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MID-WESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

• Official Publication of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association •

Iowa State University

On the Cover

Located in Ames, Iowa, just 30 minutes north of Des Moines, Iowa State University is the nation's oldest land-grant university. Its park-like campus covers nearly 2,000 acres and includes 154 buildings, many of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. The campus features more than 200 works of art by internationally acclaimed artists such as Grant Wood and Christian Peterson.

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The College is home to the Center for Technology in Learning and Teaching, the National K-12 Foreign Language Resources Center, and the Institute for Excellence in Science Education.

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The *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* accepts research-based manuscripts that would appeal to a wide range of readers. All materials submitted for publication must conform to the language, style, and format of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 4th ed., 1994 (available from Order Department, American Psychological Association, P.O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784).

Four copies of the manuscript should be submitted typed double-spaced (including quotations and references) on 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Only words to be italicized should be underlined. Abbreviations and acronyms should be spelled out when first mentioned. Pages should be numbered consecutively, beginning with the page after the title page. Manuscripts should be less than 20 pages long. An abstract of less than 100 words should accompany the manuscript.

The manuscript will receive blind review from at least two professionals with expertise in the area of the manuscript. The author's name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address (if available), should appear on the title page only. Efforts will be made to keep the review process to less than four months. The editors reserve the right to make minor changes in order to produce a concise and clear article. The authors will be consulted if any major changes are necessary.

Manuscripts should be sent with a cover letter to:

Deborah L. Bainer, *MWER* Co-Editor
1680 University Drive, Ohio State University at Mansfield, Mansfield, OH 44906

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Mid-**W**estern **E**ducational **R**esearcher

Call for Manuscripts

The *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* is a scholarly journal that publishes research-based articles addressing a full range of educational issues. The journal also publishes literature reviews, theoretical and methodological discussions that make an original contribution to the research literature, and feature columns. There are four issues of the journal published annually.

The journal is now accepting manuscripts for review and possible publication in 1997 and beyond. Manuscripts are submitted to blind reviews by at least two researchers with knowledge of the literature in the appropriate area. Furthermore, the editors will review the manuscript and make the final decision. The review process requires approximately three months.

Manuscripts are accepted from faculty, students, and professionals working in non-educational settings. Membership in the MWERA is not required in order to submit a manuscript for review. The editors encourage the submission of revised papers that have been presented at the annual meetings of the MWERA, AERA, and other professional organizations.

Submit four (4) copies of the manuscript with a cover letter to Deborah L. Bainer (see address in left margin). Manuscripts should conform to the style and format described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 4th edition. All manuscripts should be typed, double spaced, on 8 1/2 x 11 paper with 1 1/2 inch margins on all sides. An abstract of less than 100 words should accompany the manuscript. The author's name and affiliation should appear on the title page only. Submissions typically are less than 20 pages in length. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, the author(s) will be asked to provide a disk file (WP 5.1 or higher on a 3 1/2 inch high density IBM formatted disk) as well as a printed copy of the final version. Please note that the editors reserve the right to make minor modifications in order to produce a concise and clear article.

Questions regarding the journal or the submission of feature columns should be directed to the editors.

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Keynote Address

Violence Goes to School

Jack Levin
Northeastern University

Abstract

The growing problem of juvenile violence has found its way into all of our institutions, including our schools. More and more school administrators report having to deal with violence on an everyday basis and having to suspend students for carrying weapons or being involved in violent confrontations. In response, many observers have suggested solutions that are politically expedient, but simply won't work. They fail to address the question of what makes violence so appealing to so many youngsters, in the first place. Without providing healthy alternatives to violence, all the training programs, counseling, and therapy will have little effect on our crime rate. We need a cultural revolution at the grass-roots level.

During the last few weeks alone, the headlines have been filled with reports of hideous crimes committed by teenagers. A 16-year-old boy in Pearl, Mississippi fatally stabs his mother and then goes on a shooting spree at school where he kills his former girlfriend and another student. A 15-year-old boy in a suburb of Boston leaves 98 stab wounds in his 43-year-old neighbor, the mother of his best friend. A 15-year-old boy in Southern New Jersey kills an 11-year-old child who was going door-to-door selling candy. And a 14-year-old Florida boy shoots his sister simply because she talked on the phone too long.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago, such crimes would have seemed extraordinary not only for their extreme brutality or senseless motivation, but also for their rare occurrence. In 1967, if a teenager had murdered his sister because she wouldn't let him use the phone, we would have been talking about it for six months. In 1997, the same offense is regarded as the crime of the week. We shake our heads in dismay and then move on to the next horrific offense. Sadly enough, the most brutal and hideous crimes involving our teenagers are now viewed as commonplace or expected.

And there is some reality behind this perception. In urban and not-so-urban areas around the country, anxieties concerning violent crime have been reinforced by a soaring crime rate and by the growing participation of juveniles in the most serious criminal offenses. From 1985 to 1994, for example, the rate of murder committed by teenagers, ages 14-17, actually increased more than 170 percent. For 15-year-old boys, the increase was an incredible 212 percent (Fox, 1996). Younger and younger children now have more dangerous weapons in their hands, more dangerous drugs in their bodies, and a cavalier attitude toward human suffering.

Actually, the problem of desensitization to violence is even worse than the dreadful statistics concerning juvenile crime might suggest. While relatively few of our youngsters are committing hideous murders—about 1 percent is responsible for more than 30 percent of all homicides—they are being tolerated—perhaps even honored—by their friends and classmates. Millions of teenagers may not be able to shoot or stab someone themselves, but they are fully capable of looking on as others do so.

Several years ago, a teenager in Milpitas, California murdered his 14-year-old girlfriend and then returned to the scene with a dozen classmates to show them the corpse. One student covered the body with leaves to keep it from being discovered; others threw rocks at it. None of them contacted the police. This episode became the basis for a film in the 1980s entitled *River's Edge*.

More recently, Attorney Marsha Kazarosian filed a suit against the Winnecunnet, New Hampshire school district on behalf of the families of the three youngsters convicted in the murder of Greg Smart in Derry, New Hampshire. Kazarosian claimed that Pam Smart's love affair with her 15 year old student was made possible because she was negligently unsupervised by the Winnecunnet High School administration—that somebody in charge should have been keeping a watchful eye on Smart.

Whether or not school officials should have known, it appears that they may have been the only ones at Winnecunnet High who didn't. Statements made during the course of the police investigation indicate clearly that at least one month before the Derry police finally broke the case, the corridors of Winnecunnet High were already abuzz with rumors implicating the three students and their teacher. Yet nobody bothered to inform an adult.

More incredibly, statements later made to law enforcement officials indicate that students at Winnecunnet High were talking about Greg Smart's murder for two months *before* it actually occurred. With a simple phone call, any one of them might have prevented a murder. But nobody wanted to "snitch" or "tattle" on a classmate. Everybody was concerned about being rejected by friends. So they all kept quiet and let the murder plot proceed according to plan (Levin, 1993).

The impact of juvenile violence has been felt in every one of our institutions, including our schools. Some 35,000 teenagers go to school each day carrying a handgun. Almost half of all high school students report that their classmates carry weapons; and about 40 percent report that gangs are present in their school (Blumstein, 1995).

More and more principals report having to deal with violence on an everyday basis and having to suspend or expel students for carrying weapons or being involved in violent confrontations. More and more school administrators are attempting to counteract violence with some combination of a law enforcement strategy including metal detectors and security personnel as well as a conflict resolution program. And more and more principals and teachers consider violence prevention a priority for their schools. According to a study I recently conducted of schools in five urban school systems, even the elementary schools are feeling the impact of student violence in a major way. They too are dealing with violence on an everyday basis; they too are offering conflict resolution programs in response to episodes of violence between students and are expelling students for carrying weapons (Noguera, 1995; Levin and Johnson, 1997).

At least some part of the violence problem in schools around the country is linked to racial tensions. Between August 31 and September 18, 1990, pollster Louis Harris set out to determine the views of a nation-wide sample of students regarding the state of racial and ethnic tensions in America. Harris's staff talked with a cross-section of 1865 high school students who were attending the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in public, parochial, and private schools around the country (Levin and McDevitt, 1993).

The pollster's findings paint a rather bleak picture of race relations among American youth of the 1990s. Apparently, confrontations between individuals of different races and religions have become, to use Harris's words, "commonplace" in the nation's high schools. More than half of the students interviewed claimed that they had witnessed racial confrontations either "very often" or "once in awhile." One in four reported having personally been a target of such an incident. Yet, only 30 percent of all students said that they were prepared to intervene to stop or even to condemn a confrontation based on racial hatred. On the contrary, almost half admitted that they would either join in the attack or, at the very least, agreed that the group being attacked was getting what it deserved (Levin and McDevitt, 1993).

The findings of a recent survey of all 1,570 elementary, middle, and secondary public schools in Los Angeles County also support the view that youthful violence is connected with race relations. Thirty-seven percent of these schools had encountered incidents of hate-motivated violence over the period of a year. As expected, students in middle and high schools were particularly likely to have experienced hate violence, with a response rate of 47% and 42% respectively. Somewhat more surprising was the finding that 34% of the elementary schools had also had violent episodes based on hate (Levin and McDevitt, 1993).

Reducing Juvenile Violence

The American Psychological Association (APA), recently made a number of recommendations most of which focus on changing the psychological condition of our youngsters. According to the APA Commission's report, the violent kids watch too much television, learn aggressive habits early in life, and handle frustration by lashing out at others. They have trouble learning social cues, are desensitized to violence, and lack self-esteem.

As a remedy, the psychologists suggested, among other things, that television networks carry fewer violent programs during the hours when children watch, that the schools teach their students to manage anger, and that family members stop fighting one another.

Although very much worth considering, I would argue that the suggestions proposed by the APA's Commission fall just a little short. Specifically, they fail to address the question of what makes violence so appealing to so many youngsters, in the first place. Why is it that, in many quarters around the country, semi-automatic rifles have replaced 35mm cameras, leather jackets, and CD players as status symbols of choice? And, why has serving a year behind bars become a rite of passage in some inner-city neighborhoods?

Without providing healthy alternatives to violence, all the training programs, counseling, and therapy we can muster won't have a profound effect on our crime rate. Whether we like it or not, many teenagers benefit—or at least believe that they benefit—from being deviant and destructive. In a single violent episode, they are able to impress their friends, make money, receive career training, feel powerful, protect themselves, and find acceptance among their peers. The most violent-prone teenagers aren't getting along at home, aren't making it at school, and can't find a decent job. In violence, they feel something they never felt before—they feel special, they feel important and wanted.

A couple of years ago, I appeared on a television talk show with three Nazi skinheads, young men who wanted to feel powerful and dominant, but who were totally unsophisticated with respect to understanding Nazi ideology. Angry and hate-filled, they wore Nazi uniforms and other symbols of power. It occurred to me that these three youngsters could just as easily have joined a gang or have become members of a cult. They were marginal youngsters who wanted to feel successful, wanted to feel important, but couldn't seem to make it in any middle class way. So they terrorized vulnerable people, just as other troubled teenagers find it entertaining to drop boulders through the windshields of oncoming cars, to spray bullets into crowds, or to break into apartments and automobiles in order to terrorize their occupants.

Jack McDevitt and I (1993) have found that the majority of hate crimes reported to the police—crimes against individuals because they are different in terms of race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability status—are committed by groups of teenaged boys for the thrill, the excitement—to feel something that they believe is lacking in their own lives—a sense of power and control. In the same way that some young men get together on a Saturday night to play a game of cards, groups of teenaged boys gather to destroy property or to bash minorities. They look merely to have

some fun and stir up a little excitement...but at someone else's expense. They enjoy the exhilaration and the thrill of making someone else suffer.

For a while, Americans were discussing whether we should try caning our kids, the way it is done in Singapore. Legislation to introduce caning as an official criminal justice response to teenage violence is pending in at least a few states. Well, American youngsters are already comparing the size of their bullet wounds; if we were to institute caning, I'm afraid our kids would be pulling down their pants to show off the welts on their buttocks—sort of a red badge of courage. What seems to be a severe punishment in Singapore may, in the cultural context of the United States, turn out to be a reward.

Or, take jurisdictions in which parents are held criminally responsible for their teenagers delinquency. In Flint, Michigan, for example, parents can be fined a thousand dollars if their seventeen-year old children are caught smoking cigarettes in public. Of course, mommy and daddy ought to be held accountable for the destructive behavior of their preadolescent youngsters. But Two things bother me about any policy that punishes the parents for their teenagers transgressions. First, it sends the wrong message to teenagers who are all too eager to avoid responsibility for what they do wrong. And second, it sets up the possibility of dramatically increased levels of domestic homicide. In many cases, when we speak of children, we are really talking about physically mature youngsters who are fully capable of having their way with their parents. Two skinhead brothers in Pennsylvania recently murdered their mother, father, and 11 year old brother, after their parents wouldn't let them drive the family car. One of the murdering youngsters was a 15 year old boy who also happened to be 6 foot 5 and weighed 245 pounds. Rather than make mommy and daddy the super cops of society—at the very time when the family is at risk of going the way of Jurassic Park—we should be giving support, assistance, and encouragement to parents everywhere. Let's get them involved once again in the lives of their teenagers—but not because they might otherwise be punished.

Uniforms seem to make a difference—at least in the opinions of principals who have tried them. They level social class differences in dress; they make it easier to spot intruders; and, at least for a short period of time, they eliminate gang distinctions. But these distinctions apparently soon reappear, just as soon as gang members discover that they can find other ways to communicate their membership. The research so far does not seem to support the effectiveness of uniforms as a method of fighting school violence.

Of course, conflict resolution programs, especially if they are started very early in elementary schools, make at least some difference—perhaps an important difference—in stemming the tide of violence. Even if the results of such programs cannot be generalized to non-school settings, they are as important as metal detectors and security personnel as an effort to control the school day for children and teachers who deserve a safe environment in which to learn. By the way, recent evidence suggests that the positive effects of conflict resolution programs are very frequently generalized to interactions after classes and outside of the school environment.

But no matter how effective, such programs will not make the big difference. Conflict resolution programs, for example, aim at reducing the traditional forms of violence and conflict that develop between teenagers and children. The problem is that the most troublesome, most marginal students will not be persuaded by peer mediation or programs designed to teach them to manage their anger. Their problems are structural in origin and will require a structural change in response.

In many jurisdictions, there are simply no alternative programs designed for students who are expelled because they are violent at school. Instead, these violent-prone and alienated youngsters—the very children and teenagers who are responsible for committing the most heinous crimes of all—are left to walk the streets idle, bored, and unsupervised. They may no longer be an immediate threat in the context of the school environment, but, in the long run, they will become even more threatening to everyone, including themselves.

As for the Commission's recommendation that broadcasters provide programs that counter violence, I'm afraid that it simply won't work. True, children spend too much of their time watching television—on average, four or five hours daily. It is also true that much of what they view on the tube is violent and desensitizing. In fact, the average child grows up observing more than 30,000 murders on TV, more than 100,000 acts of violence, not to mention what he or she sees in R-rated slasher films and in violent video games.

The V-chip strategy for limiting children's access to violent television sounds good in theory. Parents will now be able to eliminate electronically the most offensive network programs from their children's after-school viewing options. Unfortunately, the V-chip will not work, and it sends the wrong message to adults. By installing this bit of high-tech wizardry in their TV sets, they can continue to ignore their unsupervised children after school.

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton voiced his support for V-chip technology and urged the television industry to adopt the measures taken years ago by motion picture producers. Yet, the motion picture business has been far more offensive than the networks when it comes to filling our youngsters' heads with tasteless images of human destructiveness. In fact, acts of violence are now routinely depicted as graphically as possible on the screen, without regard for how they may affect impressionable young viewers. In one motion picture after another, children are treated to disgusting scenes of decapitation and dismemberment. Victims are shown with their brains literally blown apart, their heads missing, their fingers sliced off, and their intestines exposed. What is more, many of these films are available as videotapes for rent, escaping the ability of a V-chip to eliminate them from children's viewing.

Some concerned parents and lobbying groups have praised the rating system employed by the motion picture industry (G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17, and X), a voluntary code that was adopted in the 1960s in order to placate concerned parents. Yet, it is the rating system itself that has inspired the producers of motion pictures to introduce more and more gratuitous scenes of human destruction and suffering, not to enhance the plot, but just to attract teenagers who tend to spend freely on entertainment. Without such gory details, their films might get a PG or even a G rating and be shunned by most ten-year-old boys who refuse to go to "kids' movies."

Ironically, the films most likely to contain graphic scenes of violence are, under the voluntary code of the motion picture industry, ostensibly off limits to movie-goers under 17 years of age, unless they are accompanied by an adult. Because the code is rarely enforced, however, the majority of the audience for the most grotesque of these films is often comprised of unsupervised children who are thrilled by the prospect of seeing unlimited quantities of blood and guts. Thus, the industry's rating system has provided a standard of consumer decision-making, not for parents, but for their under-age children who search the newspaper advertisements for a film that contains large doses of sex, violence, and gore.

