

## Editors' Introduction

Within school walls, we are presented a stark picture of society and its structures of opportunity and oppression. Scholars have long argued that schools reproduce social hierarchies and inequalities (Bowles & Gintis, 1976) yet the institution of education also creates identities for children, young people, and adults within schools which both constrain and enable opportunities for agency and creativity. In Volume 5, Issue 1 of the Berkeley Review of Education (BRE), four pieces explore the production of education from the classroom to the broad social structures. In so doing, they take up the BRE's call to examine the experiences and consequences of marginalization, and to imagine something new despite constraints. The authors in this volume examine the interaction between the dynamic processes of racial identity development and school- and classroom-based practices, bring attention to the educational tools that misrepresent and misidentify students' needs, show how students are involuntarily and systematically fed by their schools into the to the School-to-Prison pipeline, and uncover the ways in which schools operate narrow gendered and racialized notions of academic success. These articles make evident the obstacles before us, but in so doing they also reveal opportunities by which to challenge existing structures and to bring about a new institution of education that engenders joy, hope, wisdom, compassion, and creativity.

In our opening piece, Daren Graves poses the relationship between school and students' racial identity as an empirical question in *Critical Racial Awareness, School Culture, and Academic Achievement of Black High School Students* to find that racial identity is a unique, interactional process that is in flux. The responses of the young Black adolescents at the center of the study invite the reader to consider a range of responses and interpretations of classroom practices embedded within students' personal histories and environmental contexts. These young people demonstrate a remarkable sensitivity and receptivity to classroom- and school-based practices designed to offer opportunities for students to make sense of their racial and ethnic identity. Graves reminds educators that racial identity is also part of the education project and challenges adults to thoughtfully craft with students school cultures that will positively inform the school-based component of racial identity.

Our second piece, by Sunaina Shenoy, critiques policies that undermine the achievement of English language learners (ELLs) due to widespread misuse of standardized assessment tools and "wait to fail" approaches to addressing language acquisition concerns. On the one hand, misuse inevitably produces distorted results that increase the risk of misidentification; in such cases, a label of Language Learning Disability (LLD) is assigned when it is not warranted. On the other hand, the paucity of alternatives may result in no classification at all—even when one may be warranted. In her study of 75 professionals, Shenoy examines the utility of a comprehensive process of data collection that extends beyond traditional standardized assessments and suggests a support model that systematically addresses concerns surrounding English language interventions.

In our third article, "*Disproportionality fills in the gaps: Connections between achievement, discipline and special education in the School-to-Prison Pipeline,*" authors Subini Annamma, Deb Morrison, and Darrell Jackson forcefully demonstrate how youth

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are caught in an intersection of school disciplinary actions, special education, and juvenile justice placement. The intersection of these institutional processes constitute a part of the school-to-prison pipeline. Through a blend of legal analysis, descriptive statistics, and critical race spatial analysis, the authors examine Colorado as a state case study to illuminate the interaction of policy, place, and race to shape significant life outcomes for students.

We close with a piece by Kirsten Hextrum, who brings feminist poststructuralist theory to bear on the disconnect between female academic achievement and social position in the workforce. Critiquing classic Marxist and feminist positions for their narrow visions of academic success and inattention to the mechanisms of gendered reproduction in schools, Hextrum argues that gendered inequality in schools emerges through a limited conception of women's academic success, one premised on a white and well-resourced ideal subject. She presents an alternative understanding of academic success and its connection to the labor market, one that incorporates gender performance and examines how the discourse of "separate spheres" continues to inform the dialectical relationship between schools and labor.

In this issue, we are proud to introduce a tradition that reflects BRE's commitment to emerging scholars. Our home institution, UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Education (GSE), holds an annual event known as GSE Research Day in which we open our doors to members of the greater UC Berkeley community to share research being done by GSE professors and graduate students. The BRE held a contest for graduate students to submit their work to be selected for publication. While publications are a critical aspect of an academic career, it can be daunting and overwhelming. This contest served as an opportunity for the BRE to support graduate students by demystifying the publication process and providing extensive substantive support on manuscripts. We are excited to present to our audience the work of Sunaina Shenoy, doctoral candidate in the Joint Doctoral Program in Special Education, and Kirsten Hextrum, doctoral student in Social and Cultural Studies.

The Berkeley Review of Education invites pieces that continue and extend the conversations started by the authors in this issue as well as work that starts new conversations on issues related to equity and diversity. We encourage senior and emerging scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to submit articles that address issues of educational diversity and equity from various intra/interdisciplinary perspectives. The editorial board especially welcomes submissions that provide new and diverse perspectives on pressing issues impacting schools, educational systems, and other learning environments. We also welcome a broad range of "critical" scholarship. We define as "critical" work that aims to analyze, evaluate, and examine power and dominant structures while helping us to imagine something new.

We thank the many people who have assisted in getting this issue to press: the authors, current and former board members, volunteers, reviewers, advisers, and the students and faculty members at the Graduate School of Education who have helped us in many other ways. We especially thank Dean Judith Warren Little and our faculty adviser, P. David Pearson, for their ongoing support and guidance as we broaden the scope and readership of the journal. We thank the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education, Graduate Assembly, and Associated Students of the University of California for their

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**References**

Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America* (Vol. 57). New York, NY: Basic Books.