this study of democracy as a broad, vacillating, cultural and political system and process, one that must reconcile power differentials, is potentially detrimental to the teaching and framing of democracy for students. The repeated focus on elections as encompassing the quasi-totality or most significant aspect of democracy leads to questions about how democracy is taught in schools. The nebulous linkage between democracy and social justice, with the overriding fear of bias, values-dissemination and indoctrination, raises the concern of how education systems and teachers conceptualize the qualitative, citizenship-based, lived experience of democratic education, as opposed to standardized testing and the ever-ending quest for high academic achievement

exemplified in No Child Left Behind (Hoover & Shook, 2003). In sum, the lack of focus on and attention to social justice in relation to democracy in education, both at the conceptual and applied levels, will have a deleterious effect on how students shape their own views during and after their educational experiences, and, significantly, how they engage in democracy. Any discussion of accountability for high academic standards must ultimately consider accountability for democracy and social justice as an integrated component, not an afterthought.

Appendix 1 - Survey Questionnaire[5]

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

FOR X UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. I am a X University College of Education student: Yes ____ No ____
(Please note that this survey is for X University College of Education students only)
2. Number of years at, or degree program in, the College of Education:
 - a. B. Ed. Level - 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__
 - b. Master's Level ____
 - c. Doctoral Level ____
3. What is your specific area or program of study?

4. Age:
 - 21 and under ____
 - 22-25 ____
 - 26-30 ____
 - 31-40 ____
 - 41 and above ____
5. Gender:
 - Male ____
 - Female ____
6. Racial Origin: _____ (Please self-identify)
7. Ethnic Origin: _____ (Please self-identify)
8. Educated in:
 - Ohio ____

Another State in the US _____
Outside of the US _____
Other (i.e., a combination of the above)

9. From your perspective, how actively involved in politics were your parents? (1=not at all involved; 5=very much involved)
1 2 3 4 5

SECTION 2 - QUESTIONS ON DEMOCRACY

NOTE: Please expand on answers for each question, and use additional sheets of paper if necessary.

1. How would you define democracy?
2. Do you feel that the US is democratic? (1=not very democratic; 5=very democratic)
1 2 3 4 5
3. From your perspective, is the education system in which you were education democratic? (1=not very democratic; 5=very democratic)
1 2 3 4 5
4. In your opinion, how important are elections to democracy? (1=not very important; 5=very important)
1 2 3 4 5
5. Have you ever voted in an election for which you have been eligible to vote?
YES____ NO _____
Please explain. Why was it important to vote or not vote?
6. Are you satisfied with the issues raised in elections? (1= not very satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)
1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5
Please explain: Are there other issues that aren't raised that you feel merit attention?
7. Are you a member of a political party?
YES____ NO _____
Please explain. How important is this to you?
8. Do you feel that you are actively engaged in democracy? (1= not at all actively engaged; 5= very actively engaged)
1 2 3 4 5
Please explain the reason for your rating.
9. How important is social justice within democracy? (1=not at all; 5= very much so)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain the reason for your rating.

10. Did your high school experience have an impact on your thinking about democracy? (1=not a great deal; 5=a great impact)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain the reason for your rating.

11. Do you feel that teachers should strive to inculcate a sense of democracy in students? (1=they should not at all; 5= they should most definitely do so)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain. Are teachers capable of nurturing democratic values in students?

12. Do you feel that your education at X University is preparing you well to become actively engaged in democracy? (1=not at all; 5= very much so)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain the reasons for your rating.

13. How important do you feel the issue of racism is in relation to democracy? (1=not very important; 5= very important)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain the reasons for your rating.

14. Are you satisfied with the quality of elected officials in the US in general? (1=not at all satisfied; 5=very satisfied)

1 2 3 4 5

15. What should be done to improve democracy in the US ?

SECTION 3 - QUESTIONS ON CITIZENSHIP

1. How would you define citizenship?
2. In your opinion, are citizenship and democracy related? (1=not at all; 5= very much related)
1 2 3 4 5
3. Can one still be a good citizen if she/he does not vote in elections? (1=not at all; 5=very much so)
1 2 3 4 5
4. Does religion play a significant role in citizenship? (1=no role at all; 5=a very strong role)
1 2 3 4 5
5. What is your opinion of citizenship in relation to racism?
6. Thinking back to high school, would you say that you learned a great deal about citizenship in school? (1=not very much at all; 5=a great deal)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain. Did high school prepare you to become a good citizen?