Now we have done for television what has been so disastrous for motion pictures. Home-alone teenagers can turn to the *TV Guide* to find their favorite programs—those with the equivalent of an R rating. In the meantime, it will take years before their parents trade in their sets for one containing a V-chip. And, within six months, mommy and daddy will have forgotten how to program the V-chip on their set before leaving for work or will have given in to their complaining teenagers' constant demands. Remember all the VCRs blinking in homes around the country? Well, they're still blinking 12-12-12-12.

Once again, the question involves providing healthy alternatives. What will bored and alienated teenagers do when they are not watching TV? It is doubtful that they will instead read the classics or take up chess. Rather than worry so much about what our children are watching, we might be more concerned about who is watching our children.

It's not that television is so powerful. It's that our other institutions—our churches and synagogues, our neighborhoods, our schools, our universities, and our families—have become so weak on the issue of supervising youngsters.

Japanese television is much more violent than its American counterpart; yet the level of street violence in Japanese cities is extremely low. One reason is that Japanese traditional culture continues to be quite powerful even among young people. Another reason is that Japanese television is hardly ever used as a baby-sitter, the way that it is in the United States. In Japan, children who watch violent programs are viewing with adults—their parents and their grandparents. They have adults around to monitor, to guide, to interpret, to explain.

If we were really smart, we would begin now to invest as much in our young people as we invest in the stock market. We must intervene as early as possible in the lives of children who are troubled, not because we fear they will grow up to be Jeffrey Dahmers, but simply because it is the right thing to do and because it will be effective in the long run. If we were smart, we would repair our nation's playgrounds, put lifeguards at neighborhood swimming pools, build decent community centers, and make sure that kids have summer and after-school jobs. For youngsters who are otherwise unsupervised and idle, we would provide quality day care and after school programs.

To an increasing extent, city high schools do offer an array of after school programs including intramural athletics, drama, art, music, and student government. Unfortunately, such programs and activities are virtually absent from grades K through 5, leaving many younger children without opportunities for wholesome experiences and activities in the afternoon. Moreover, after-school high school and middle school programs in large cities are usually restricted to students who are in academic good standing, haven't been troublesome in the classroom, have economic resources, and can find their own transportation home (Levin and Johnson, 1997). In other words, they exclude the impoverished, alienated, and rebellious students—the very students who are in greatest need of supervision.

It took 20 or 30 years to get to the point where violence, in some cities, seems out of control. It will probably take at least a decade to get us going firmly in the opposite direction. Try telling that to our governors, senators, and representatives who come up for re-election every two, four, or six years. They look for politically expedient short term answers, even if they won't work. They emphasize three strikes and you're out; boot camps; uniforms, curfews; the death penalty; holding parents criminally responsible for their teenagers violations of the law, and dismantling the juvenile justice system. These are policies that might make Americans feel more secure, but they will do little more.

Take something as simple as curfews. They sound great—get the kids off the streets after eleven or twelve, so they won't hurt one another. Well, cities like San Antonio have tried curfews, with almost no effect at all. The problem is that only 10 percent of all serious crimes committed by under-age teenagers are committed after 11 pm and before 6 am. Almost 50 percent of all juvenile crimes (not to mention premarital pregnancies) are committed between 2 and 7 in the afternoon—after school and before dinner—or should I say before mommy and daddy come home from work (Fox, 1996).

And many of our youngsters, lacking in support systems—and Im talking about even those youngsters who grow up in middle-class areas—feel that they are on their own. Their parents may be divorced; both of their parents may hold full time jobs; or they may grow up in a single-parent household. And, when they come home from school, too

many of our youngsters are literally alone or with a group of friends who are unsupervised. Twenty years ago, at least some of the neighbors would have been home, peering through the blinds to keep an eye on the block. Not now; not in most neighborhoods—everybody is working, including the neighbors.

So fifty seven percent of all teenagers and children now grow up without full time parental supervision—Forty nine percent under the age of six. Of course, some of them do have a healthy alternative—quality daycare, after-school activities, summer jobs, community centers, athletic programs. But many others do not. So they end up raising themselves (Fox, 1996).

We used to hear about elderly residents in high crime areas who virtually become prisoners in their own homes. To avoid crime, they double lock their doors and stay inside their apartments after dark, afraid to venture out on the streets under any condition. Instead, they watch television. In fact, TV becomes, in some cases, the only friend they have.

Well, this same pattern is now occurring among teenagers in high crime neighborhoods. It's called street survival skills; but what it means is that more of our youngsters are staying off the streets in order to survive; they come home from school every day, double lock their doors, and watch television until their parents come home from work.

The Future of Juvenile Violence

Based on demographics alone, we are in trouble. The children of the baby boomers will shortly join the violence-prone age group—those who are in their late teens and early twenties and who commit a disproportionate share of violent crimes. Over the course of the next decade, the number of teenagers, 15-19, will increase by 15 percent. If we are not effective now in our efforts to reduce the scourge of teenage violence, we may look back at the 1990s as the lull before the crime storm.

At the same time, allow me in closing to give you at least a little bit of good news. Believe it or not, the murder rate has been coming down in many of our major cities. Now, let's not kid ourselves into believing that we've conquered the crime problem. Things are by no means great in the crime department, but, in many places, they are getting better. A drop in the murder arrest rate over the last two or three years is, at the very least, a good sign. We may not be totally out of the woods yet, but we can at least see sunlight through the branches.

Part of the explanation for the decrease in serious crime is probably demographic. The 76 million baby boomers have matured into middle age and out of the crime-prone age group. Rather than commit murder and aggravated assault, they have graduated into such lower-risk white collar offenses as fraud and embezzlement.

Another factor involves a beefed up criminal justice system, putting more and more police officers between citizens and criminals. In New York City and Houston, Texas, for example, zero-tolerance policing has taken more and more offenders off the streets and out of the reach of innocent victims. William Bratton, when he was still New York's Police Commissioner attributed the success of his crime-fighting efforts to a get-tough policy that locks away street criminals long **before** they have had the opportunity to commit serious offenses. Of course, his policies are now also being blamed for the rise in excessive force complaints against New York's Finest. Many principals have adopted the same zero-tolerance policy regarding students who carry weapons to school.

But the most important factor in declining murder rates in our major cities may have nothing to do with policies, population or prisons. Americans everywhere, at the grassroots level and up, are just beginning to recognize that they can make the difference in the crime rate. At the grass roots level, they are working to repair the moral, social, and economic damage done to our youngsters and to take the glamour out of destructive behavior.

Fed up with crime, ordinary citizens are enthusiastically addressing the issue of violent crime and, in the process, are re-defining it. Everywhere you look, you find groups and organizations not unlike this one focusing on violence in conferences, lectures, keynote speeches, and workshops. Moreover, taking their cue from growing popular sentiment, local institutions have sponsored a number of interesting programs aimed at local youngsters—churches running athletic programs and gun-buyback programs, companies providing more after-school jobs with a future, college students going into inner-city schools to do tutoring, mentoring, and peer-mediation, universities providing scholarships to youngsters in the local community, and teachers and parent groups volunteering to supervise after-school activities.

Parallels can be found in our changing attitudes toward cigarette smoking. Prior to the Sergeant General's Report in 1968, smoking was widely regarded as fashionable and stylish. But more than twenty five years later, the campaign has discredited smoking and stigmatized smokers. Hopefully, the same may soon happen to individuals who have a propensity for violence.

Of course, although the anti-smoking campaign reduced the consumption of cigarettes among adults, it essentially failed to convert young people. In 1997, an additional 4000 teenagers continue to take up the smoking habit everyday.

In the same way, teenagers aren't likely to be touched by a cultural revolution that asks that they become less violent and destructive. Many youngsters don't think about long-term consequences—whether about contracting lung cancer or going to prison. Indeed, teenagers are likely to feel invincible and therefore immune from the impact of their own violent behavior.

But unlike smoking campaigns, the cultural revolution in attitudes toward violence is being aimed not at teenagers at all, but directly at their parents, their teachers, their clergy,

their neighbors, their government representatives—at adult members of society who are (or should be) responsible for dealing with teenagers. This is important because our youngsters will change only to the extent that society's response to them changes first.

Teenagers who have been routinely ignored, unsupervised, and left to fend for themselves must discover that their parents and teachers care. Youngsters who join gangs and carry weapons to school must be guided and counseled more and more by clergy, social workers, and probation officers. For the first time in their young lives, our teenagers will feel important, they will feel special, because somebody cares what happens to them. And that will make all the difference, for all Americans everywhere who want to feel secure in their own schools, homes and neighborhoods.

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Kick-off Address

The Legal Context of Sexual Harassment In Education[1]

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Introduction

Sexual harassment of students and faculty members in elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools has been drawing widespread attention from the general public, the media and the courts in recent years. This new-found awareness may not be an indication of more prevalent occurrences of sexual harassment, but rather to the fact that victims are more willing to come forward to report and complain. Behavior that may once have been tolerated or handled behind closed doors is now frequently the subject of newspaper headlines, television talk shows, new stories and civil court dockets. Sexual harassment suits are burgeoning. As the most casual observer has noticed, public schools and university communities across the country are embroiled in heated debates about the existence, seriousness, causes and consequences of sexual harassment on campus.[2] Although sexual harassment is a very difficult and complex issue, one thing is clear; sexual harassment is a serious problem and schools and universities must act to prevent it from occurring. As they respond to the challenge of eliminating sexual harassment, they must do so in light of the impact of the laws of sexual harassment on their deliberation.

Overview

Sexual harassment is wrong because it hurts people. Sexual harassment is devastating to the victim, it can destroy the career of the harasser and it can significantly damage the reputation of the school district or university. Society through its various legislative efforts has made sexual harassment illegal. School districts and universities are increasingly being held liable when they do not carry out their legal responsibility to prevent sexual harassment and/or do not respond promptly and appropriately when complaints arise.

For more than twenty years legislators at the state and federal levels have been grappling with the issues surrounding sex discrimination. This struggle has resulted in laws being passed that set forth standards and procedures for ensuring nondiscrimination. The goal of all of these enactments is to ensure nondiscrimination and educational equity for both males and females.

Although it is now well established that sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination, this understanding is still evolving. As schools and universities have become aware that they are liable for violations of federal law (Title VII and Title IX), they have begun to act affirmatively to avoid liability. However, active debates continue to focus on the validity of the perceptions of their experiences of targets of sexual harassment, the due process protection that is necessary, and the school or university's liability for any harm that has occurred.

From the first case[3] to recognize a claim for sexual harassment in 1976, to the 1994 case of *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Schools* [4], challenges in the sexual harassment context have been based on statutory and less frequently, constitutional grounds. Courts continue to be called upon to illuminate the legal status of this evolving area of the law. Each new case provides an opportunity for the court to resolve uncertainties and clarify what constitutes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment cases are heard and decided in the context of constitutional challenges under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and the equal protection component of the Fifth Amendment. Recent court decisions have clarified the level of judicial review and the nature of proof required to establish a violation. However, even when courts provide guidance, there is often sharp disagreement in concrete cases. These disagreements generally focus on the questions of truth, sanctions and school district or university liability.

The primary statutory bases for sex discrimination questions are Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1992. However, the definition of what constitutes sexual harassment is far from static. In the hope of achieving harmony, the majority of us voluntarily allow laws to regulate our behavior. Lawmakers and judges are involved in the constant process of attempting to strike a balance that allows individuals as much freedom as possible while at the same time protecting the rights of others. The Constitution protects our individual rights while various state and federal laws protect the general welfare of society and implement the constitutional protection of individuals.

Because our society is made up of people who hold many different values, new rules are not accepted by everyone at the same rate. Some people are way out in front of a value shift. They are the people who are fighting for a new idea before most of us understand what they are talking about. For example, Farley and others coined the term sexual harassment in 1974,[5] but it wasn't until 1986 that the Supreme Court ruled that sexual harassment was a form of sex discrimination. By the time a new idea is formalized into law, most people have formed an opinion about it, and the majority of the people accept the new law. However, there are always people who continue to fight against a new value, even after it is passed into law. They keep testing the resolve of society to uphold the new law. Some of this testing

is taking place on the campus and some is taking place in the courts. The current uncertainty about the legal status of sexual harassment is an example of the complex process of translating a new value into new rules for behavior.

Legal Interpretation of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with a persons work or education. The term "unwelcome" indicates the action or behavior was unsolicited and nonreciprocal. In other words, the person witnessing or being affected by the behavior didn't "ask for" or invite the behavior. For example, wanted kissing, touching, or flirting, is not sexual harassment.

"Behavior of a sexual nature" includes virtually any conduct that refers to sex. Such conduct can include using profane language or telling off-color jokes. It includes using sexist terms such as "babe" or "bitch," or "bimbo" or making comments about body parts. But, it can also include what some may consider to be "terms of endearment" such as "honey," "baby," "darling," etc. Behavior of a sexual nature includes leering and ogling, and without question, any kind of unwanted touching such as patting, hugging, and pinching. Finally, any request for sexual favors in return for benefits meets the criteria established for sexual harassment.

Although the concept of sexual harassment is not completely settled in law or fully understood by society as a whole, courts have clearly and consistently affirmed that the workplace and the classroom must be free from sexual harassment. While not legally required to do so, the courts tend to look to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for guidance on matters relating to sexual harassment. In 1988 the EEOC issued a document to all field offices entitled *Policy Guidance on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment.* The document outlined the behavior that constitutes sexual harassment. The guidelines reminded field personnel that sexual

harassment is a form or subset of sexual discrimination and is therefore prohibited by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The EEOC drew upon a substantial body of judicial reasoning in holding that Title VII affords the right to work in an environment free from discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult. The student's workplace is school, and consequently students are afforded this same right.

Over the past ten years most sexual harassment cases have been based upon the *EEOC Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Sex.* According to these guidelines, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is sexual harassment if;

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The first two subsections of the EEOC guidelines define *quid pro quo* harassment. The third subsection describes hostile environment sexual harassment. A subset of the hostile work environment is known as sexual favoritism.

Quid pro quo, environmental, and sexual favoritism sexual harassment regularly occur on school and university campuses. Although all three are forms of discrimination, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the categories, it is important to do so because schools and universities are held to different standards of liability for each. Often these forms overlap or occur simultaneously. However, each is a distinct category and provides for a separate complaint or cause of action. The following is an overview of each category of sexual harassment.

Quid Pro Quo

Quid pro quo is a Latin term that means, "you do something for me and I'll do something for you." In the context of sexual harassment of educational employees or students, *quid pro quo* may include an offer of special treatment such as awarding a better grade, letter of reference, promotion or merit raise in return for sexual favors. It can also be a threat of retaliation. For example, *quid pro quo* occurs if a teacher or professor threatens to lower a grade or refuses to write a letter of recommendation or a principal or department chair threatens to withhold a recommendation for promotion or tenure if a sexual request is rejected. *Quid pro quo* also takes place if a teacher or professor threatens a student with some penalty if the student does not consent to have a sexual relationship with the teacher or professor. One critical aspect of *quid pro quo* is that courts hold institutions liable for even a single incident. In *quid pro quo* sexual harassment the deprivation of educational benefits, once such deprivation is proven, allows the victim to ask the court to provide relief.

Quid pro quo sexual harassment is the easiest type of harassment to recognize and has received more attention from the media and consequently it is better understood than other forms of sexual harassment. In cases of *quid pro quo* the institution is generally held liable even if it had no knowledge of the specific behavior. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 permits an award of compensatory and limited punitive damages against private employers. However, public employers are only liable for compensatory damages.

Although *quid pro quo* sexual harassment frequently occurs and the consequences are devastating, hostile educational environment is the most prevalent and misunderstood form of sexual harassment.

Hostile Educational Environment

Any sexually-oriented conduct or any sexually-oriented atmosphere that is intimidating or offensive to a reasonable person, can be construed as creating a hostile educational environment. In the workplace this behavior is called hostile work environment sexual harassment, in a school or university setting I refer to it as a hostile educational environment. This concept is sometimes confusing because men and women often perceive the very same behavior in quite different ways. What a man might consider innocuous, a woman might consider blatantly offensive. It is important to remember that courts now tend to favor the victim's point of view.

One critical dimension of the hostile educational environment category is that sexual harassment can occur even though the victim does not suffer any loss of economic or tangible benefits. Unlike *quid pro quo*, hostile educational environment requires a consistent pattern of behavior. A single event does not necessarily constitute a violation. In order for a behavior to be considered to have created a hostile educational environment, it must be "sufficiently pervasive and severe."

What Constitutes A Hostile Educational Environment

A hostile environment in an educational setting is essentially the same as it is in other workplace settings. In the school or university setting the hostile educational environment theory is based on the assumption that the relationship between the student and the school and the subordinate and the supervisor is very significant and that students and subordinates should be protected from psychological as well as physical abuse. Each student or employee should be able to come to class or work free from fear and free from harm.

It is important to remember that the person who creates a hostile environment does not have to have formal power. Therefore, co-workers and fellow students can crate a hostile educational environment for each other. It is also possible for a subordinate to create a hostile environment for a supervisor and for a student to create a hostile environment for a faculty member.

Sexual Favoritism

A third type of sexual harassment is actually a subset of environmental sexual harassment. Sexual favoritism is also fairly easy to identify. It occurs when a student or employee receives benefits as a result of his or her submission to sexual advances or requests for sexual favors. The victims of the harassment may be the other students or employees who are treated unfairly because they are not objects of the romantic interest of a supervisor. In the workplace, this type of sexual harassment has resulted in successful law suits brought on behalf of qualified persons who were denied employment opportunities or benefits. However, courts have required proof of the sexual relationship, not merely rumors or innuendos. Courts have yet to offer consistent views on how to treat sexual harassment cases in which a student is favored by a teacher who has a romantic interest in him or her.

Issue of Intent

Some people are confused about the role that intent plays in determining whether or not sexual harassment has taken place. Faculty members who have been accused of sexually harassing students often reply that they did not intend to embarrass, or that they were only teasing. They apparently assume that this is some how a defense against the impact of their actions. Many people who have been accused of sexual harassment admit that they committed the behavior but contend that they did not intend the behavior to be offensive. This argument demonstrates a lack of understanding of sexual harassment. The behavior does not have to be sexual in nature. Nor is the *intent* of the harasser relevant. It is the *impact* of the action that determines whether or not sexual harassment has taken place.

In order for a behavior to be considered to have created a hostile educational environment, four elements must exist.

- **First**, the harassment must be based on a person's sex.
- **Second**, the behavior must be unwelcome to the victim. The victim must not have solicited or incited the offensive behavior, and the victim must regard the conduct as undesirable or offensive.
- **Third**, the offensive behavior must be sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter conditions of the learning or working climate to interfere with a person's ability to work learn, or partake in the opportunities offered by the institution by creating a hostile educational environment. One off-color joke or comment will usually not be considered to be sexual harassment.
- **Fourth**, in order for a school or university to be liable for sexual harassment, it must have known or should have known of the harassment and failed to take prompt, effective, remedial action. Because the school board or university is expected to control the campus environment, it is held responsible for sexual harassment.

Title VII

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 prohibits private employers, state and local governments, and educational institutions employing more than 15 individuals from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in all aspects of employment. It does not cover students, other than those employed by the institution. The 1972 amendments permit employees and applicants to file suit in federal district court if they are not satisfied with the employers disposition of their complaints. This act covers all aspects of employment including hiring and firing; compensation, assignment or classification of employees; transfer, promotion, layoff or recall; job adver-

tisements; recruitment; testing; use of company facilities; training and apprenticeship programs; fringe benefits; pay, retirement plans and disability leave; or other terms and conditions of employment.. As amended in 1991, it allows plaintiffs, including those alleging sexual harassment, to sue for monetary damages. This act allows recovery of compensatory damages only in cases of intentional discrimination, and punitive damages only against non-public employers who act with malice or reckless indifference. The damages are currently capped depending on the number of employees, with a maximum of $300,000. Title VII also prohibits retaliation against a person who files a charge of discrimination, participates in an investigation or opposes an unlawful employment practice.

In 1986, the Supreme Court relied on EEOC guidelines when it unanimously held in *Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson*[6] that both *quid pro quo* and hostile-environment sexual harassment are a subset of sex discrimination and are actionable under Title VII. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. According to EEOC, sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the other sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another are, a co-worker, or a non-employee.
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
- Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.
- The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc.

Although, by all accounts, the number of sexual harassment cases is rapidly increasing, *Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc.*[7], was only the U.S. Supreme Court's second decision on this issue. Although the Court did not provide the hoped tests for hostile work environment claims, it did clearly warn employers that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. This case raised the question of whether employees alleging sexual harassment on the job must prove psychological injury in order to collect damages under Title VII. Although Harris had shown that her boss subjected her to "a continuing pattern of sex-based derogatory conduct," the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the case.[8] The Court said she was unable to prove that the abuse affected her "psychological well-being."

In a unanimous decision the Supreme court reversed the lower court decision. The Court held that a plaintiff charging sexual harassment does not have to prove psychological harm. The Court reminded employers of the rules it made in 1986 in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson.*[9] According to the Court, "sexual harassment is against the law when it is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive working environment. The environment would be considered abusive if a "reasonable person" would find it objectionable and the victim subjectively found it objectionable. The Court stated that, a mere utterance of an epithet which engenders offensive feelings does not violate Title VII. However, "Title VII comes into play before the harassing conduct leads to a nervous breakdown."

The Court stated that a jury can determine whether an environment is "hostile" or "abusive" only by considering all of the circumstances that effect an employees psychological well being. These circumstances would include:

- the frequency of the discriminatory conduct;
- its severity;
- whether it is physically threatening or humiliating, or a mere offensive utterance; and
- whether it unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance.

This decision gave all employers a clear warning that they are responsible if they permit abusive or hostile work environments to exist. By focusing attention on the work environment rather that the psychological make-up of the victim, this decision will help victims of sexual harassment.

The Court stated that Title VII "bars conduct that would seriously affect a reasonable person's psychological well-being, but the statute is not limited to such conduct. So long as the environment would reasonably be perceived, and is perceived, as hostile or abusive, there is no need for it also to be psychologically injurious."[10]

Civil Rights Act of 1991

Shortly after the Senate confirmation hearings of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1991 for the express purpose of providing additional remedies under federal law to deter unlawful discrimination. By providing for compensatory and punitive damages relating to punishment and providing a trial by jury, this act actually encourages suits charging sexual harassment and should deter employees from discriminating. In addition to the back pay, front pay, reinstatement, and attorneys' fees previously available under Title VII, this act authorizes as much as $300,000 in compensatory damages.

EEOC

The U.S. Equal Employment Commission (EEOC) enforces Title VII.[11] EEOC provides oversight and coordination of all federal regulations, practices and policies affecting equal employment opportunity. EEOC also develops policies, writes regulations, conducts outreach and education

efforts, and coordinates all federal issuances affecting equal employment opportunity, and implements approved affirmative employment programs.

If a person believes that he or she has been discriminated against under the protections of Title VII, he or she may file a charge of discrimination with EEOC. Although the charge can be filed in writing, by phone or in person, there are strict time frames that must be adhered to. In order for EEOC to act and to protect the right to file a private lawsuit charges must be filed with EEOC within 180 days of the alleged discrimination. EEOC's policy is to seek full and effective relief for each and every victim of employment discrimination, whether sought in court or in conciliation agreements before litigation, and to provide remedies designed to correct the discrimination and prevent its recurrence.

If the evidence shows there is reasonable cause to believe discrimination occurred, EEOC then attempts to persuade the employer to voluntarily eliminate and remedy the discrimination. Monetary damages may also be available to compensate for future monetary loss, mental anguish or pain and suffering, and to penalize a respondent who acted with malice or reckless indifference. The employer may also be required to post a notice in the workplace advising employees that it has complied with orders to remedy the discrimination.

If efforts at conciliation fails EEOC may consider the case for litigation. Most charges are conciliated or settled, making a court trial unnecessary. However, EEOC may then file a lawsuit in federal district court on behalf of the charging party.[12] As a result of court action, the EEOC regulations on sexual harassment have been upheld as a lawful regulatory interpretation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and that sexual harassment is a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Title IX

In the late 1960s and early 1970s concerned educators and students intensified the struggle against sex bias and discrimination in our nations schools and universities. At that time Title VII specifically excluded educational institutions from its terms. An awareness of this exclusion and a commitment to equity resulted in the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The legislative history of Title IX makes it clear that Congress intended to apply Title VII claims standards to Title IX.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities which receive federal financial assistance. Title IX covers both employees and students and virtually all activities of a university. The prohibition covers discrimination in employment of professors and other university personnel as well as discrimination in admissions, financial aid, and access to educational programs and activities. Title IX states: *"No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."* In general, Title IX is enforced by the Department of Education. Under Title IX students may sue to collect monetary damages from the school or the school may lose federal funds.

Elementary and secondary school students as well as university students are protected by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX is one of the most sweeping sex discrimination laws ever passed. Although it had little early enforcement, it is now the primary tool that defines equal educational opportunity for women in universities. Under Title IX, sexual harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, imposed on the basis of sex, by an employee or agent of a recipient that denies, limits, provides different, or conditions the provision of aid, benefits, services or treatment protected under Title IX.

The courts look to the principles developed under Title VII when they interpret Title IX. Although Title IX law has evolved slowly, it is clear that sexual harassment is sex discrimination under Title IX. In several recent Title IX cases, the courts have continued to clarify how Title VII standards apply to Title IX claims.[13] The first federal case brought under the auspices of Title IX dealt with *quid pro quo*, hostile environment and appropriate grievance procedures. In *Alexander v. Yale* the plaintiff alleged that she received a low grade because she refused to cooperate sexually with her professor.[14] Although leaving the other issues undecided, the Second Circuit confirmed the right to sue for *quid pro quo* sexual harassment. In two 1986 cases federal courts allowed claims based solely on the allegation of hostile work environments.[15] In the 1992 case of *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*,[16] the Supreme Court ruled that a teacher who sexually harassed and abused a student was engaging in sexual discrimination. The Court allowed compensatory damages as a remedy for the intentional violation of Title IX.

Office for Civil Rights

Title IX is enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education. In August of 1996 OCR wrote a letter to all school administrators confirming the department's position regarding sexual harassment of students in our schools.[17] This letter was written in response to sexual harassment that occurs during school activities or on school grounds by faculty members against students and by students against other students.

The letter reported that the OCR has investigated claims of peer harassment since 1989 and in appropriate cases, found schools liable under Title IX. OCR's position is consistent with United States Supreme Court precedents and well established legal principles. On march 10, 1997 the U.S. Department of Education published "Sexual Harass-

ment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties."[18]

By issuing this guidance the U.S. Department of Education has affirmed that the elimination of sexual harassment of students in public schools and universities is a high priority. This guidance was developed and disseminated as a result of OCR's knowledge that a significant number of students, both male and female, have experienced sexual harassment, that sexual harassment can interfere with a student's academic performance and emotional and physical well-being, and that preventing and remedying sexual harassment in schools is essential to ensure nondiscriminatory, safe environments in which students can learn. This guidance makes it perfectly clear that OCR interprets Title IX of the education amendments of 1972 (Title IX) as prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. This prohibition is based on the fact that OCR has long recognized that sexual harassment of students engaged in by school employees, other students, or third parties is covered by Title IX. OCR's policy and practice is consistent with the Congress' goal in enacting Title IX. OCR also believes their guidance is consistent with United States Supreme Court precedent and well-established legal principles that have developed under Title IX, as well as under the related anti-discrimination provisions of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

According to the Title IX regulation each institution must provide a grievance procedure for sex discrimination. Title IX's protection against sexual harassment covers prospective students, students, and employees of programs which are operated by the university. Thus employees, including student employees may file under both Title VII and Title IX. Title IX coverage also extends to other programs that receive significant assistance or are considered part of a school's curriculum.

OCR can conduct compliance reviews on its own initiative, and is required to conduct a prompt investigation whenever a complaint is filed. If after an investigation is conducted OCR determines that sexual harassment has taken place it attempts to secure voluntary compliance from the institution. OCR does have the authority to institute proceedings to suspend or terminate federal assistance or bar future assistance but rarely does so. It may also request the Department of Justice initiate court action.

Unlike Title VII there is no award cap placed on Title IX awards. In the case of a student complaint, the court may award money damages to cover such things as pain and suffering, emotional distress, attorney's fees, and the cost of past, present and future therapy. The court may also require the school district or university to initiate or change its policy and develop training programs. It may also require the school district or university to waive various time limits for degree completion and/or provide tuition refunds.

In the case of an employee complaint, the court may require the school district or university to reinstate or promote the employee, pay back wages, etc. It may also award money damages to cover lost wages, attorney fees and therapy.

Consensual Relationships

The discussion of *quid pro quo* in the university setting raises questions regarding consensual sexual relationships and is the focus of much debate. Sexual activity between two consenting adults is not specifically prohibited by either Title VII nor Title IX. Although not illegal in the workplace, a number of universities are developing policies that attempt to regulate such behavior when it occurs between a faculty member and a student.

As early as 1971 courts began to acknowledge that there were inherent problems associated with professor-student sexual relationships. In the case of *Board of Trustees v. Stubblefield*[19] the court recognized that, "Certain professions...impose upon persons attracted to them, responsibilities and limitations on freedom of action which do not exist in regard to other callings. Public officials such as ...school teachers fall into such a category." This court went on to say that, "The integrity of the educational system under which teachers wield considerable power in the grading of students and the granting or withholding of certificates and diplomas is clearly threatened when teachers become involved in relationships with students."

In 1984, the Seventh Circuit indicated that when determining if a professor had engaged in sexual harassment the "conduct is not to be viewed in the same context as would conduct of an ordinary 'person on the street.' Rather, it must be judged in the context of the relationship existing between a professor and his students within an academic environment. University professors occupy an important place in our society and have concomitant ethical obligations."[20]

Zalk, Dederich & Paludi correctly identified the bottom line as one of power, "...the faculty members have it and the student does not."[21] This power imbalance must be kept in mind when discussing amorous relationship policies because even with the consent of both parties may be damaging to the educational process. The stated purpose of consensual relationship policies is to protect students and junior faculty members from being exploited by senior faculty members. These policies attempt to ensure that grading policies are fair and that students are not coerced into sexual relationships. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) cautions faculty members and staff against entering romantic or sexual relationships with their students. They also warn supervisors against entering such relationships with an employee. "Faculty and staff should be cautious in assuming professional responsibilities for those with whom they have an existing romantic relationship."[22]

The policies that seem to generate the least controversy, and provide the least protection from abuse, are those that are advisory in nature. These policies simply suggest that faculty

and students not become romantically involved. A few require that those faculty members or staff engaged in romantic relationships with someone for whom they have professional responsibility must report the relationship to their superior so that an alternate means of performing the professional responsibility can be devised. A more controversial policy is one that prohibits sexual relationships between faculty and those over whom they have grading authority.

The policies that include a broad prohibition on sex between faculty and students generate the most controversy. These policies provide a great amount of protection to students and protect the integrity of the grading system. However, some argue that they are too stringent and substantially interfere with the right of people to become romantically involved with the person of their choice. Those who argue against such policies raise issues of individual rights to privacy, freedom of association, and the civil right to engage in intimate relationships without governmental interference. Keller and others argue that "outside the instructional context, the presumption that an intimate faculty-student relationship results from coercion cannot be justified."[23] The policy generated the most debate is the one adopted by the board of trustees of Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Their policy declares that sexual relations between faculty and students are unacceptable and constitute professional misconduct.

Because of the special relationship between the university and the student, universities have a duty to protect students from sexual abuse by faculty members. Consensual relationships between faculty members and students or between senior faculty and junior faculty or between supervisors and subordinates present potential problems for the university. These relations may be based on mutual attraction, however these people often do not hold equal positions of power. If and when the relationship ends there may be charges of coercion, intimidation or blackmail.

Consensual relationships also raise the issue of fairness. If a consensual relationship exists between a professor and one of his or her students, it is reasonable for other students to wonder if their grade is dependent on their personal relationship with the professor. It is also likely that the student involved in the relationship may come to question his or her own academic abilities. Universities may want to explore the possibility of developing policies covering consensual relationships. Absent such policies, it is unlikely that the university will be able to discipline a faculty member for entering into a consensual relationship.

The Concept of Welcomeness

In the *Meritor* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that sexual harassment violates Title VII if it creates a hostile or offensive environment for the victim, regardless of whether it threatened the individual's job. Although the *Meritor* decision was based on Title VII, Title IX cases will likely follow the same judicial reasoning. In the educational setting, this means that in addition to faculty-to-student sexual harassment, student-to-student initiated unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment. This is an unsettled area, with some courts stating that schools are responsible for the actions of third parties and other circuits stating that schools are not responsible for the action of third parties. It must be noted that unwelcome sexual attention toward a faculty member by a student is also sexual harassment.

Remarks that simply offend a person's feelings are usually not considered to be sexual harassment. However, if the offending behavior is severe or pervasive enough to actually affect a student's educational environment, then it may be sexual harassment. In this context there is a clear difference between welcome and voluntary. For example, even if an alleged victim agreed to participate in sexual intimacy, the sexual advances are a prohibited form of sexual harassment if it is clear that the victim did not desire to have the sexual relationship, but capitulated under pressure.