7. From your perspective, to what extent is social justice a critical component of citizenship? (1=not a very critical component; 5=very much a critical component)

1 2 3 4 5

8. As a future teacher, to what extent are you concerned with teaching about citizenship? (1=not concerned at all; 5=very concerned)

1 2 3 4 5

9. Would you agree with the statement: In the US, some have more citizenship rights than others? (1=do not agree at all; 5=very much agree)

1 2 3 4 5

10. Would you say that you are being well prepared at X University to deal with citizenship in education? (1=not very well prepared; 5= very well prepared)

1 2 3 4 5

11. Has your understanding of citizenship changed as a result of the September 11 attacks? (1=not changed at all; 5= very much changed)

1 2 3 4 5

12. Do you feel that you are encouraged to participate fully in US society as a citizen? (1=not encouraged at all; 5=very much encouraged)

1 2 3 4 5

13. Is there anything you would change in relation to how citizenship is taught in schools?

SECTION 4 - CONCLUDING COMMENTS

1. Do you have any additional comments on democracy?
2. Do you have any additional comments on citizenship?
3. Do you have any comments on this questionnaire?
4. Would you be interested in being interviewed on the subjects raised in this questionnaire? If yes, please provide your name and e-mail address.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.

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Notes

[1] The name of the university is less important than the fact that the study actually took place. Although the university is described, and some demographic data are provided, based on publicly-available information, it was determined that naming the university would not add to the overall presentation and analysis, and might even diminish the strength of the research. While the study was conducted within one university, given the contextualization provided, readers are invited to determine the generalizability of the findings. Lastly, identifying the name of the institution would unnecessarily raise questions about this one particular university rather than present a portrait and discussion about democracy in education, which is the central focus.

[2] To simplify and render the qualitative comments more relevant, the following identifier is employed throughout the paper: a number (attached to each of the 129 respondents), the educational level (U for undergraduate and G for graduate), gender (M for Male, and F for Female), racial origin (W for White, A for African-American, and O for other), and age (1 for <21, 2 for 22-25, 3 for 26-30, 4 for 31-40, and 5 for 41+). For example, (38/U/F/W/1) would be participant 38, who is an undergraduate, female, White, student under 21.

[3] This research was not conceptualized as being quantitative nature in nature, although some questions sought a quantitative ranking (see the next endnote). Rather, the focus was on eliciting reaction, commentary, narrative and understanding of the participants' engagement with democracy. The answers to the questions with a Likert scale were further flushed out and elaborated on through the subsequent narrative comments. In sum, no quantitative methodological tests were undertaken to determine if the sample was deemed large enough to be able to formulate generalizations and analysis.

[4] To clarify, survey-questionnaires contained explanatory information with each question containing a Likert scale. For example, for the question "Do you think that the US is democratic?", instructions were provided indicating that a 1 would represent not very democratic at all and a 5 would indicate extremely democratic. The narrative comments provided after the quantitative score further helped to flesh out the strength of the data.

[5] The survey has been modified in two minor ways for the purpose publication in this article: 1) in order to maintain the anonymity of the participating university, the name of the institution has been deleted; and 2) the spacing has been altered in order to shorten the length.

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Author's Details

Paul R. Carr is Assistant Professor in the Foundations of education at Youngstown State University, where he is conducting research on democracy and social justice in education. He recently co-edited a book with Darren Lund entitled *The Great White North? Exploring Whiteness, privilege and identity in education*, published by Sense Publishers.

Correspondence

Dr. Paul Carr

Assistant Professor

Educational Foundations

Beeghly College of Education

Youngstown State University, Ohio, USA

telephone: 330-941-2231

website: www.coe.ysu.edu/~paulcarr/