Because the 1980 EEOC guidelines do not define "unwelcome," we must look to various court cases in order to understand the difference between a voluntary activity and a welcome activity. In the *Meritor* case the victim claimed that she initially refused the sexual advances of her supervisor, but she eventually gave in and engaged in sexual intercourse out of fear of losing her job. The Supreme Court ruled that her participation in a sexual relationship did not establish that the relationship was truly consensual or welcome. The Court ruled that "the fact that the sex-related conduct was voluntary, in the sense that the complainant was not forced to participate against her will, is not a defense to a sexual harassment suit brought under Title VII." Challenged conduct must be unwelcome in the sense that the employee did not solicit or incite it, and in the sense that the employee regarded the conduct as undesirable or offensive.

Rights of Those Accused of Sexual Harassment

Schools and universities have an affirmative duty to ensure a safe environment to learn and work. Sexual harassment seriously interferes with a victim by discriminating against him or her on the basis of sex. However, as with most personnel issues, there are substantive and procedural due process rights that must be protected. As schools and universities promulgate and enforce policies prohibiting sexual harassment they must ensure that the rights of both the alleged victim and the alleged harasser are protected. In a number of cases involving charges of sexual harassment, sanctions against the alleged harasser have been called into question because either the policy, or the process of investigation, or the type of sanction violated either a contractual or due process right.[24]

The Intersection of Sexual Harassment and Academic Freedom[25]

Any effort to regulate the speech of students or professors must consider how to distinguish sexual harassment from

speech protected by the First Amendment. Most incidents of *quid pro quo* sexual harassment deal with the conduct of the alleged harasser. However, many incidents of hostile environment sexual harassment deal with speech that in another context may not be seen as not obscene, defamatory, "fighting" words or otherwise disruptive. However, speech not involving vandalism or "fighting words" present a more difficult problems for university officials. MacKinnon and Dworkin content that sexist speech is not protected in the workplace.[26] They claim that those who protect such speech "value speech in the abstract." Content, form, context, and effect are the critical issues to assist the university in determining what constitutes sexual harassment. The American Association of University Professors interprets academic freedom to mean that "[The] teacher is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results."[27]

To determine if a hostile working environment exists, the US Supreme Court in *Harris v Forklift Systems* said the test is whether the conduct in question is severe or pervasive enough that: a reasonable person would find it created an objectively hostile or abusive work environment that altered the conditions of the victim's employment, and the victim perceives that the environment is abusive According to the *Harris* Court , if the workplace is permeated with discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment, actionable sexual harassment has occurred. This court went on to say that conduct that alters work conditions includes that which detracts from employees' job performance, discourages employees from remaining on the job, or keeps them from advancing in their careers.

Conduct that is merely offensive, such as the mere utterance of an epithet which engenders offensive feelings in an employee, is not actionable sexual harassment. According to the *Harris* no one single factor must be present to find actionable abusive or hostile environment workplace sexual harassment. Such harassment can only be determined by looking at surrounding circumstances such as: a) The frequency of the discriminatory conduct, b) its severity, c) whether it is physically threatening or humiliating, or a mere offensive utterance, d) whether it unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance, and e) the effect on the employee's psychological well-being, which is relevant to whether the victim actually found the environment abusive.

In examining questions of academic freedom in the classroom it must be remembered that academic freedom does not protect classroom speech that is unrelated to the subject matter at variance with the prescribed curriculum, or in violation of federal or state anti-discrimination laws. Such speech can be the reason for discipline or termination.[28] Further, speech that disrupts the educational environment is not protected by academic freedom. Academic freedom is not a valid defense for non-cooperative and aggressive behavior. An institution can discipline a faculty member for such actions.[29] Academic freedom is also not a license for activity at variance with job-related procedures and requirements, nor does it encompass activities which are internally destructive to the proper function of the university or disruptive to the education program.[30]

In the case of an investigation by the EEOC, the university does not enjoy a special privilege, grounded in the First amendment right of academic freedom, to prevent the EEOC, from having access to confidential peer review materials.[31] The EEOC and other governmental agencies may regulate First Amendment Rights if they can demonstrate a compelling governmental interest to do so.[32] And the U.S. Supreme Court has previously determined that the elimination of sex discrimination, of which sexual harassment is a subset, is a compelling governmental interest.[33]

In a widely reported decision discussing academic freedom and sexual harassment allegations, a federal district court judge ruled in favor of a tenured professor on a motion for a preliminary injunction and enjoined a public university from suspending him for his sexually laden lecture comments that had triggered complaints from female students.[34] The *Silva* Court cited with approval the test in *Mailloux v Kiley*,[35] for determining the validity of governmental regulation affecting a teacher's classroom speech. *Mailloux* said that free speech does not grant teachers a license to say or write in class whatever they may feel like and that the propriety of regulations or sanctions must depend on such circumstances as: a) the age and sophistication of the students, b) the relationship between teaching method and valid educational objective, and c) the context and manner of presentation.

Because the students in the *Silva* case were exclusively adult college students, the court ruled that the classroom statements advanced the valid educational objective of conveying certain principles related to the subject matter of the course, and they were made in a professionally appropriate manner as part of the college class lecture. The court further found that the University's sexual harassment policy was not reasonably related to the legitimate pedagogical purpose of providing a congenial academic environment because it employed an impermissible subjective standard that failed to take into account the nation's interest in academic freedom.

Defenses Against Charges of Sexual Harassment

Defenses against charges of sexual harassment that have been successful: 1) no harassment occurred, 2) any advances that took place were solicited, incited or encouraged, 3) the harassment was not sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment and create an abusive environment. Schools and universities are expected to eliminate sexual harassment if they knew or should have know of its existence. Some universities have argued that they had no knowledge of the harassment and there was a grievance avenue for claims. Another defense used is that they took prompt remedial action as soon as they learned of the situation.

Conclusion

Society and the courts are asking school and university officials to balance the claims of freedom and responsibility on the campus. The break down of civility in our society is a trend that is evident at all levels of education. Abusive language, sexual misconduct and sexual assault are occur-

ring more and more frequently. Sex discrimination, although diminishing, still persists.

The existence of sexual harassment on campus undermines the integrity of education. I do not wish to suggest that schools and universities have been unresponsive to the new realities of sexual harassment. Many institutions have, in recent years, made serious efforts to respond to these questions. Many are shaping new codes of conduct. However much needs to be done before schools and universities reestablish an environment of courtesy and civility necessary in order for learning to take place.

All schools and universities must make preventing sexual harassment a high priority. The first step in this process is to ensure that their is a clear written policy stating that sexual harassment will not be tolerated, that all students and employees have the right to study and work free of fear, intimidation and harassment. In addition to defining sexual harassment these policies must define the rights of the victims and accused. All employees and students must know what their options are if they perceive that they have been sexually harassed. There also must be a well designed grievance procedure that will deal with faculty and student misconduct. Schools and universities must ensure adequate training takes place so that all employees and students know and understand the policy. Prompt and through investigating protocols must be in place and investigators must be adequately trained.

Endnotes

[1] This article is the text of a speech presented to the Mid-West Education Research Association in October of 1997. © 1997 Robert J. Shoop.

[2] According to a report by the United Educators' Insurance Risk Retention Group the number of sexual harassment claims brought against colleges they insure has approximately tripled over the past three years. (Neary, C.B. {1994}. Unique issues in sexual harassment litigation, Annual conference of National Association of College and University Attorneys. Stokes, J.D. and Vinik, D.F., in Consensual sexual relations between faculty and student in higher education, 96 Ed. Law Rep. [889] (March 23, 1995), report that "survey's conducted in the 1980's found that anywhere from 10% to 33% of female students at a number of campuses believed they had been subjected to sexual harassment at some time during their college careers.

[3] *Williams v. Saxbe*, 413 F. Supp. 645 (D.D.C. 1976).

[4] 120 S.Ct. 1028, (1992).

[5] Farley, Lin, (1980). *Sexual Shakedown*, Warner Books, New York, N.Y., see also Sandler, Bernice, *Important Events in the History of Sexual Harassment in Education*, in About Women on Campus, Vol 3, No. 2,Spring 1994, at 5.

[6] 477 U.S. 57 (1986).

[7] 114 S.Ct. 367 (November 9, 1993).

[8] Teresa Harris was a rental manager at Forklift Systems. Harris proved in the trial court that Charles Hardy, the company's president, targeted her with unwanted sexual and gender related comments throughout her employment. Harris quit and sued Forklift for sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1994. Forklift systems argued that she left work for other reasons. The Tennessee trial court ruled in favor of Forklift Systems because Harris did not show serious injury to her psychological well-being. The Sixth Court of Appeals agreed. The Supreme Court reversed the lower court decision.

[9] 477 U.S. 57 (1986).

[10] *Harris,* 114 S.Ct. at 371.

[11] The popular interpretation of the addition of "sex" to Title VII is that it was the result of a deliberate ploy of foes of the bill to scuttle it. An alternative explanation is that this inclusion is a typical example of "incubated" legislation. For an extensive analysis of the over forty year process of seeking equal rights for women see: Freman, J., (1991) How Sex Got Into Title VII: Persistent Opportunism as a Maker of Public Policy, Law and Inequality: A Journal of Theory and Practice, Vol. 9, No. 2, March 1991, pp. 163-184.

[12] Material regarding EEOC was drawn from EEOC documents that are in the public domain. Information on all EEOC-enforced laws may be obtained by calling toll free on 800-669-EEOC.

[13] *See* Lipsett v. University of Pittsburgh, 864 F.2d 881, 897 (1st Cir. 1988), O'Connor v. Peru State College, 781 F.2d 632, 642 n. 8 (8th Cir. 1986), Doe v. Petaluma City Sch. Dist., 830 F. Supp. 1560, 1571-72 (N.D. Cal. 1993), and Nagel v. Avon Bd. of Educ., 575 F. Supp. 105, 106 (D. Conn. 1983).

[14] 631 F.2d 178 (2d Cir. 1980).

[15] See *Moire v. Temple University of Medicine*, 613 F. Supp. 1360 (E.D. Pa. 1985). aff'd 800 F.2d 1136 (3d Cir. 1986) and *Lipsett v. University of Puerto Rico*, 864 Fd 881 (1st Cir. 1988).

[16] 112 S.Ct. 1028 (1992).

[17] http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/peers.txt

[18] http://Ww.Ed.Gov/Offices/Ocr/Ocrpubs.Html

[19] 16 Cal. App. 3d 820, 824-27 (1971).

[20] Korf v. Ball State University, 726 F.2d 1222 (7th Cir. 1984).

[21] Zalk, R., Dederich, J. & Paludi, M. (1991). "Women Students' Assessment of Consensual Relationships With Their Professors: Ivory Power Reconsidered." In Academic and Workplace Sexual Harassment: A Resource Manual, edited by M.A. Paludi & R.B. Barickman, 99-111. Albany: State University of New York Press.

[22] AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS, *Sexual Harassment: Suggested Policy and Procedures for Handling Complaints, in* AAUP POLICY DOCUMENTS & REPORTS 113, 133 (1990).

[23] Keller, E.A. (1988) "Consensual Amorous Relationships Between Faculty and Students: The Constitutional Right To Privacy." Journal of College and University Law 15: 21-42.

[24] See "Jury Ignores Judge to Set Award in Suit," New York Times, July 24, 1994.

[25] The legal research and concept development in this section is derived from Elsa Kircher Cole's speech entitled "The Intersection of Sexual Harassment and Academic Freedom." The speech was presented to the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, March 25, 1995, Seattle, WA. (used with permission.)

[26] MacKinnon, C.A., (1987) Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law, and Dworkin, A., (1981) Pornography: Men Possessing Women.

[27] *AAUP Bulletin*, Vol. 60, No. 2, 269-72 (Summer 1974).

[28] *Clark v Holmes*, 474 F2d 292 (7th Cir 1972); *Hetrick v Martin*, 480 F2d 705 (6th Cir 1973).

[29] *Harden v Adams*, 760 Fd 1158 (11th Cir 1985); *Kelleher v Flawn*, 761 F2d 1079 (1985); *Adamian v Jacobsen*, 523 F2d 929 (9th Cir 1975); *Chitwood v Feaster*, 468 F2d 359 (4th Cir 1972); *Jawa v Fayetteville State Univ*, 426 F Supp 118 (EDNC 1976).

[30] *Statsny v Bd of Trustees of Central Washington Univ*, 647 P2d 496, 32 Wash App 239 (1982).

[31] *Univ. of Pennsylvania v Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, 110 S. Ct 557 (1990).

[32] *United States v Lee*, 455 US 252 (1982).

[33] *Board of Directors of Rotary Int'l v Rotary Club*, 481 US 537, 549 (1987).

[34] *Silva v University of New Hampshire*, 1994 WL 504417 (DNH 1994), (The case settled by reinstating professor, no appeal).

[35] 448 F 2d 1242 (1st Cir 1972).

Conference Highlights

Mid-Western Educational Research Association 1997 Conference

Thomas S. Parish, Program Chair
Kansas State University

Well, the 1997 MWERA Convention is now a part of history. The task that remains is for the highlights of the meeting to be shared in this short article. Sounds simple, but it really isn't. You see, the 1997 MWERA Meeting was very, very special to me because of the opportunity I had to work closely with so many of you, and for that reason I would like to share some of my thoughts with you regarding what I saw, heard, and felt.

To begin with, each of the division chairs worked diligently in order to set up their respective portions of the program. I cannot say enough about their devotion to seeing their tasks through to completion, and how well they worked with me to bring the convention program together. I was so positively impressed with their combined efforts that I dedicated the 1997 MWERA Book of Abstracts to them in an attempt to recognize them and their endeavors toward making the annual meeting a great success.

Others, too, made great efforts to make our annual meeting successful. First, and foremost, was Jean Pierce, the Executive Officer. How fortunate we are to have someone like her who is so personable, patient, and poised. Throughout the months of preparation for the meeting, and during the meeting itself, she continually maintained a friendly and kind demeanor. Truly, she deserves to be thanked for her endless good deeds on everyone's behalf.

Unfortunately, space will not permit me to acknowledge everyone's gracious contributions, but I must say that the annual meeting's success could not have been possible without the efforts of Sharon McNeely, Adria Karl-Weiss, Kim Metcalf, and Linda Bakkan. Each of these individuals went well beyond their call of duty when it came to helping organize and coordinate our annual meeting that was once again held at the Holiday Inn at the Mart Plaza in Chicago, Illinois.

The 1997 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association deserves many accolades, and for many reasons. First of all, it had some really wonderful invited speakers. For instance, three noted educational scholars shared their respective insights with those in attendance at this year's meeting. Dr. Robert Shoop provided helpful hints regarding how to prevent sexual harassment and things we can do in order to avoid being sexually harassed, while Dr. Jack Levin discussed the growing concern over violence in every segment of our society, including our schools. Dr. James Boyer then shared his view of our nation's demographic future, and how research efforts need to be adjusted so that they will more likely correspond with the changes occurring in our society. All three invited speakers were very well received, and all three speakers indicated to me that they were equally well pleased with the members' receptivity to their remarks.

Besides the Association's invited speakers, many of the divisions invited speakers too. Division A, for instance, had two invited speakers. Dr. Theodore Kowalski spoke on the need for enhancing communication skills in the context of school reform, while Dr. Paul Baker discussed the leadership challenge associated with various school reform issues. Regarding other divisions' invited speakers, Division J had Molly Baker examine the technology currently in use in higher education, while Division E had Gloria Smith discuss ways to foster more multi cultural perspectives within education today. Finally, Division D had Dr. James Impara describe ways to set standards through using Angoff's method. Though each of these presentations were generally directed at specific divisional foci, it certainly seemed that all who attended these sessions came away with what they wanted, whether or not they were members of the respective divisions.

In addition to various notable invited speakers, the 1997 MWERA's annual conference offered various special sessions that the membership could also attend. For instance, Dr. Jean Pierce pulled together two highly revered professional panels in order to consider two key issues in education today, i.e., (1) the effects of educational policies upon the motivation of teachers and students, and (2) ways of forming collaborative partnerships among teachers and researchers. In addition, other special sessions offered various options ranging from meeting with the editors of the *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* to ways that playing cards could be used in the teaching of statistics.

MWERA's 1997 Annual Conference was further benefitted by other features too. For instance, the round table presentations seemed to be very well attended, and certainly provided researchers with ample opportunities to explain their findings to interested individuals via this highly interactive format. Furthermore, there were certain intangibles that must be cited too. Specifically, it seemed as though everyone really enjoyed the sessions they attended, and also enjoyed being with one another. In fact, it seemed to me that this was more like a family reunion in some respects because of the pleasantness that seemed to prevail among those who were in attendance at the meeting. Having been to meetings that were highly critical and seemed to detract from its presenters, I was greatly pleased that this was not the case at our conference. Yes, everyone seemed to help or share with one another, and that was an incredible plus for me. So much so, that I will never forget how much I enjoyed being at this meeting, and I am already eager to attend the next one in 1998.

Incidentally, be sure that you make your reservations at the Holiday Inn-Mart Plaza before the deadline next year since many members are bringing their families and friends with them (in order to attend our meeting and/or enjoy the sights associated with Chicago's loop). Consequently, space may once again be very difficult to find once the allotted rooms are assigned. So start planning now to join us, and don't be late, because our meeting is sure to be great in '98. The bottom line, of course, is that "U" are very important to US. In fact, we can't even be S_CCESSF_L without "U". So contact Dr. Jeffrey B. Hecht at Campus Box 5900, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois 61790-5900, if you would like to be involved in any way with next year's exciting MWERA Conference. Jeff is the new Vice President of the association, and will personally direct the development of next year's program.

President's Report

Kim K. Metcalf
Indiana University

On behalf of the officers and Board of Directors of MWERA, let me wish you a happy and safe 1998. I hope that this finds each of you well into a productive and rewarding academic year.

As many of you know, MWERA is in the midst of a period of necessary change. Our colleagues and predecessors have done a remarkable job of guiding us in 25 years of tremendous growth. Through their wisdom we are undoubtedly among the largest and most active regional professional organizations associated with AERA. For most of us, our professional "roots" were established through MWERA early in our careers or in graduate school. Personally, I clearly remember my first MWERA conference as a graduate student. The thought of presenting my own work to a group of colleagues, many of whom were among those whose works I had read in my studies, was incredibly intimidating. However, from the moment I arrived at the memorable Bismark, I was struck by the hospitality and support I felt. In fact, it was at this and future MWERA conferences that I first began to get to know my more experienced colleagues and mentors not just as scholars, but as people and friends.

It has been this environment of professional and personal support that has helped MWERA grow and thrive over the years. And, I would argue, it is this environment that can enable us to continue to thrive as an active, valuable professional organization. However, our task is perhaps more difficult now than ever before. Our universities and employers continue to reduce the support they provide for professional conference travel; graduate students and early career faculty are forced to make difficult choices about the professional organizations they will join; and the professional benefits of conference participation are valued less and less in the merit, promotion and tenure process. Thus, while we are confident of the quality of our organization and of the professional and personal benefits it can have, it is imperative that we work harder than ever to inform our non-members of the benefits of MWERA membership and participation.

As an organization, we have emphasized the very reasonable cost of MWERA membership and of our annual meeting, particularly for graduate students. Certainly, there are few if any professional organizations that can boast of such low membership costs. But at a time when our students and early career colleagues are forced to choose to participate in only a small few of the many professional organizations that they might, we absolutely must ensure that MWERA is not only inexpensive, but a good investment in their professional future. We offer our early career colleagues a variety of professional opportunities that they are unlikely to be afforded through most other professional organizations: an open, accessible, and supportive annual conference, publication opportunities in our regional journal, almost immediate opportunities for becoming formally involved in the organization through the journal, the conference, and the executive committee, and a small, close-knit network of established and emerging scholars throughout the midwest and Canada.

In spite of our amazingly affordable dues and the professional value we can offer, these attributes only draw new members when our colleagues and students are aware of them. I am confident that each of us believes strongly in the value of our organization. We each have our own reasons, but we share a commitment to and love of MWERA. But, I wonder if we may mistakenly take for granted that others will see the value of MWERA participation as easily as we do. For students and colleagues who are not familiar with MWERA, it may be easy to assume that their limited professional time and energy may be more efficiently invested in one of the many other organizations to which they are invited. It is up to us, those who know MWERA and who are committed to its continued success, to make the personal contact with our colleagues that can help them see the value of the organization.

During the coming year, I challenge each of us strive to promote MWERA in two ways. First, let us explicitly work to make known to our students and colleagues the important and unique benefits that MWERA membership can provide them. Let's help them see the opportunities for presenting, publishing, networking, and participating that we can provide, but that few other professional organizations can. Second, let us realize that we are no longer a small group of well acquainted friends who assume the value of our organization, who meet each year as much for social as for professional reasons. In order to remain viable, we must accept that our future depends on the long-term and active participation of young scholars who work in a rapidly changing, ever more competitive professional context. While maintaining the supportive, nurturing environment MWERA is known for, let us continue to improve the stature, visibility, and integrity of MWERA. Doing so will allow another MWERA to experience another 25 years of growth and success and allow another generation of scholars to experience the same feelings of collegiality and pride that we have felt as members of MWERA.

Invitation for Proposals for 1998 Annual Meeting

Keynote Address

Diversity Issues in Educational Research

James B. Boyer
Kansas State University

Educational research is an ongoing activity of many whose careers keep them in the center of the American academy—whether that academy is a defined research institution or at some other level. While much of the educational research conducted in the United States is associated with institutions of higher education, there is an increasing level of research activity being undertaken in other agencies as well. Also, many of the institutions of higher education are forming linkages with funding agencies (to include government agencies) and the results of their work will continue to influence public policy and the ultimate quality of life in all of America.

Much of the research undertaken by educational specialists in the past has attempted to adopt the traditional natural sciences approach to discovering new knowledge about humankind. In some ways, this is admirable, because some disciplines have been engaged in a particular design for generations. Most of us were socialized into the research community by something called the scientific method. However, our position raises questions about some of the research endeavors underway today. While we applaud the funding provided for this area of educational activity—and while are happy that agencies like the National Institute of Education and others are there to enhance research activity, we are concerned that the limitations placed on the broad area of educational research may provide data and images considered less useful and less accurate than some would view them.

If one of the major purposes of educational research is to improve the quality of life for all of us, then we place our priority with that purpose. Diversity issues in educational research means expanding the research dimensions, further analyzing the research assumptions, reviewing the research production teams, re-thinking the research consumption impact, and re-defining the parameters of our work as educational researchers.

Multicultural Transformation of Educational Research

What are the goals of multicultural research as we approach the 21st century? Why should the academy embrace multicultural research effort when the majority of the participants in the academy are not representative of the highly visible ethnically different populations? What ultimate effect will the research community have on the academy's image, purpose, and service function? Our position is that the academy (to include the research practitioners) must recognize the changing demographics of the United States and execute its leadership and service function with keen regard to the emerging presence of diversity.

Research activity must be reflective of the multicultural perspective so that it can more directly result in public policy which is more *inclusive*, and in human service which is more *culturally sensitive*. We continually call for research which underlies the quest for a society that is nonviolent, open, supportive, inclusive and diverse in its framework. We are urgently calling for research activity which is supportive of all humanity, if indeed, the application is going to be made for all humanity.

Research activity in the academy (especially for those of us who are identified as educational researchers)—must be more focused on ethnic identity, gender adequacy, an understanding of the necessity for economic sufficiency and a celebration of linguistic diversity. Gender adequacy involves understanding that neither gender is better than the other and that equality does not necessarily mean *sameness* or exact *duplication*. No one should have to make apologies for one's gender, ethnic identity, race, first language, economic profile, or handicapping condition as a participant in the research community or in the academy.

James Montford, Jr. (1990), writing in *Black Issues in Higher Education*, asserts that institutions must make a commitment to diversity at every level, particularly at the support programs level. He writes that "the mission of cultural diversity means the institutionalization of a cross-cultural perspective into curriculum, programs and services at the institution" (p. 64). Further, he insists that "it is incumbent upon all institutions of higher education to move forward with deliberate speed to develop draft proposals designed to address infusion of cross-cultural education into the very fabric of higher learning" (p.64).

Educational researchers, particularly those of us concerned with teaching and learning, with the experience of participation in the academy, and with the ultimate quality of life for all people—must now engage in that transformation. Such engagement means re-thinking our *perspective* on educational research.

To what extent can we continue to place almost all our research effort into one design, based on one general set of assumptions, and then attempt to apply that to *all* populations—whether they were included in the sample or not? Most professions base their practice on the best available research findings and educational practitioners are no different in this respect. The practice, however, can be no more *equitable* than the research activity on which it is based.

Expanding the Research Dimension

Multicultural concerns include the expanded definition and dimension of educational research. We support both quantitative and qualitative research efforts to provide greater insight into the academic endeavor. Further, we support a new look at the following categories that lend themselves to educational

research but which are rarely given serious attention by educational practitioners.

Historical research: That which builds a chronology of persons, groups, or issues not normally studied by educational researchers in the professional education research community. It makes ample use of the purposes of history—and some of the historical approaches to *Knowing* and discovering.

Descriptive research: That which defines a reality and offers findings which do not readily lend themselves to quantitative reporting though they may contribute much to professional understanding of teaching, learning and consumer issues.

Creative research: That which is the result of compositions in educational theatre, music, art, drama, photography, or other areas including poetry.

In addition to traditional experimental research activity, those categories may need to be employed or addressed far more frequently than before. If diversity is the fundamental base for educational effort, then it must also be part of the research paradigm and the broad practice.

Traditional experimental research designs have long had something of a monopoly on the conduct of educational research. In the future, as we transform the field of educational research, multicultural concerns will include friendly confrontations with the assumptions that historical, descriptive, or creative research designs have equal merit in attempting to generate new knowledge on which to base professional practice.

Additional Research Dimensions

There are several critical dimensions of multicultural education research which the research community (including action research teams in public schools) may need to embrace in order to remain a viable entity within the American academic framework for the twenty-first century. Boyer (1992) cited the following: (a) recognizing racial and ethnic identities, (b) understanding diversity, (c) multiple learning environments, (d) relation of issues to academic disciplines, (e) human rights, social justice, and choice, and (f) inclusion of diverse populations.

Add to these dimensions or concerns the continuing factors of policy, program, and procedures, and one realizes how critical it is for educational research to expand its parameters when discussing research production and research findings. There is agreement that those engaged in full-time educational research have provided the academic community with much data. That data guides the practice of those "on the front lines" of educational service delivery. No practice, however, can be more equitable than the research on which it is based.

The Research Paradigm for Diversity

Perhaps no area of the research community's function is more complex than the paradigm or parameters of our daily work in research activity. In the United States, we depend heavily on the academic research community for information about national policy and program direction. Diversity must become part of the foundational base on which our research work and discussions are built. Diversity, however, does not mean deficit. Diversity does not mean a stop-gap for racially motivated crisis. Diversity is not a benevolent act growing out of a slave-master mentality. Diversity is not a call just to add-on something that was never there before.

As we approach the twenty-first century, diversity means embracing the age of Multicultural, multi-ethnic understanding. It means the acceptance of "consumerism" and "academic reconstruction." While we have a spirit of self-direction, let's announce our own re-definition of research activity. Let's announce our new levels of self-reliance and allow others the chance to review our new levels of "research self-respect." We will no longer allow other disciplines to tell us what is *good research* or poor research activity, production, or consumption. While we must bring the problems of public schools to bear through our work, we must offer more functional solutions than we ever did before.

We all know that educational policy is made through the political process. That is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. However, we have the responsibility to understand the implications of that process in the educational research community. Researchers in the educational enterprise must have a *culture sense*—that is, insight into the dynamics of culture, programs, and feelings of social balance. What constitutes research? How will it be used? Which research functions and projects are worthy of the academy's seal and image? Who shall make these decisions? On what basis? Despite a tendency to favor research parameters of the past, a stronger level of *inclusion* must be part of our research dimensions and research definitions. What is the prevailing definition of educational research? Who created that definition? If educational research is designed to improve the quality of life for *all* people, then which people shall have a part in describing that improvement? All the people—including those who are culturally different from the masses—now require a more comprehensive definition.

Choice of Research Topics

As research topics are chosen by students and faculty, what types of topics are *encouraged*? Which are discouraged? To what extent are candidates encouraged to engage in research on issues of race, gender, ethnicity, bilingualism, and economic exploitation? In the sciences, to what extent are concerns about ethical issues investigated? How, for example, are decisions made about where toxic waste dumps are placed? Or which patients shall get organ replacements (transplants) in medical facilities? Academic research, while once much more limited, must now be deliberate in its concern for the diversity which questions imply. How are research topics chosen? With which populations in mind? Educational research must now become more responsive to the differences which help to define us.

The Research Production Team

Research production is both a science and an art. To what extent do researchers feel that all clients and potential researchers must *duplicate* the patterns and techniques of past research? Why must research in one area be acceptable to academicians in *all other* areas or categories of research activity? We can

never escape the powerful influence of the human perspective. Educational researchers must take the lead in expanding the range of topics, methods, and outcomes to reflect the expanded level of diversity in the United States.

Boyer (1986) identified a distinction between authentic researchers and basic researchers with implications for the entire field of research activity. A basic research team is one which does *not* include a person about whom the research is being conducted. In other words, if an African American research team which has no Caucasian persons on it attempts to conduct a study of Caucasian learners, this would be basic research.

Authentic research occurs only when the research team or principal investigator represents the profile of those being used as subjects in the research design. When Native American researchers study Native American students and their learning styles, for example, such persons bring insight to the task which others cannot bring. The Native American principal investigator brings not only research skills to the project, but also a lifetime of experience from that population to the research project.

Educational research has generally assumed that such factors are insignificant. The position taken here is that America is too diverse to have such factors continually ignored. To those who suggest that the presence of a Native American researcher on a research team "contaminates" the quest for objectivity in research, the premise of this is to proclaim that the *absence* of such a person is actually the "contaminating" factor. Perspective in research is extremely important. Authentic perspective is essential.

The Gate-Keeping Function of Refereed Journals

With the increasing diversity of the consuming public, one must ask the major questions of gate-keeping functions of refereed journals as the *only* acceptable level of dissemination. At the same time, traditional techniques may come under question. Are there more ways to conduct research and disseminate results than what we now presently know and depend upon?

While there may be value in the historical practice of blind reviews, there can also be flaws. Depending on the publication and the training, perspective, and inclinations of the editor, that which gets published may have all the trappings of monocultural, monoracial, poorly conceptualized definitions of what is academically respectable.

Diversity means the presence of cultural *difference*, not cultural warfare. It should be remembered that no one is deprived of culture! Often, what we see is a *variation* from what is traditionally known by those who are familiar with the activities of the educational research community.

Multicultural Concerns with Academic and Social Research

All academic and social research will reflect human preferences on methodology, design, and perspective. The very choices made in conceptualizing a research study emerge from the preferences and perspectives of those engaged in the study. All findings, then, are proportionately affected.

We see educational research as an arm of all academic and social research because of its heavy reliance on human beings and their mental, emotional, intellectual, and physical properties. Some time ago, legal parameters were created to protect subjects or learners from being unduly exploited in the conduct of research. We applaud such steps, but we are equally concerned with the research team composition, the topics chosen, the design of major projects, the dissemination of findings, and the seemingly vocal intent on re-stating the same negative descriptions of culturally different populations.

Research associations cannot continue to perpetuate the status quo when everything else associated with a multicultural, diverse population is changing. While the educational research community can be commended for production of new data, it leaves much to be desired in some areas of research which have been under-studied.

Historical Perspective on Multicultural Education

In the decade of the 1960s, much of the research produced which could be under the banner of diversity was growing out of America's efforts to *desegregate* its schools and other major institutions. Though embryonic in stage, its major assumptions were based on a compensatory model. That is, anyone who was culturally different was assumed to be abnormal, deficient, sub-standard, or negatively unique in some way. In describing economically poor populations, for instance, some of the research concluded that these learners were "culturally deprived." Little or no effort was made to find the *strengths* of these populations.

In the decade of the 1970s, there was a strong move on for "competency-based" research activity. The research in multicultural education in that decade was clearly embryonic—and a number of "profile studies" were completed. A profile study is one which describes a given population or a given academic or social reality. For example, some of that research focused on the "profile" of presidents of historically black colleges. It was done to establish a new realization of the academic appropriateness of such a population within the academy.

In the 1980s, much of the reform movement impacted multicultural research studies—and a clearer focus on the "institutionalization" of certain curriculum issues characterized multicultural research. Studies which attempted to look at exclusions from the general curriculum and from collegiate studies, were quite prominent.

In the 1990s, we are in the Age of Multicultural Understandings which gives greater attention (and respect) to the consumer. We have abandoned the "compensatory model" or philosophy and have embraced the idea of diversity in all of its dimensions. For example, Anne Butler's 1990 study, *A Content Analysis of Education and Social Science Research Related to Young African American Females, K-12,* attempts to look inside the published research for inclusion and treatment from an equitable standpoint. Another example would be Veronica McEachin's study, *Employee Training Programs on Ethnic/Cultural Diversity in Corporations and Service Agencies: Selected Case Studies (1991).*

Areas of Needed Multicultural Research

While much research is underway within the framework of diversity, there are still areas in which additional research needs to be done. Following are some critically needed areas:

1. Studies on culturally-influenced learning styles are needed. The major published research consumed by educational researchers tends to exclude this dimension in their work on learning styles. The work of Barbara Shade, Janice Hale Benson, Ricardo Garcia, and Jon Reyner made some attempts to address it. Much more needs to be done.
2. Studies on academic racism and institutional racism are critically needed. While these areas are not a high priority for some, the research community must be willing to address them. Academic racism exists when the practices associated with teaching and learning assume that the traditional intellectual inferiority or superiority of a student, faculty member, or staff member is based primarily on one's race or ethnic identity. It reflects an imbalance based on instructional preference which results in extremely limited learnings about racially and ethnically different persons, ideas, heritages, or events. Institutional practice could stand much more research. Diversity is assessment in an aspect of this kind of research which is needed.
3. Studies on authorships of required textbooks in colleges and universities, especially those books used in preparing educational practitioners such as teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, and research specialists. Who are the authors we've studied all of our lives? What academic and social history do they bring to their writings? What has been the instructional practical and multi-ethnic experiences of these authors? How much basic literature is there compared to authentic literature?
4. Studies on cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-gender relationships within the academic context. This is not limited to issues such as sexual harassment or racial harassment, but includes higher levels of ethnic literacy.
5. Studies on images presented of various profiles within the academic preparation of specialists. How limited is the pool of images presented? Is it deemed adequate for service to a multicultural, multi-ethnic population of clients?
6. Studies on specific disciplines in the elementary and secondary curriculum (sciences, art, history, literature, mathematics, music, drama, English) for their inclusion of multiethnic, non-sexist entities. For example, if an anthology is used for required literature, how many of the selections represent authorships and content about the culturally different? And how many are female vs. male?
7. Historical studies designed to upgrade the monocultural, historical dimension of the education of teachers and human service professionals.

Summary

Much of academic research activity, particularly in education and the social sciences, has assumed a monocultural audience and a monolingual readership. Such a monocultural, Western, English-speaking, middle class, Eurocentric perspective is no longer adequate for our comprehensive definition of a multicultural population. Educational research in American higher education must transform itself for the twenty-first century. However one defines diversity, the bottom line is *inclusiveness*. One way to accomplish this is to raise the hard questions of how we do things in education research—and why we have always done them this way.

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Presidential Address

Learning About Sex: The Missing Paradigms and Challenges to Educational Researchers

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In making this Presidential address, I will depart from some of my predecessors. I am presenting you a brief summary of some of my work in progress, and sharing my thoughts on some concepts that most educational researchers seem to be ignoring. In doing so, I hope that you will be open to the challenges that I am presenting, and start your own reflecting on how best all of us can work together to help impact this field.

When I was doing volunteer work in high school, it came to my attention that there were inadequate sex education materials for the mentally challenged adults that I was working with. They often lacked basic information essential for sexual healthy relationships. It soon became apparent to me that one of the reasons they lacked the information was because they were typically denied their sexual feelings, and weren't allowed to engage in sexual behaviors. Of course, that didn't stop them, it only changed the outlets they choose for expressing their sexuality. Over the years, it became clear to me that this problem was not isolated to this group. Most of my peer group also lacked good sexual information, and choose to engage in sexually risky, unhealthy behaviors.

In the twenty-five years since I was in high school not much has changed. Educators still focus on the major disciplines and relegate sexuality education to physical and health education segments provided to gender-divided groups of students. Educational researchers continue to focus on the major disciplines, and, for the most part ignore how we learn about sexuality, and what techniques and methods are most effective for sexuality education. Regardless of the small fluctuations in various statistics, United States teenagers have high rates of pregnancy, sexually-transmitted disease infestation, and engaging in health-risky sexual behaviors.

I feel a need to take a moment here and tell you that I am not trying to engage you in a "culture specific" or "value-laden" discussion here. Let's keep to what seem to be some important facts. Medical science tells us that teenage females usually do not have fully developed uteruses. Given their own nutritional needs, and body maturation, most female teens cannot provide the compliment of nutrients and oxygen that is recommended for optimum fetal growth. When we add to this the cross-cultural concerns for supporting a child, being prepared to parent, and being able to access jobs that provide for professional growth, we find most teenage parents severely disadvantaged in our society.

Sexual science researchers tell us that developmentally appropriate sexual education which is presented on an ongoing basis to our children tends to postpone the age of first engaging in sexual activities. Yet, few educators have access to these materials so they can provide them to the children. In fact, in many school districts and states, educators have to be specially certified to provide sexuality education, or to address questions which the children ask that are related to sexuality. In all other areas we tell educators to encourage student questioning and to help provide resources and answers for students. Yet, when students ask questions related to sexuality, most educators aren't trained to provide the answers, and don't know where to go to get the answers and resources that they need.

Do you remember the "just say no" type of campaigns of the 1960's? They focused first on cigarettes, and then on drugs. They keep recycling. Researchers have generally found such campaigns are ineffective, yet, they are now being used when it comes to sexuality. "Say no to sex" is often pushed at our kids. As an educator, I can't help but wonder at the contradictions we give our children, and be amazed if they get the point at all. There seems to be a lot of agreement that learners should feel good about themselves to optimize their learning. Yet, when we deny that our learners are sexual beings and deny that should feel good about their sexuality, we deny part of their self-esteem. We also deny the nature of learners. We tell our educators to build on curiosity, to encourage it. Yet, when learners are curious about sex they are told to "say no." To make matters worse, we are telling our teens to "say no" at a time when "no" means "yes." What we forbid becomes even more a curiosity, more a desire, and more a challenge to master.

Over the past several years I have been engaging in various lines of research with the goals of understanding how people typically learn about sex, if current models of learning apply to learning about sex, and what methods work best with various aspects of sexual education. My research has lead to my developing a sense of some of what is needed in the field. I will share with you some of the findings from the field, and the model for sexuality education that I am working on.

First, I have collected responses of over 10,000 students on my campus. These students are typically non-traditional in that they represent over 100 different language backgrounds, over 30 different religions, and are typically over 25 years old. They reflect, to a large extent, the multicultural population which lives in Chicago. They have shared their knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and ways of learning. They have taught me that the lack of sexual knowledge is not a singularity to standard ethnocentric middle class America. Additionally, despite the focus on HIV/AIDS education, most people are still engaging in health-risky sexual behaviors. My research shows that this is

due to the lack of knowledge across various aspects of sexuality, and the lack of meaningful, contextual information. It appears that cultural, and motivational factors, in addition to learning styles and opportunities for exposure to information are important predictors for explaining learning and sexual behaviors. In particular, the cultural factors of age, gender, social class, ethnicity, language, social status, and religion need to be considered. The health status of the learner also seems to be important. Those learners who reported that they had some health problems seem to have learned more about sex than those learners who did not report such problems.

Second, I have been collecting survey and interview data from adolescents. Some of the data has been collected in middle and high schools. Some of it in health and social service programs for inner city teens. This data includes self-concept, risk-taking, sexual knowledge, and self-reports of their lives. Various path and regression analyses have been used to understand what factors may contribute to effective learning and engaging in sexually healthy behaviors. These analyses have supported that in addition to the factors presented above, it is important to understand people's risk-taking propensities, and the perceptions of risk that are associated with various sexual behaviors. For instance, males and females have different perceptions of the risks associated with engaging in sexual relationships. Males report that short-term mating relationships pose few emotional or physical risks, but are somewhat emotionally risky. In contrast, one-night relationships are both emotionally and physically risky. Females typically report just the opposite. One-night relationships pose some social risks, while short-term mating relationships are seen as emotionally and physically risky.

Also important to understanding our challenges is to recognize that different learners engage in different sexual behaviors. Those who engage in behaviors that are considered health-risky tend to have different perceptions of the risk factors associated with these behaviors. They tend to be risk takers, and to differ in their motives for engaging in sex (fun, challenges, etc.). They report different ways they learn about sex, and have different conceptualizations about how they learn about sex. They tend to be more impulsive, and yet believe themselves to be more reflective.

Third, my various undergraduate and graduate students have been followed through three or more years of post-secondary education. They have provided information on the stability of their learning styles and ways of thinking, and on their conceptual development processes. They lead me to understand that among adults, there is some stability in the learning styles of reflectivity/impulsivity, concrete/abstract, and hands-on/reflective. It also is important to distinguish between visual and auditory when it comes to the type of materials. However, the visual/auditory styles seem to interact with other styles, and are dependent upon the types of learning that are presented. It also seems that with sexual education materials conceptual change and learning styles function independently.

Fourth, I have conducted various analyses of sexual education materials used by the schools. The analysis which I am going to focus on here includes the learning styles and methods used within the texts, and the appeal of the texts to the students. Repeatedly, when sexual education materials are available (in many schools they are not), they rely on strictly print/visual materials that limit the interactiveness of the reader, and present material in an isolated, abstract manner. Typically, the only information presented in concrete forms is basic biology, and statistical information concerning rates of infection, etc. The things that we know about incorporating learning strategies and organizing text in ways that provide scaffolds and allow learners to use situational contexts are typically not incorporated into texts.

It should be noted that the teens I have interviewed generally did not report learning anything that was meaningful or important to them through the use of sex ed texts. When it comes to learning about sex, both males and females report that friends, other peers, and sexual experimentation with others are primary ways of learning about sex. Males also report that they learned about sex through discussion with older siblings and peers, through listening, and through challenges. Many times they engaged in hands-on, active learning with selves or others because of dares and challenges from others. On the other hand, females reported learning through reading popular magazines and romance novels, through religious affiliations, through relationships (an emotionally-tied partner taught them), and through their own fantasies. Few teens report that their parents are good sources of information, or that teachers at school responded to their questions about sex.

Fifth, my work with teachers has lead to my hosting focus groups, professional discussions at conferences, and other discussion groups among teachers. Teachers report that they have problems of students acting out sexual abuse, asking about sex, and engaging in sexual behaviors in the schools. Reports show that sexual harassment among our students is high, and teachers often report that they see others victimized, and may feel victimized themselves. They don't know what to do, or how to respond.

In short, our "methods" related to sexuality education don't match what we know about learners and learning processes. To make matters worse, there are no Midwestern states that require that sexuality education is part of teacher education. Ask around colleges of education, and most don't have a sexuality education specialist on faculty, and most don't offer a course for pre-service teachers, much less mandate such a course. Most human development texts provide a cursory overview of the field, usually focusing on biological aspects, and rarely providing information that helps educators deal with critical issues they face in their classrooms. In addition, most of my colleagues who teach human development are quick to admit that they ignore this aspect of the course, or zoom through it, rarely discussing any of the problems or issues that educators face in the classroom. This is confirmed by the teachers who report that they have never received any training on sexual education.

Now, look among our colleagues, our membership. How many educational researchers readily admit to studying and researching aspects of sexuality? How many belong to groups like the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists,

or the Sexuality Education Information Council of the United States? How many times have you even heard of sex ed reported at MWERA meetings? In general, it is pretty difficult to find a Division that those of us who do research can use as a home within MWERA. Worse yet, we don't often feel at home in other organizations, and thus, we don't share a common vocabulary among sex educators and educational researchers. We don't talk to each other. Thus, sex educators don't usually know or use aspects of educational psychology and human developmental learning that may be helpful for the learners. They don't know how to do applied action research in their classrooms, and they don't have contacts to have others help them engage in meaningful evaluation of materials.

In short, I do not believe that the current methods of sexual education are working effectively. I question if the models, paradigms, and methods we use to teach cognitive skills, enhance cognitive learning, impact affective learning, or otherwise lead to new behaviors are effective for learning about sex. I think that we need a new model that incorporates the various aspects I have talked about, always remembering that each individual is a unique learner. When we consider the age, gender, social status, economic status, religion, language, ethnicity and health of the individual into the model, and then consider the risk-taking propensities, perceptions of risk, learning styles and motives of the individual, we should come closer to understanding the factors that need to be incorporated into building sexual education materials and processes. When we engage the sex educators in open discussion about how learning works in other disciplines, and then study how it works in sex ed, we might find that we not only have to expand our current learning paradigms, but also make changes in many of them.

Here are some of our challenges:

1. If we are truly a profession, a discipline, a specialty in our own right, we must recognize all of education, and be prepared to research all areas, including sex ed. We cannot continue to ignore one of our most pervasive societal issues and pretend that because it is often not a major discipline it does not deserve major attention. If we had a quarter of the studies on sex ed and sex learning that we have on self esteem, we would know a lot more, and be more effective in the ways our schools provide sex ed.
2. If we are going to be serious in our efforts to know about sex ed, we have to look at the crisis our vocabulary causes in sex ed. We can't talk about "sex ed" as just cognitive or just affective, or just psychomotor learning. Sex ed crosses all domains. Maybe someday I'll have converts to my belief that sex ed requires its own domain, as well as its own learning style vocabulary.
3. Yes, current vocabulary among educational researchers can't be used by sex educators in real ways. Sex educators can't talk, and be taken seriously, about developing hands-on materials, take home activities, group projects, experiential or experimental or cooperative learning activities. They are even hesitant to talk about situated learning, and building on curiosity. After all, we are dealing with educators who have to be aware that the vocabulary and methods they use is always scrutinized by others. It wasn't until a few years ago that educators were even allowed to use the term "menstruation" when they taught sex ed. Today, most still can't use the other "M" word, masturbation. Also, depending upon the state they teach in, they may not even be able to use words like "condom" in the classroom. Many times, you can find whole curriculum that don't include these words.
4. We have to go to the source, not expect the source to come to us. Until we are all reading the sex ed and sex research journals, we are not going to be able to know the problems already faced in the field. So far, we have not been open to sex educators. We haven't invited them to join us, and haven't provided a means for their voices to be heard among us. We need to go to them. I can count on one hand the number of educational researchers who routinely are involved in the sex education field and attend those professional meetings. If we don't make an effort, we can't expect one back.
5. We have to look at our own institutions, whatever the level of learner. Do we have sexual educators on staff? Is there any focus on teaching sex ed, or teaching people to teach people to be sex educators? Do we have courses, inservices, professional development opportunities for our sex educators and teachers who need information and resources? Do we have the theory to build upon the education?

I have to caution you that if you take my challenges seriously, you are in for not only a lot of hard work, but potentially a lot of challenges to your own career. I don't recommend those new to educational research embark too deeply unless they have the blessings of those that have power over their careers. I was blessed in my pre-professional, my graduate work, and my professional work with having mentors and colleagues who felt that this was an important issue, and who "humored" my studies in this area. However, I was always careful to remember that I had to do other kinds of research when it came time to publish or perish. I learned that I had to be careful in my work in this area, and very serious, so that my work might be taken seriously. Unfortunately, the stigmas that sex has in our society often are carried over to our professional lives, and blushing colleagues. This work is typically not the thing that gets shared in hallways the ways other share what they have learned.

However, there are many among us who are far enough in our careers that we can afford new challenges, and can stretch in new directions. We can not only expand our own thinking into these areas, but also bring along colleagues. There are many challenges, many ventures, many avenues awaiting us if we choose to learn more about learning about sex. I hope that you will seriously consider my challenge and join me in this task.

Division A Invited Address

The Role of Communication in Providing Leadership for School Restructuring

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Abstract

Educational reform now focuses largely on school restructuring. In this context, both transformational leadership and cultural change paradigms have become critical issues for school administrators. The argument is made that both concepts are inextricably linked to communication. Consequently, leadership for change requires both an adequate knowledge base pertaining to leadership and organizational theory and knowledge and skill in the area of communication theory. A research agenda for studying communication in schools and the inclusion of communication theory in the preparation of school administrators are recommended.

During the early 1980s, school reform was characterized by a seemingly endless list of intensification mandates, such as longer school years, longer school days, and increased graduation requirements. These initiatives, advanced by elected officials and powerful business executives, were predicated on the notion that higher levels of productivity could be achieved by doing more of the same within the existing structure of schooling. This strategy allowed local boards and administrators to "coast on tradition" (Danzberger, Kirst, & Usdan, 1992, p. ix). In essence, these local officials merely had to implement and regulate ideas developed elsewhere. But the accession of school restructuring changed this condition. In the context of decentralization, principals and superintendents are being asked to both lead and manage school and district improvement (Murphy & Hallinger, 1987). As a result, their role expectations are becoming more developmental than reactive, a condition that accentuates the symbolic and political frames of their behavior (Bolman & Deal, 1994).

The purpose of this article is to present the argument that the fundamental means for providing leadership for school restructuring, transformational leadership and cultural change, are attenuated when administrators neither understand nor appreciate communication as a core element in their practice. Further, the contention is made that this deficiency exists for most administrators because communication theory has received insufficient attention in both professional preparation and school-based research.

Critical Elements of School Restructuring

If meaningful school restructuring is to occur, the task must be addressed at two levels: a realignment of the school; the need to reshape traditional power relationships between public education and its clientele (Elmore, 1990; Conley, 1993). Both assignments require transformational behaviors and cultural change paradigms. *Transformational* leadership seeks to influence behavior by appealing to "higher ideals and moral values such as liberty, justice, equality, peace, and humanitarianism" (Yukl, 1989, p. 210). Components include a common goal commitment (both the leader and followers desire the same goal), the pursuit of higher levels of morality (emphasis on moral values to govern behavior), and a reliance on higher-order needs (the leader focuses on more advanced human needs when considering motivations) (Burns, 1978). In essence, transformational leaders seek to empower teachers and other employees so that collectively members of the organization can eradicate existing unjust, inequitable, or ineffective conditions in their cultures (Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993). This conceptualization of leadership, however, has not been dominant in either business (Bennis & Nanus, 1985) or education (Yukl, 1989).

Cultural change paradigms are predicated on the assumption that organizational modifications are resisted either because an institution's culture is negatively disposed toward change or because a specific initiative is incongruous with the dominant values and beliefs held by those who operate the school. This approach to school reform can be defined as a revision of common understandings, occurring first at the deepest level of basic assumptions and ultimately at the level of overt behaviors. It is a process that relies on transformational leadership styles to reshape the form and content of an institution's symbolic field (Mohan, 1993). In schools, administrators are expected to initiate the process by reading the existing culture to determine how fundamental beliefs result in positive or negative practices (Deal & Peterson, 1990). Following this diagnostic stage, the leader promotes open and democratic discussions allowing members of the culture to determine the extent to which modifications are necessary. These discussions become a forum for allowing members of the school family to find common ground for a vision and a plan of action (Prestine & Bowen, 1993).

Since the early 1980s, the targets of educational reformers have shifted from students to educators to schools. This is evidenced by the fact that iterations of restructuring, such as site-based management, now enjoy center stage. *Structure* refers to the formal ordering of roles in terms of authority, job descriptions, and work assignments; also included are the ar-

rangements of networks that affect formal and informal interactions (Toth & Trujillo, 1987). Restructuring thus implies the reshaping of these elements. In the case of public schools, advocacy for the process emanates from the conclusion that centralization has encouraged "lock-step" programs that are insensitive and unresponsive to a changing world. As a result, reform policy is now heavily influenced by decentralization theory (the closer the process of governance is to those affected, the more responsive it is to real needs and wants). The intent of decentralization is to make schools less dependent on a hierarchy of authority and more inclined toward collegiality and shared authority.

Because schools are complex social systems in which behavior is influenced by a network of interactions among individuals, among formal and informal groups, and between an organization and its external environment (Kowalski, 1995b), effective decisions about education are usually not made unilaterally. Rather they evolve from political actions, typically ending in compromise. Accordingly, those who have studied organizational change (e.g., Bracey, 1994; Murphy, 1991; Schein, 1996) often conclude that restructuring requires change agents who view schools from a social systems perspective, i.e., leaders who see schools and districts as complex systems composed of interrelated parts that interact to varying degrees. With this perspective, one is less prone to suggest a single cause for the imperfections of public education and less inclined to believe that meaningful improvement can be produced by simply tinkering with select institutional elements. Philip Schlechty (1997) wrote, "Systemic thinking requires us to accept that the way social systems are put together has independent effects on the way people behave, what they learn, and how they learn what they learn" (p. 134). As social systems, public schools are shaped by both formal structure and culture, by both internal (within the school) and external (community) political transactions. Therefore, structural change not supported by cultural change eventually gets overwhelmed by the existing culture (Schlechty, 1997).

Among those pointing out the importance of culture to systemic change is the noted psychologist, Seymour Sarason (1996). After studying failed reform efforts over the past four or five decades, he determined that the "system" of public education was allergic to change; any effort to alter one part of a school was quickly obstructed by system wide barriers. He concluded that the source of this intractability was a pervasive culture erected on a set of assumptions shared by virtually all educators. He went on to note that this culture evolved over time through a series of political compromises between schools and society. According to Sarason, it is this macropolitical relationship that makes it impossible for us to understand what goes on in schools "only by riveting on what goes on in schools" (p. 2).

Also studying the effects of local political pressures on school district design, Jane Hannaway (1993) found that even in districts with similar institutional environments and technologies, differences could be observed in organizational design and procedures for decision making. In summarizing her research, she concluded, "The results suggest that the assumption implicitly made by many educational reformers that schools are free to choose their organizational structure is, at least to some significant degree, overdrawn. External political pressure at the local level appears to constrain managerial arrangements" (p. 160). In essence, she discovered that educational philosophy and organizational design are endogenous to local districts (Hannaway, 1992). Such findings suggest that neither structure nor culture are manufactured entirely by school boards, administrators, and teachers. Rather they are produced by innumerable internal and external interactions. By focusing on the school as a social system, we begin to comprehend the essential nature of communication in both transformational leadership and cultural change models. Language and its use provide the keys to understanding why things are the way they are, within the school and between the school and its external communities. In this respect, reshaping formal structure and institutional culture necessitates an appreciation of how schools are affected by their communities and in turn affect them (Sarason, 1996).

Unfortunately, little research has been done on the specific characteristics of culture that hinder or enhance change (Burgess, 1996). Most researchers have been preoccupied with finding relationships among phenomena, and their inquiries have relied largely on positivist approaches. Such efforts have not provided a sufficient picture of reality. In order to study behavior in a social systems context, for example determining the ways in which micro and macropolitical interest groups influence ideology and policy, researchers need to use holistic paradigms (Bacharach & Mundell, 1993). This alternative requires an understanding of mixed methodologies and a comprehension of the relationship between culture and communication.

The Relationship Between Culture and Communication

The relationship between culture and communication may be more expediently studied when both variables are explained. Edgar Schein (1992) identified culture as a multilevel construct consisting of *basic assumptions*, *espoused values*, and *artifacts*. The basic assumptions make up the deepest and most mental layer; here we find the tacit beliefs educators hold about themselves, their relationships with other people in the school, and the purposes of the school. Espoused values are distinguished by strategies, goals, and standards representing preferred behaviors for coping with daily job requirements. Artifacts are symbolic manifestations of the basic assumptions; examples include language, myths, rituals, and ceremonies. Artifacts and espoused values exist on or near the surface, and thus, constitute the more visible and identifiable dimensions of culture (Short & Greer, 1997). By comparison, basic assumptions are highly subjective and pose the greatest challenge to change agents,

because identification typically requires extensive observations and analysis (Rousseau, 1990).

School cultures are often described quantitatively on the basis of strength, i.e., along a continuum ranging from *weak* to *strong*. Weak cultures are fragmented and difficult to discern because few teachers and administrators accept common assumptions about professional responsibility, student discipline, and the like. Strong cultures are characterized by a high percentage of employees holding the same assumptions. In most organizations, including schools, "there are often different and competing value systems that create a mosaic of organizational realities rather than a uniform corporate culture" (Morgan, 1986, p. 127). This is one reason why an accurate description of a school's culture is difficult to capture. While the term *strong cultures* has been linked to effective schools (e.g., Levine & Lezotte, 1995), strength does not indicate the quality of shared values and beliefs. This attribute is more commonly described along a continuum from *positive* to *negative*, reflecting the degree to which dominant assumptions are congruous with the professional knowledge base, encourage adaptations, and contribute to positive outcomes. Some writers (e.g., Mohan, 1993) refer to cultures as being *stable* and *unstable*. The former are characterized by clarity of purpose and vision, tendencies to view tradition with moderation, and leaders who accentuate the positive and encourage collective action; the latter are characterized by disagreement in core values and purposes, high uncertainty among subcultures, the protection of tradition to avoid change, and low morale. In organizational research, the ability to be innovative is considered a positive attribute (Burgess, 1996).

Communication commonly has been described as a loop involving a source, a receiver, and a channel. This limited perspective stems from the classical theory of communication that was articulated by Harold Lasswell (1948): "A convenient way to describe an act of communication is to answer the following questions: Who..Says What..In Which Channel..To Whom..With What Effects?" (p. 37). This theory divides the communication process into a series of discrete parts that include a source, a message, a channel, a receiver, and feedback (Pepper, 1994). This elementary view was widely accepted because it was easily understood and readily assimilated in bureaucratic-like organizations, i.e., the functions of transmitting information and issuing commands were congruous with accepted managerial responsibilities in hierarchies (Taylor, 1993). One of the limitations of the classical theory of communication relates to the conveyance and maintenance of organizational culture. When communication is treated merely as interaction, words are judged to be containers of thought and feelings. In truth, meaning is not embedded in the content of words but rather the product of a "complex communicative process that includes words, intentions, contexts, histories, and attitudes" (Pepper, 1994, p. 9).

Discussions of communication appearing in management literature have been influenced substantially by classical theories of communication and organizations; that is to say, they usually focused on the study of undesirable by-

Table 1
Common Communication Problems Associated with Organizational Structure and Individuals

Factor	Perceived Effect
	Organizational-Based Problems
Size of organization	The larger the organization, the more difficult it is to maintain effective communication.
Reliance on a formal channel	Attempts are made to restrict communication to a formal channel known as the "chain of command."
Hierarchy of authority	Because most power and authority is vested in a small number of people, these individuals experience information overload (a condition that reduces their effectiveness).
Information Filtering	Because information passes through a prescribed channel, it gets filtered at each stage of transmission.
Closed climate	The school or school district discourages interactions with the community because such exchanges are seen as conflict-producing.
	Personal Problems
Poor listening skills	Administrators are unable or unwilling to receive information.
Poor encoding/decoding skills	Inability to structure messages appropriately; inability to comprehend verbal and nonverbal messages.
Lack of credibility or trust	Messages are not accepted as being accurate; motives of administrators are questioned.
Elitism	Administrators isolate themselves, electing to communicate with a select number of powerful individuals.

products of bureaucratic structure in the context of discrete steps in information exchanges. For example, excessive levels of hierarchy were often deemed to produce undesirable communication outcomes, such as illegitimate bypassing and reliance on informal channels (e.g., Culbert & McDonough, 1985). Table 1 provides other examples of organizational and personal communicative problems of this type. While these problems are neither invalid nor unimportant, they constitute a restricted and insufficient perspective of organizational communication. As such, they diminish the importance of communication, reinforce erroneous conclusions about the connections between communication and culture, and encourage modernistic approaches to studying communicative behaviors. Many researchers, for example, have categorized organizational climate and culture as causal variables while classifying communicative behavior as an intervening variable. A proclivity to treat the relationship between culture and communication in this manner has been verified by a macroanalysis of communication research conducted across all types of organizations; this review found that modernistic approaches have been far more prevalent than either naturalistic or critical modes of inquiry (Wert-Gray, Center, Brashers, & Meyers, 1991). As John Dewey (1938) long ago observed,

> *The way in which the problem is conceived decides what specific suggestions are entertained and which are dismissed; what data are selected and which are rejected; it is the criterion for relevance and irrelevancy of hypotheses and conceptual structures. (p. 138)*

In this vein, a presumed cause-and-effect relationship between culture and communication has limited our understanding of how cultures are formed and how they can be transformed.

More recently, enlightened communication scholars have provided a broader perspective of organizational behavior, one that views the relationship between culture and communication as reciprocal. Charles Conrad (1994), for example, wrote, "Cultures are communicative creations. They emerge and are sustained by the communicative acts of all employees, not just the conscious persuasive strategies of upper management. Cultures do not exist separately from people communicating with one another" (p. 27). Stephen Axley (1996) described the bond between culture and communication this way: "Communication gives rise to organizational culture, which gives rise to communication, which perpetuates culture" (p. 153). This association implies that communication cannot be understood sufficiently by reducing it to a loop of linear steps or by focusing research exclusively on the transmissions between senders and receivers (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Instead, investigators should treat communication as a process through which organizational members express their collective inclination to coordinate beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes. Put more simply, it is course of action that people in a school or district use to give meaning to their organizational lives by sharing perceptions of reality. A negotiated order evolves from both internal and external interactions among individuals and groups, and this interplay occurs in the informal as well as formal organization. When viewed from this social system standpoint, communication is a process that shapes, transmits, and reinforces a socially-constructed culture (i.e., a set of shared dimensions that form the assumptions, values, and artifacts of a particular organization) (Mohan, 1993).

Within the framework of a cultural change model, problem solving requires administrators to identify how individuals perceive reality so this information can be used to erect mutual understandings about a school's purposes and practices. This objective is unlikely, however, in situations where administrators employ communication practices, either consciously or unconsciously, that restrict the debate of values, discourage conflict, and limit access to information (Deetz, 1992). Regrettably, managers in many organizations continue to treat information as power, and they restrict access to it as a means of protecting personal power (Burgess, 1996). Superintendents and principals who fall into this category are incapable of actualizing the primary function of transformational leadership—shaping and developing new norms in the school (Carlson, 1996).

The reciprocal relationship between culture and communication is especially noteworthy with respect to the symbolic frame of administration. When an administrator appropriately recognizes that organization does not precede communication and becomes subsequently supported by it, he or she is more inclined to view organization as an effect of communication (Taylor, 1993). This changes our thinking about critical leadership attributes. For example, credibility and trust (essential characteristics of leaders who assume the role of change agent) are not produced by structure or programs; instead, they spring from human interactions. Unless leaders accurately evaluate the effects of communication on underlying assumptions, and unless they properly dissect the language of a school, they probably cannot determine the extent to which culture facilitates or obstructs change. Language within an organization is the primary vehicle through which audiences develop a sense of order; the study of language focuses on how an institution and its various publics collectively define and participate in organizational reality (Toth & Trujillo, 1987).

A Call for Action

To provide capable leadership for school restructuring, administrators must accurately assess the existing culture and gain an understanding of how and why it was established and sustained (Deal & Peterson, 1990). The nexus between culture and language suggest that these tasks are not achievable for administrators who lack an understanding of communication theory. Therefore, two specific actions are recommended. First, research on culture and communication in school settings should become a high priority among scholars in educational administration. Tradi-

tional approaches that examine only select aspects of the communication process, aspects such as direction (e.g., top-down) and channels (formal and informal), fail to show how value orientations cut across organizational contexts and shape the organization's culture (Mohan, 1993). Second, communication theory should be an integral part of professional preparation in school administration. This argument was valid long before school restructuring became a popular issue, because administrative work has always centered around interpersonal relationships. The pursuit of culture change has simply made the need to study communication theory more obvious.

As already suggested, dominant perspectives of communication in schools have been influenced by classical theory which portrays the ideal school as tightly coupled, rational, well-defined, orderly, and logical (Owens, 1995). In this utopian organization, communication is transparent. That is, it is assumed that the "intentions of the message sender can be directly coded into explicit message language or manifest content" (Taylor, 1993, p. 251). This presupposes the existence of a coding-decoding procedure allowing the sender and receiver to exchange the accurate and complete meaning of a message through words. Based on this supposition, a failure to communicate can be blamed on one of the following problems: (a) the coding procedure was not properly used; (b) the sender did not properly construct the message; (c) the receiver was inattentive; (d) there was interference in transmission (e.g., the memorandum got lost). Both the supposition and simplistic framework it engenders disregard the significance of context in information exchanges (Taylor, 1993).

Over time, we have discovered that our schools are not the ideal organizations proposed by classical theory. Rather, they are loosely-coupled and composed of multiple subcultures in which ambiguity and behavioral inconsistencies are pervasive. Behavior in them is frequently unpredictable and bewildering. As Robert Owens noted, "there is often an obvious disjunction between publicly espoused values and what we do in schools" (p. 10). When we merely classify artifacts or identify espoused values, we usually capture a limited, and frequently inaccurate picture of culture. Worse yet, some administrators are inclined to ignore the perceptions, feelings, and emotions of other members of the school family in assessing culture. Instead they approach change as if their own eyes and ears were sufficient to determine need and direction (Sharpe, 1996).

To reach the deepest levels of culture, and thus to determine how communication influences behavior in schools, we must rely on multidimensional, multilevel analyses (Mohan, 1993). Such investigations should explore value orientations and contextual variables, especially with respect to explaining how these variables contribute to differences in school cultures (i.e., differences between strong and weak, positive and negative, and stable and unstable cultures). This form of research requires interpretive paradigms permitting us to observe, measure, and classify organizations from a communication perspective (Taylor, 1993). Interpretivists view reality as a subjective process; their goal is not to determine the status of the organization, rather they seek to understand and explain why a school is the way it is. The approach focuses on the study of meaning, or put another way, how people make sense of their world through communication (Wert-Gray et al., 1991). Schein (1992), for instance, advocates studying culture through the eyes of its participants by engaging them in discussion centering around five primary themes:

- *Relationship with the environment* (What is the primary mission of the school? Whom do we serve? What is our relationship with the community?)
- *Reality, truth, and the basis for decisions* (How do members of the organization determine if something is true or valid? What basic assumptions define reality?)
- *Nature of human nature* (Are students inclined to do good things? Are some students predestined to fail? Are most parents cooperative?)
- *Nature of human activity* (What assumptions are implicit in the problem-solving techniques used in the school? Should teachers make decisions alone or collectively? Should teachers participate in administrative decisions?)
- *Nature of human relationships* (What are the assumptions about power and authority? What social relationships are acceptable?)

Accurate descriptions of behavior in each of these categories are more probable when the researcher has the ability to interpret verbal and nonverbal messages accurately.

The study of communication and culture also can occur in other ways. For example, the researcher may concentrate on the effects of modern technologies. The infusion of new electronic devices, such as FAX machines, e-mail, computers, the Internet, and distance learning has created potentialities that are both positive (e.g., increased communication) and negative (e.g., dehumanized communication). Their acceptance and use in schools also is influenced by culture. For example, teachers often exhibit an unwillingness to change instructional methods even when new technologies permit them to do so. In another vein, communication-centered research can be used to explore moral and ethical issues. For instance, restructuring prompts leaders to induce a reconsideration of long-standing assumptions and values or to consider redistributions of power and authority. A range of possible research topics is shown in the typology contained in Table 2.

A dearth of research on communication in schools may partially explain why this topic has received relatively little attention in administrator preparation programs. But neglect also appears to be the product of indifference. Thirty years ago at a national conference sponsored by Project Public Information and Stanford University, a group of scholars in school administration and communication theory

Table 2
A Typology for Communication Research in Schools

Focus	*Potential Areas of Inquiry*
Institutional Culture	• Effects of communication on shaping culture • Relationship between communication and culture (strength, quality) • Communication among subcultures in schools • Use of communication in socialization, enculturation • Development of language within a school culture
Ethical/Moral Concerns	• Leader influence on vision, goals, or ideas • Inducing cognitive redefinitions, value orientations • Leader communicative behaviors and gender issues • Leader communicative behaviors and the expression/use of power • Communication in multicultural contexts
Organizational Change	• Communicating the necessity and means for change • Communication in "high support" and "high resistance" schools • Communication in periods of instability, crisis • Relationship between change strategies and communicative behavior • Case studies of successful and unsuccessful change ventures
Networks	• Formal and informal networks • Open and closed networks • Network preferences in effective and ineffective schools
Conflict Resolution	• Communication as a source of conflict • Inter- and intragroup communication • Communicative behaviors and conflict resolution
Media of Communication	• Written versus oral communication • Electronic networks - effects on communicative behaviors - effects on accessing and using information - effects on group decision making
School Productivity	• Communication and administrator effectiveness • Communication and employee effectiveness • Communication and student effectiveness • Communication and community satisfaction
Leadership	• Communication knowledge base and skills among school leaders • Leadership styles and communicative behaviors • Language as a symbolic dimension of leadership

joined forces to discuss the study of communication. Recently, the *Journal of Educational Relations* published a monograph of that conference. A case for requiring administrators to study communication was developed and tied to perceived deficiencies in practice. One speaker offered this list of reasons why educators communicate poorly: (a) they have a false impression of their ability to communicate; (b) they are not accustomed to competing for the public's attention; (c) they operate in relative obscurity and are unprepared for the public's interest and scrutiny; (d) they minimize the value of outside opinions; (e) they have little communication experience and almost no meaningful communication training (Christian, 1997). While some of the recommendations presented at that conference have been addressed adequately by the National School Public Relations Association, one that has gone unheeded pertains to integrating communication theory into the preparation of school administrators (Holliday, 1997). A lack of action in this area is especially disconcerting in light of mounting evidence that the work of school administrators is permeated by interpersonal relationships and the use of information. Such evidence can be found in reviews of change literature (e.g., Fullan, 1991; Hord, 1992), studies of interpersonal relationships between principals and teachers (e.g., Bredeson, 1987; Reitzug, 1989; Martin & Willower, 1981; Willower & Kmetz, 1982), and studies of the work lives of superintendents (e.g., Blumberg, 1985; Kowalski, 1995a).

Table 3
Possible Themes for the Study of Communication in Administrator Preparation

Theme	Examples of Content
Communication Theory Organizational Behavior	How language and communication build and sustain culture; and how communication is used to negotiate order; the role of communication in organizational change.
Community Relations	Two-way communication channels; encouraging interaction with the community environment; public relations; building community support.
Communication and School Outcomes	Effects on employee performance; communication as a form of motivation; effects on student outcomes.
The Symbolic Frame of Leader Behavior	Communication and organizational symbolism; language as form of symbolic expression; modeling desired changes.
Modern Technologies	Potential benefits of modern technologies; potential problems related to using modern technologies for communication; effective control of modern technologies.
Moral/Ethical Dimensions	Communication as an expression of power; inducing cognitive and value changes; empowerment and shared governance.
Interpersonal Relations	Dimensions of communication; conflict resolution; open communication.

Communication is commonly addressed in courses on school-community relations and public relations; some newer textbooks on organizational behavior in schools also provide limited material on the subject (e.g., Hanson, 1966). In most instances, however, organizational communication receives only superficial treatment. Rarely is the subject examined thoroughly in relation to culture and the politics of school reform. If adequate coverage is to be provided, at least seven themes need to be addressed; they are outlined in Table 3. The scope of these themes suggests that at least one separate course on communication and interpersonal relationships should be required in professional preparation.

Concluding Comments

When the United States moved from an agrarian to a manufacturing society at the start of the twentieth century, public education was reshaped from a system of largely one-room country schoolhouses to modern organizations displaying many facets of bureaucracy and scientific management. The more recent transition to an information society, however, has not yet produced a parallel realignment despite intense criticism and sustained calls for educators to do so. Consequently, formal structures and cultures crafted nearly 100 years ago remain operative in a majority of our public schools.

On the surface, the idea of reinventing schools from the center is appealing because it is congruous with democratic governance, decentralization theory, and professionalism (Carlson, 1996). But the goal also remains highly ambiguous. Neither the means nor the ends for restructuring are certain (Leithwood, 1994). Nevertheless, three critical facts shape the reform mission: (a) the school has become the primary target for reform; (b) administrators are expected to provide the leadership necessary for institutional renewal; (c) decentralization theory has been adopted as the conceptual guide for change. As Kenneth Leithwood (1994) accurately concluded, these circumstances require commitment rather than control strategies. What educators believe and value is deeply situated in their institutional cultures, and it is when we start to think about the capacity for change within a cultural context that communication emerges as a critical variable. Discussing the process of building a capacity for change, Philip Schlechty (1997) offered a list of inhibiting factors that pertain to communication: a lack of communication within schools, between schools, and between schools and society; public misperceptions about educational purposes and practices; ignoring the opinions of teachers who seek to do things differently; minimal teacher input regarding student expectations; the lack of a centralized system for disseminating accurate information at all levels of the decision-making process; and, inadequate opportunities and procedures for teachers to share innovative ideas.

If behaviors in schools were random rather than the product of fundamental assumptions cutting across institutional experiences, cultural transformations could more easily be achieved by simply replacing personnel or juggling organizational charts (Robbins, 1996). But this clearly is not the case. Even in schools where there is a positive disposition toward change, educators are likely to be incapacitated by their lack of knowledge. Seymour Sarason (1996) pessimistically concluded that educators were incapable of renewing their own institutions because they were ignorant of organizational culture and the change process; and he chastised teachers and administrators for rarely reading professional journals and books that could enlighten them on these topics. In his book, *Leading Minds*, Howard Gardner (1995)

provides another critical element. He agrees with the contention that leaders must possess the technical knowledge associated with change, but he goes on to point out that such knowledge is of limited value if leaders do not have the communication skills necessary to build support for their ideas.

In the past an indifference toward studying communication was less debilitating because an imposed structure, supported by a culture that viewed schools as agencies of stability, resulted in role expectations that were largely managerial. Today, conditions are clearly different. Policymakers are asking educators to venture into unfamiliar and risky territory. More precisely, they are asking administrators to assume responsibilities for which, at best, they have been marginally prepared. Those of us who educate practitioners have a moral and professional responsibility to address this problem. At the very least, we should focus our research on issues of practice that relate to cultural transformations, and we should provide our students with a comprehensive understanding of communication.

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Division J Invited Address

Technology and Teaching in the Communications Age

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A couple of years ago, I was winding down a four-year appointment as an instructional designer, supporting faculty in their efforts to learn how to use technology in their teaching. In this capacity, I offered hands-on training, customized lessons, and individualized consultation on a wide range of technology-related topics. It was not uncommon for me to spend two to three weeks learning all the ins and outs of a piece of software, creating step-by-step documentation, and building a database of tips, tricks, and applications for its use in the higher education classroom. Now that I am in a tenure-track teaching position, I no longer have three weeks to learn anything (especially new software) and think up ways to use it; it's all I can do to join my colleagues in the on-going struggle to teach, do research, serve on committees, and try to keep up. I tell you this only because I want you to know that I am not just another "techie", but one who has been on both the technology support and faculty sides of the fence.

Today, I would like to dialogue with you about this reality of the college professor and technology in the '90's. What's happening with technology at your institution? Why do you think we need it? Why do you want it? What makes implementing it in your teaching so difficult? Where are you with it personally, and what tricks can we come up with to make it an integral, supportive aspect of your professional life?

First, if your institutional environment is anything like mine, administrators are lauding the potential of technology and seeking funds to expand technology resources for teaching. In fact, much of the new money being spent in higher education today is for technology. Few administrators have given much thought to supporting faculty in finding ways to integrate the technology effectively into teaching, however. It's just expected! Those with more insight are hiring support staff who often reach a small minority of the faculty masses.

Meanwhile, there is a lot of pressure on faculty to make the technology "work," that is improve teaching, increase enrollments or retention, expand ways to "instruct" non-traditional students, etc. A few faculty are excited about the winds of change and have been first in line to seek out the college's resources to break new ground, in spite of all the growing pains associated with being on the "(b)leading edge."

The rest of us range from "show me how, and I'll try" to "who has time? ask me next year" to "let Mikey do it and than I'll see" to "make me!" Some of us are concerned about the apparent emphasis on technology for its own sake, rather than seeing it as one, potentially useful tool. Others feel the "tool" analogy supports the adage that "When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." A few bemoan the difficulty technology creates in keeping a moral purpose to what we do in the forefront; how are we going to find happiness in all of this? Added to the pot are our students who are coming out of high school (or increasingly out of work environments) with more technology skills than ever. They expect faculty in the '90's to use technology if they are up-to-date in their fields. Hmmm...maybe Borg (Star Trek) is right: "Resistance is futile. You will be assimilated."

So, where are we with all of this? IS resistance futile? In my opinion, technology is not a passing fad; we CAN find ways for it to make a positive difference in our professional lives and that of our students; we must find effective ways to use it in higher education for a large number of legitimate reasons. However, I don't think technology is an educational panacea. I DO know that it is not easy for faculty:

- to carve out time for exploring the multitude of available options in order to choose a match with your level of technology experience and particular teaching style.
- to identify cheap, effortless, or feasible options to do this year, especially when our retention or tenure criteria do not reward technology-related effort.
- to find a meaningful place for technology within our own academic or teaching passions.
- to develop confidence when the "big guns" are into huge projects, lucrative grants, or high-end applications of technology.
- to overcome the frustrations that are inevitable as we try to learn the technology skills necessary to implement our ideas and deal with information overload.
- to work with support staff who sometimes speak in "techno-babble" or try to take over (or simply cannot respond to our needs immediately).
- to implement our ideas when the technology is not readily accessible in the classroom or not reliable when it is there.

Now, we can continue to dwell on the "poor us" scenario, or we can accept the downside of it all and rise above it to focus instead on the opportunities technology is affording us, especially some practical ideas on how we can make it work FOR us, at least in the short-run.

Now that most of us have a computer on our desk and e-mail access, what are some reasons that we might WANT technology to be a part of our professional lives? Would you agree that we want:

- to be in touch with colleagues we can be energized by or share information with?
- to access information that we need faster and easier?
- to be up-to-date and effective in our respective disciplines?
- to be in touch with our students who are enrolled at a distance so that we can easily exchange information and get acquainted?
- to relate to our tech-savvy students?
- to be able to reach students with new instructional strategies made possible, easier or more interesting with technology? perhaps, even breathe new life into courses taught many times in the past?
- to receive technology or other types of perks that administrators dole out periodically?
- to have a diversity of ways to express our ideas?

- to have grant-writing and research-in-teaching opportunities?
- to receive local recognition and state/regional/national opportunities to share our technology experiences?
- to avoid looking stupid?
- to increase the opportunity to talk with upbeat people and learn from colleagues with more experience?

You can probably think of dozens of other reasons we might want technology to be present in our professional environments. The important thing is to find a personalized combination of technology-related activities that will help you learn about technology in education while serving your personal and professional needs.

Personalized combo, you say? The trick is to take a quick look at some of the tips and ideas below that I have practiced myself or observed others do during recent years. Choose the ones that fit your time, interests, and readiness as far as technology is concerned. The main objective here is to have a plan that begins where you are and helps you move toward finding a technology niche that you can be energized by and rewarded by. A niche, you say? Yes. Give up on the idea, for now, that you are going to change the world and do a project that will rival the "big guns." For most of us, successful integration of technology into our professional lives, especially teaching, begins with a plan that has a step-wise "feel" to it. Beginning with the development of a multimedia CD-ROM, for example, is rarely wise. Instead, consider one of the following groups of tips to lead you to your niche.

Find a niche: Getting Started

- Locate the best sources of help and training available to you on campus or in your community, as well as a training schedule. Commit yourself to getting some training or one-on-one consultation.
- Locate equipment and software that are better than your own and accessible to you. You might need this for future work.
- Find out what technology is available in classrooms you can use, and labs or other locations your students can use.
- Buy a computer system at home and purchase Internet access from there.
- Identify undergraduate students who might be interested in independent study with or about technology, or graduate students who are tech-savvy and enthusiastic about using it for professional activities (research, presentations, etc.).
- Team up with persons who know more than you or have more courage when it comes to trying new things with technology, and network with them.
- Have lunch occasionally with creative friends.
- Use e-mail everyday (and the Internet for searching at least weekly).
- Identify internal grants, release time possibilities, and external fund sources related to your teaching and research interests.

Find a niche: Streamlining Office Management (while building tech skills)

- Learn how to filter your e-mail, create an electronic address book, and separate your student e-mail from your professional e-mail.
- Join a listserv in your discipline, but be callous: delete unread e-mail from listservs.
- Learn how to do your grades on a spreadsheet.
- Find five super Web sites in your discipline and bookmark them; access weekly for updates.
- Furnish your workspace with gentle lighting and colorful visuals to remind you (when you are using high-tech equipment) that you are a human being in a high-touch field, focusing on information, communication, and relationships—not equipment.
- Read, rather than skip, articles in your trade journals about technology use in your discipline, about good Web sites in your field, about ways other faculty are using technology for teaching and learning.
- Watch for technology humor; you'll need it!

Find a niche: Putting a plan into motion

- Inventory your current teaching philosophy and passions, your current research or presentation plans, and the "hot topics" valued by your department or division this year.
- Ask yourself "how can technology help me do any of this (better)?" If you are very new to technology, you may find it helpful to ask this question of more experienced colleagues, friends at other institutions, technology or faculty development support staff, or your children!
- Ask yourself if you are more interested in teaching with technology yourself or having your students use it to learn.
- Begin a log of ideas.
- Consider the time you want to commit to this technology "thang" this semester or this year, who you can enlist to collaborate on it with you (collaboration is much more successful than random "try-its"), and your current level of experience using technology for educational purposes.
- Evaluate the items on your log and the current demands on your time: what would you like to try this year that would support your current demands? what would you like to begin learning for a fresh idea next year?
- Apply for internal or external funding to support a project idea that excites you.

It is 1997 and technology is affecting all aspects of our lives, and the lives of our students. We are faculty, employed by institutions of higher learning who are interested in integrating technology that supports teaching and learning. We recognize both the hype, the potential, and the challenges associated with finding effective, efficient, and appealing ways to use technology in our teaching. Times could be better, but they could also be a lot worse! "We must prepare ourselves and our students for our future, not our past. And the future is not what it used to be!" (B. O. Barker, personal communication, April, 1997) That means finding meaningful ways to bring technology into our professional lives, especially ways that impact positively on our students. It does not mean we must give up our other passions. We must seek ways to integrate them together! I hope some of the ideas we have explored today will help you find ways to do that in your own environment. I invite you to share with me other tips for accomplishing the task as you discover them! Good luck!

Mid-**W**estern **E**ducational **R**esearcher

Call for Manuscripts

The *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* is a scholarly journal that publishes research-based articles addressing a full range of educational issues. The journal also publishes literature reviews, theoretical and methodological discussions that make an original contribution to the research literature, and feature columns. There are four issues of the journal published annually.

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